Date A Re:Live

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Summary

(Imported Work from fanfiction.net)

Even a similar story can take it's own path. Shido and Mana are amnesiac siblings living with their friend Kotori, however the past catches up to Shido when he nearly runs into a space quake, and his world changes as one girl asks... "Are you here to kill me?" (Stronger Ratatoskr, weaker DEM, games & movie are canon to story) [Shido/Tohka/Harem]
Alright everyone, time for my first serious Date A Live story, before now I've just made a one-shot and a few short stories, but to anyone who's also read "A Dragon's Heavenly Bonds" know, when I get serious with my writing, I can go beyond what I did for any of my stories before them. That's what this Date A Live story will be as well. So to those who've seen my previous DAL stories, I think you'll especially love this one.

Before I begin, I want to let everyone know while I am including some of the revelations from Volume 16 into the story, I had this idea planned since before it came out, so there's a lot that I won't be using from Vol 16, some examples being I have different characters set as the real identities of the First Spirit and Phantom. I have a good feeling that one of my ideas (at least from out of the ones I've read, so I may be wrong) is one that hasn't been used in any DAL fanfic just yet.

Here are some things I want to clarify here at the start, the story will use the first 15 novels, the games, and the movie to make up the story line, however I don't have any translations to Rinne Utopia and Ars Install, so be prepared for an unplanned indefinite hiatus by the time I get to them unless anyone here knows where I can find them, I don't have this issue for the movie and Rio Reincarnation so I'll be good for the two of them. If worst comes to worst, I'll simply put the games in separate stories just so the story can continue if it gets really bad.

Also as the summary mentions, in this story what I mean by a "more effective Ratatoskr" and "less unbeatable DEM" is this. While Ratatoskr isn't really weak and unhelpful in canon, they sometimes tend to feel a bit more like comedy relief and do more bad than good, the anime even seems to only present them like this too. While in the DEM's case, I feel except for Vol 15, the story makes Westcott always seem to have things go his way even if he loses, so I'm going to even things out and actually have things not always go his way. Now with that cleared up, it's time to begin.

P.S: If you see me bringing up anything about a Crossover, or Season 4 for this story, then just ignore it. Those were both ideas that ended up getting cancelled.

**Chapter 1, S1: Prologue**

Suddenly in some abandoned building all gray and heavily damaged, a brown-haired man wearing a mask and a thin yet powerful armor rushed across the room as he drew an energy sword and prepared to strike against a pink haired girl wearing an empress like outfit, holding a strange tree shaped sword with multiple colored gems on it. The girl rushed forward and shouted as she collided with his energy blade, sparks flying as magical power ricocheted off the walls around them, breaking
the structure further.

The man gave a small smirk, jumping as he twirled the blade and changed it into a cannon, and blasted it at the girl, striking her and knocking her back, she's knocked to the wall before cutting the blast apart with her blade. She soon collapses onto her knees a bit, feeling a bit tired and weakened by the attack, but soon regaining her footing.

"You've reached your limit, just give up and let me take what I desire." The masked man said.

The girl simply responded by stabbing her blade into the ground, causing a huge overflow of pink energy that surprised the masked man and knocked him off balance, she took the chance to rush at him and slash him furiously, managing to strike his blade in its cannon form and force him to change it back into a blade as the cannon attachments explode. He smirks, slightly impressed.

"Never, not after I've learned what you intend to do. I won't let you hurt this world or any other one more than you already have!" The girl screamed, staring at him with anger as she recalled what he had already done to her. She would stop this madman, and when she did she could finally leave everything behind, and go back to the life she wanted to live again. The man scowled, hating her ideas of what was 'right' and soon drew a second sword.

The two collided again, and right as the weakened pink girl believed she had found an opening to end it... she gasped as she realized too late she had fallen right into a faint, and the man began his trap as his armor suddenly created energy tethers that held her into the air, locking her movements before he crossed his swords, creating a dangerous surge of power before he shot it at her, striking her hard.

"Fools who spout nonsense like dreams of peace and their pacifistic natures are the one thing I hate, survival of the kindest never will succeed to the survival of the fittest." The man coldly said.

The man soon walked to the girl and slashed her across the abdomen, ripping across her outfit as his sword glowed black, preparing for an apparently fatal stab as he smiled darkly. Everything he had been waiting for, his dream, all of it was going to be realized right now, at least... that's what he expected. The girl realizing she couldn't win decided that if she must fall here... she would make sure that he didn't achieve victory either.

"I'm sorry, please forgive me. I won't be coming home... Shido, Mana." The girl said, soon grabbing her sword and stabbing herself in the chest to the surprise of the man. Suddenly a huge surge of energy spews out of the girl's body, and the man who was directly in front of her screamed as it hit him, overloading and damaging his body from the sheer magnitude of the power that flooded out.

Soon, the girl's body slightly bleeds as it goes limp, her face shedding tears of guilt and sadness as three people filled her last thoughts. Her eyes soon slowly close, and her body slowly fades away in small pink sparkles, after she had disappearing entirely, her sword and the energy she emitted burst apart and sent ten spheres of light flying across the globe.

"NO!" The man shouted as his dream flew further away from him, he tried to reach out to the lights before the energy knocked him further away from the spot the girl one laid upon, knocking him unconscious as he gave a final scream.

It all began 30 years ago, during 2021, the day had begun like any other would on the planet Earth and no one expected any trouble to happen... but then suddenly in a random location within the continents of Europe and Asia, the sky began to swirl without any warning or indication. Then in response, small shards of rock began to rise like something had begun sucking them in. To anyone nearby, it would have simply looked like a mere tornado was forming, but it wasn't.
Every animal nearby began to flee, but it was too late for even a Cheetah had it been in the area, what was coming was the calling of the Grim Reaper's slaughter... no, Earthly Laws would soon no longer matter, even the Grim Reaper would soon be killed as his domain would be ruined and replaced. The swirling began reaching towards the ground like a sharp needle ready to puncture the earth, yet as clear as the air and the sky itself, and soon it reached down like a floating object ready to land.

However, the moment it did... not even claiming the most powerful nuclear weapon had suddenly set off would have been an accurate depiction of what happened. The entire area and beyond was flattened and incinerated like the flames of hell in a dark pink energy form burst further and further, consuming and destroying the mountains, the rivers, and anything else that it touched... and yet it was still not satisfied with its hunger.

The city nearest to the space quake suddenly had all its residents turn as they heard something rumbling near them, only for the winds of dirt and debris yet to be consumed by the explosion reach them, everyone began to scream and try running away in vain. However, the force of this explosion literally threw them and everything within the city into the air, destroying even the smallest of chances for them to get away before the explosion's powerful force swallowed the entire city inside of it.

In only mere seconds after it went off it reached the towns, the cities, the country sides and only mere seconds passed for everyone to look at it, then... the nightmare truly breached the world. To anyone watching from space, an entire black swelling would be seen, but that's all that one would discover as on the surface of the planet... this unearthly force of nature would kill a total of 150 million people!

It was the worst disaster that has ever hit Humanity, and we were sure that was it, or at least all that we’d expect for some time, but we were so very wrong. Continuous occurrences of these explosions followed up, spreading across the entire globe, there was nowhere to run or head, nothing to defend against these quakes. If a quake went off near where you lived, only distance would save you and even then, you might not be left unscathed, even if only emotionally or mentally.

Only after 6 months did the worst end, by the time these quakes had finally slowed down into rare occurrences, it was estimated that Humanity's former population of over 8 billion had become a mere 2 billion, more than 75% of our own kind destroyed by some unknown force. Eventually studies were finally made about these unknown explosions, and studying the original footage captured by satellites it was revealed that these explosions were actually more like earthquakes.

In the damaged ruins of various locations around the world, and certain parts of larger nations, the sight of many surviving families all struggling to survive in the wreckage was seen, even the slightest of loud sounds setting them off as they expected another explosion to end their already near-ruined lives. At the same time in the few surviving facilities throughout the more undamaged locations, everyone who could was working together to hopefully find a way to discover a way to save the remains of Humanity before they were all brought to extinction.

To be more specific, a certain area of space suddenly began to vibrate, distorting the dimensional plane around that area and twisting it until it compressed as a singularity that could no longer shrink and further. After which, all that compressed energy burst apart, becoming like a miniature big bang, as such they were named "Spacequakes". Initially, everyone believed they only brought annihilation, but somehow these Spacequakes after further study were revealed to have touched the planet, drastically changing the world as we knew it.
With further study, it was revealed that within these quakes existed a material that was identical to one best known in fiction: mana, quite literally the world had been touched by magical energy, but not in the same was as stories of magicians or spell casters, nor did there exist spells everyone could cast. With the fact that Humanity could risk extinction if they didn't come together, all existing nations came together and created a united government to give hope to everyone in these dark times.

Very soon, a miracle happened, and the creation of new technology using the very magic the quakes brought led to shelters that could let people survive Spacequakes, with the new technology helping making repairs and recovery of lost items become as easy as casting the very spells in fiction. It wasn't just technology, but Humanity itself gained new potential, a new breed of humans soon emerged from the generations born after the disaster, infused with magical power that graced them with phenomenal physical abilities and skills.

In the new of New Pittsburgh, a boy was walking by when suddenly the scream of a girl entered his ears, the girl trying to catch an important college paper that the wind had taken from her.

"No, please come back!" The girl cried out.

The boy made a fierce determined look as a slight blue aura formed around him, he jumped towards a nearby tree and swung himself into the air, shocking the girl as he managed to grab the paper before landing on part of the opposing building's wall and soon dismounting to the ground. He turned before jumping near her apartment window's ledge.

"Forgive me for intruding, but I believe this is yours?" The boy smiled, handing he paper to her. The girl made a thankful smile as she took it back to her relief.

It had been the worst disaster we had ever known, but in a way, it had freed Humanity from the chains that had been holding it back... at least mostly, even if most have changed for the better there are still few who try to take advantage of others and use them to their ends. Still, with the population having slowly recovered to 3.5 billion, and many advancements in the world, it seemed that things were looking up.

Yet the existence of the Spacequakes, and how they suddenly came to our world? That is a mystery which even today is still without an answer, the last remaining darkness lingering in the world of now... or was it? In the crater of a former space quake zone, an inhabited area known as Tenguu City stood, and no one knew that this city was where the answers to a decades long question would finally begin their revelation, all because of one single action.

This is the story of how that action would change everything, and answer the questions of 30 years ago.

*Date A Live, Season 1 opening theme plays*

(Instrumental) The scene opens up to show Earth from space before the sight of a Spacequake forming appears, then showing the very moment when the original quake first went off follows it, soon continuing with the one seen in space.

A black screen shows a girl with a ponytail covered in a purple silhouette looking forward, then followed by a long haired girl in a white silhouette covering her eyes with a hand as she turned to the side and held herself as if in pain, then a young looking long haired girl in a blue silhouette crouching down and hiding her face with both hands, and then finally a girl in asymmetrical twin tails in a dark
red silhouette who turned her back before showing the moon and the earth from further away.

(Heavy instrumental) The words "デート・ア・ライブ - DATE A RE:LIVE" appear on the blackened screen, and a heavy rock beat plays before the colors invert showing a white screen with the same text now black.

(In a town where everyone's looking down, [Dead or Alive].) On a staircase leading to a viewpoint area, Shido Takamiya stood out and looked at the city. (Where a dry wind blows through.) Tohka Yatogami is standing against a white background, her hair flowing as an unseen wind passed by her, her face moving as the focus zooms in on it. (My eyes sought for the light, [Dead or Alive].) The backside of Mana Takamiya is seen as she skips through town before she turns to face you, Kotori Itsuka soon stopping by her side giving a similar smile. (But all they saw was despair!) Origami Tobiichi looks up towards the sunset filled sky, her long hair blowing before her face widens in horror as she holds a hand to her head as she senses something.

(My scream can't reach anyone as I cry and no one hears...) Ripples from the rain are seen as Yoshino stands by a shrine, soon her face being zoomed in as she slightly looks up. (Someone please stop me with the very hands that I'm searching for!) Kurumi Tokisaki's seen sitting in her school uniform facing away from the camera, suddenly she's zoomed on with her Astral Dress, only to turn as her face shakes in horror with a frown and she covers her left eye, then removing it to reveal a now gold clock as she suddenly gives an insane look. (Three heavy beats) Soon the sight of the Fraxinus invisible in the air, the DEM ship Arbitel, and a hidden pink silhouette reaching out longingly are seen in succession.

(In this broken world, where I still don't understand my life, what I want to understand most...) A group of DEM wizards fly into view as Tohka standing in a crater holds Sandalphon tight and gives a mighty swing, creating a slash wave at them. At the same time, Origami flies through the incoming fire before using Metatron to fire beams of light at the ones firing at her. (Is why I'm scared of the kindness, that graciously... touched my heart!) Yoshino while riding on Zadkiel rushes by the DEM wizards as the area around her freezes, followed by Kurumi and her clones rising out from the shadows and firing various time bullets using Zafkiel at everyone unfrozen. (I wanna know the reason the reason to fill the gaping hole in my heart! So please, fill it with... your love!) Yoshino and soon fight with Origami in a rainy city battlefield as both fired their respective elemental beams, and then Tohka is seen in Kurumi's dimension dodging her bullets before falling into a white void and raising her hands out for Shido to catch them. (Please give me your answer-) Soon Shido sees Tohka, Origami, Yoshino and Kurumi in their Astral Dresses all stare at him in a wrecked section of the city.

DATE A LIVE!

(Humming instrumental) Reine Murasame and Tamae Okamine are seen in Shido's classroom, followed by Hiroto Tonomachi by the lockers as he puts his shoes on and waves. Ai, Mai and Mii were by a subway train as it passes by.

(Higher pitched humming instrumental) The sight of Tohka and Origami separated by split screens, the Yoshino and Kurumi, before finally Mana and Kotori all go by and finally ending with Shido looking straight forward.
Soon the sights of the Fraxinus crew and Maria grinning widely, Isaac Westcott and Ellen Mathers giving dark looks while Marina scowls, Elliot Woodman giving a serious yet worried look, and finally the sight of the same pink silhouette woman reaching out sadly all went by. Ending with Shido, Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Kurumi, Mana and Kotori all standing side by side in a line with confident looks and smiles as the music dies down and ends.

"WAKE UP!"

It was April 10th of 2051, and a teenage boy with short blue hair was seen groaning in his sleep, his body resting under the blanket of his bed as a slightly younger teenage girl with long red hair tied in twin tails held by black and white ribbons with crimson tips was dancing on top of him, apparently using it as an attempt to wake him up. He groaned as he tried to ignore it and stay in bed.

'My little sister figure might very well be giving me what could be best described as one of the worst wake up calls ever.' The boy thought to himself.

The girl giggled as she kept continuing her dance, and for all he could, the boy tried to ignore it all he could, but her little wake up dance seemed to know just the right places to hit him with her feet and eventually he couldn't ignore it.

"Kotori... darling little sister of mine?" The boy asked, getting her attention.

"What is it? Darling big bro of mine!?" Kotori asked, giving an innocent smile as if she wasn't doing anything wrong.

[This girl is my good friend and honorary younger sister, Kotori Itsuka. She's currently 14 years old and as of today will be attending Raizen Middle School as a 2nd year student. As you might have guessed by me saying honorary, she's not my actual younger sister, but considering the conditions I live in she might as well be officially considered my sister all but legally. She's a brave little ball of energy though she can easily get scared under the right harmless pranks, and I'm glad that she makes sure that I wake up, the only problem... she does it in very interesting ways.]

"GET OFF ME! This hurts you know!" The boy yelled out, wanting to just keep sleeping. However, he wouldn't get this wish as Kotori suddenly jumps into the air, giving a slight show of her white and pink striped panties to anyone who may have seen through that particular widow by that moment, and then gives him a drop kick to the gut! The boy gasped at the pain while she giggles.

"Sorry, did that hurt? I bet you're awake though." Kotori smiled, however the boy simply gives her a blank stared with his closed eyes and just goes back to sleep... or so Kotori thought as she starts trying to pull him out of bed.

"Hey, don't just go right back to sleep! Wake up! Come on, wake up sleepyhead!" Kotori shouted, still pulling on him.

"Listen to me Kotori... runaway..." The boy said, confusing Kotori.

"I've contracted the mysterious 'tickle hell giving' virus, often called the T-Virus for short."

Kotori suddenly stops pulling and steps back, suddenly feeling frightened.

"What? You've got what!?" Kotori suddenly yelled, her lower eye area becoming shadowed.

"Runaway Kotori, run! While I can still control myself!" The boy moaned, making him sound like he was succumbing to his made-up illness. The lights suddenly dim to Kotori's shock as he suddenly
gets up, with his upper face suddenly black, one of his eyes glows white and then he shouts like a monster! Kotori screams in fear before running out of the room and downstairs. The boy's head slowly turns at her, the lights come back on before he makes his face look normal again.

"OK, that's much better. Guess I am awake now."

[Oh crap, I forgot to introduce myself, didn't I? My name's Shido Takamiya, I'm currently 16 years old and like Kotori I'll be starting my first day of a new school year, in my case however I'll be attending Raizen High as a Freshman. Kotori's parents are usually out on business due to their jobs as Engineers for some company that's a sub-division under an even larger one, so I have to watch over her and my actual sister in their place, aside from them waking me up.]

Suddenly a girl with the same hair and eye color as Shido, only difference being her short ponytail the beauty mark underneath her left eye, walked down the stairs and walked into the living room/kitchen area with a smile. However, the smile vanished a bit as she noticed Kotori's hair sticking from part of the couch, showing she was still hiding from Shido's joke.

"I don't wanna go to tickle hell, someone help me." Kotori whimpered, the blue haired girl give a cat smile and slowly crawled over to the couch quickly. Once she did she jumped into view and gave Kotori a jump scare, freaking her out more as she looked to see her and ran to the wall, only to corner herself as Mana chuckles a bit.

"Calm down Kotori, it's only me." The girl said.

"A-are you sure? Is it really you Mana?" Kotori asked, still whimpering a bit. Mana playfully salutes at that.

"Yes, I am much good friend to you. Yes, I am Kotori big sister, Mana Takamiya." Mana said, and soon Kotori calmed down a bit, smiling as she forgot about Shido's made up virus prank.

[And this is my actually little sister, by blood at least, Mana Takamiya. She's 14 just like Kotori is and attends the same school and class year, the only difference is she's three months older. As you've likely just noticed, she's as playful as I am, and is a good big sister figure to Kotori. Usually when a start a joke with Kotori, she makes sure to give it a harmless resolution. Both are my cute little sisters, and I hold both of them dearly.]

Shido soon walked down dressed in his school uniform, smiling at the two as he begins to cook breakfast for the three of them, meanwhile Mana and Kotori were both listening to the news.

"A Spacequake was recorded earlier this morning by the center of Tenguu City. Only slight damage was done and no casualties among the area's residents. As usual, investigations are still failing to determine the case of these quakes." The News reporter stated, Shido briefly turned as he heard what the reported have been saying.

"Again huh, sounded close too." Shido commented.

"It was, it looked like a Class C one too." Mana replied, noticing the small crater it let on TV.

[Spacequakes... even after 30 years since they began, no one has gained any leads on what causes them. Many still remember the "Eurasian Sky Disaster" that began it all, and then there was "Dimension Collapse" that followed. 6 billion people died as across the world without any breaks among the next 6 months, a total of 50 Spacequakes razed destruction while we had no way to defend ourselves. Even after the shelters were made to protect us and casualties only happened if people couldn't make it to one in time after the alarms warned of precautionary signs.]
Shido takes something out of the fridge and holds up bacon or pancake mix, the two sisters point at the bacon and Shido begins cooking it.

[Most of all... survivors of both those events still fear the destruction wrought by the original quake, and worry another quake like that may eventually happen again. Spacequakes come in four classes. C, B, A and S. The Class-C quakes like the one on the news do little damage and often just leave a crater, Class-B quakes usually lead to a noticeable amount of damage, Class-A quakes are the equivalent of biting off a big chunk of a pie compared to Tenguu City... the Class-S quakes however? Those only began appearing around 5 years ago.]

"Hey Kotori, check this out." Mana giggled, and Kotori panics as the former tried to show her a video of the first S-Class quake. Kotori had already been overwhelmed by the T-Virus prank and didn't want to see anything else freak her out at the moment.

[The one thing we know about the quakes is that color seems to define what Class they'll be, but no one knows what color they become until after the quake sets off. The Class-S quakes however are notable for being much darker and menacing in appearance and color. These quakes literally look like they scar a majority of the city, forcing a long period of shelter time for the damage done by them to recover. The fact quakes didn't have this class level is why people worry, if the quakes are getting stronger... is it really inevitable that the Eurasian Sky Disaster could have a repeat of its quake?]

"You know it's weird, but there's been a lot of quakes around Tenguu City lately, haven't there?" Shido noted, it recently seemed like a lot of quakes occurred in the area, especially those of Class-S levels. Kotori puts a Chupa Chups lollipop in her mouth while Mana nods.

"You're telling me, it's like the city's magnetizing them over here." Mana said, trying to let her big brother notice she was making a scared face. Kotori gave a deeper stare at the quake's crater in the news, almost as if she felt something deeper than Shido or Mana did.

"Oh yeah, do you mind if we go to Danny's for lunch big brother?"

"Hmm... I don't see why not, guess we can consider it my congrats party for starting high school." Shido said, Kotori and Mana cheer before giving each other a double high five. Shido was pretty sure they just wanted an excuse to eat the restaurant's deluxe kid's plate they loved having when they went over there.

The three stop near Danny's on the way to school, the diner being located right at the crossroad path between the Raizen Middle and Raizen High.

"We'll be waiting for you here in front of the restaurant after school ends. Don't break your promise, no matter what happens, if it's still possible eat here than we are going inside and eating!" Kotori said, Shido nodded and petted her head.

"Right, I promise. Just don't let something a Spacequake count as 'still possible' at the very least." Shido joked, making Kotori pale a bit as Mana giggles at her expression.

"Be careful on your way to school you too."

As the two sisters were getting their heads pat, a trio of students noticed them as they walked by. The trio was known as Ai, Mai and Mii. Ai was the tallest of the three and had blonde hair tied in a short ponytail, but a lot spikier than mana's was and had yellow eyes. Mai had short brown hair and born eyes, her eyes tended to look partially closed as if something was always on her mind. Mii was the
shortest of the three with long blue hair and blue eyes, and she wore glasses that she couldn't see well without.

"Look, it's Shido Itsuka." Ai began.

"You think it's weird that he and his sister are close to that Kotori girl like another sister despite her parents are just their legal guardians?" Mai continued in reply.

"No, not really. They're close enough she's their sister all but legally." Mii finished.

[Those three are fellow freshman at Raizen High known as Ai, Mai and Mii, though I think a few people call them the talkative trio since they usually gossip about things they see or hear. Ai's the unofficial leader who starts the talk, Mai follows up and Mii makes a final comment. Heck, their names sound like "I, My and Me" so that who talkative trio name almost seems fitting... just don't tell them I said that, they'd probably hurt me if they heard that.]

As Shido saw Mana and Kotori head off towards their middle school, he was suddenly grabbed by the hand by a familiar face to him.

"Hey there Shido, what's up?" A black spiky haired boy with a charmer like facial expression asked Shido, making the latter chuckle a bit.

"You ready for the freshman year? I know I am."

[This is Hiroto Tonomachi, he's sorta a friend of mine. He's kinda what we'd call a "vagabond" with how he acts and currently can only get a date via his cell phone's dating sims. He's not a bad person, he just needs to work on how he sends off his aura towards everyone. One example? The talkative trio nearby I think once mentioned about hearing a rumor on how Tonomachi swings both ways, I don't see anything wrong with one's sexual orientation, the only problem was he definitely likes girls and he was a bit slow on trying to clear that up. He's still a good guy if you get to know him though.]

While the two were talking, Ai notices a in the distance who suddenly hides behind a lamppost at the moment she sees Shido. She slowly peaked out, surprised at what she was seeing before she tears up a bit, but ends up just hiding again before she ran off completely.

"Hey, isn't that the new transfer student over there? The one called the super genius?" Ai asked, the other two having noticed after she looked.

"You meant that girl from Tokyo, right? I think it was her." Mai continued.

"Why do you think she just ran off like that? It looked like it was just because she saw Shido." Mii finished, as curious and confused to the sight as her friends. The girl in question continuing running towards the school as she gave off a trouble yet happy and sad expression.

'It can't be, but it really is... it was him!' She thought, not stopping as she kept continuing towards Raizen High.

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Soon enough, Shido had made it to Class 2-4 of Raizen High, this would be his homeroom class for the school year. Ai, Mai, Mii and Hiroto all ended up being his classmates. Hiroto got a notice on his phone and opened it up.

"So, who's route is it this time?" Shido asked, pretty sure he was on a dating sim.

"Oh, it's not a normal game this time. This particular app has the girl actually live on the phone."
Hiroto said, showing a girl with pink hair that was kinda similar to Kotori with pink hair and eyes in Shido's opinion.

"This dating sim's gonna be a real textbook for-"

"Um... e-excuse me?"

The two turned to see a girl looking at them, her face blushing a bit as if she was hoping she didn't actually have to talk and she could talk with her mind... which wasn't a thing unfortunately. Shido got a good look at her, trying to see if he had seen her once before. She was a young and attractive girl with blue eyes, long white hair that reached down to her waist with three hair-clips on the right part of her front bangs, and she had a slender body with noticeably gift bust size.

"Oh, hit there." Shido introduced, the girl blushing a bit more and fidgeting to his confusion.

"I-If you don't mind me asking... what's your name, and by any chance do you recognize me?" The girl asked, surprising Shido and even Hiroto a bit. This girl knew Shido? Then again... it wasn't like he could blame not knowing if he did, or rather, if he had known her.

"M-My name is Origami Tobiichi... you and I met each other when I lived her 5 years ago. Though I moved away some time after that."

"Oh, that explains things a bit. My name's Shido Takamiya, and I'm sorry about this but... truth is I've lost my memory around that time. All I remember is the Tenguu Fire and original Class-S quake" Shido answered honestly, making Origami's eyes widen slightly before she gave a sad look.

[The Tenguu Fire, it was a nasty natural disaster that happened around 5 years ago. Without any kind of warning, flames suddenly broke out across Tenguu City, mainly in a neighborhood called Nankou. All I remember was seeing myself, Mana and Kotori in a hospital after waking up, the Doctor's said we got hit by a falling plank and likely suffered some short-term memory loss. That's just one time of my memory that's gone, truth is... me and Mana don't remember most of our past, nothing other than our mother leaving someone promising she'd come home as soon as she could... but she never came back. That's when the Itsuka family became our legal guardians.]

"I'm really sorry, but I guess you could tell me about how we knew each other?" Shido asked, wanting to honestly learn part of what he forgotten. Origami blushed shyly when he did, having been caught off guard a bit.

"O-Oh! Yeah, well truth is we had only met about two times. The first was when I had gotten lost when the Tenguu Fire began, and... after that, I was sure I saw you die trying to save my parents' lives from some flaming debris." Origami quietly answered, Shido was surprised not for the act he did, but how little Origami had actually known him. He couldn't blame her though, that one act must have made her really grateful.

"I-I'm sorry that's all, please forgive me for getting your hopes up!"

Origami tried to bow in apology, but somehow only managed to hit her forehead on Shido's desk, making her hold her head in pain.

"Are you OK?" Hiroto asked, honestly surprised by how she managed to do that. Shido took a cloth out of his backpack and lightly rubbed Origami's forehead to her shock, causing her to give a bashful blush.

"It's alright, anyone would likely be thankful to someone who was brave enough to do that. So, are you living here with your parents right now?" Shido asked, however after saying that... Origami
looked away, any shyness she had replaced by sadness and regret.

"Oh... oh my god, I'm so sorry about that."

"...No, it's OK. You couldn't have known. I'm gonna take my seat now, see you later Shido."

Origami said quietly, taking her seat.

"So that was the transfer student, the so called super genius." Hiroto said to himself.

[I wasn't aware of it at the time, but Origami Tobiichi had been in both the Tenguu Fire and first Class-S quake, while for the latter no one needed to ask her how, having been there meant she failed taken shelter for it, but had luckily been away from the blast zone and survive. However... it seems during the Tenguu Fire, despite I had apparently saved her parents early during it, they ended up being burned to death after she had been separated from them and in trying to reach her walked into the crossfire of a small burst of flame. I felt she needed me as a friend, I was the only familiar face she likely knew since she moved back to Tenguu City.]

Soon everyone's attention was moved to the front of the room as class began and their homeroom teacher came in, alongside her assistant teacher. A lot of the students cheered as they saw who their teacher was.

"Oh heck yeah, it's Tamae!" Hiroto called out, answering for about 90-95% of the whole class.

"It's Ms. Okamine please, now quiet down. I'll be your homeroom teacher this year." Tamae said with a smile, she was a young woman in her late 30s with short slightly curled brown hair and glasses. She soon motioned her hand towards her assistant. "And this is your assistant homeroom teacher."

"I'm Reine Murasame, and I'm excited to be here." Reine introduced, she had what seemed to be a pale blue/purple or silvery hair and her outfit seemed like that of a lab coat over what seemed pajamas and a skirt. Shido noticed she had dark spots under her eyes, implying she didn't get a lot of sleep, or possibly had a condition like narcolepsy... and right as the thought that, she fainted to the class' shock and worry.

[Tamae Okamine, she's 29 years old and she's popular with the freshman classes. Most who begin their year at Raizen High tend to want her as their teacher. The woman aside her, Reine Murasame, has been her assistant teacher since last year. Apparently, she has a case of chronic fatigue and narcolepsy alongside insomnia, so she frequently she tends to randomly faint while in class, provided she's standing for some reason. That's actually all I really know about her, except that she's a widow due to the ring on her necklace and a stitched up bear she's always carrying, but I don't think I'll learn more because I don't wanna pry too far.]

"Sorry about that everyone, I'm just a bit tired." Reine said as she quickly got back up, making the class relieved as she was OK.

'So, this is how my year begins.' Shido thought, looking at Origami one last time before focusing back to the front of the board.

In some strange realm, the sight of a sleeping girl bathed in a dark purple energy was noticed, wearing nothing but a black nightgown of sorts made of some glowing darkness as she laid across an unseen ground or floated in the air. The realm she was in was strange... not of this world.

"..." The girl's sleepless form stayed as it was, but then, all of a sudden... her eyes shot open as the energy bathing her began getting more violent and wild.
Shido began packing up his things as he prepared to meet with Mana and Kotori.

"You going somewhere Shido?" Hiroto asked.

"Yeah, promised I'd meet my little sisters for lunch. They want another deluxe kids plate." Shido said, chuckling a bit at their love of the dish.

"I swear, that's all those two ever want to-" Before Hiroto could finish that sentence, everyone in the school suddenly heard a familiar alarm go off. There was only one alarm that was so familiar to everyone that getting surprised was a natural reaction.

**[WARNING! YOU'RE ATTENTION PLEASE, THIS IS NOT A DRILL! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE IN THE CITY! PLEASE EVACUATE TO YOUR NEAREST SHELTER! I REPEAT!]**

"What? Another Spacequake, but there was already one this morning!" Shido gasped, at best a Spacequake tended to happen only once a day, and this was usually most of the time as well. However as of recently they had become a lot more common to the point that there were as many days where multiple quakes.

"Come on, let's get to the school's shelter."

As everyone began heading off to a quake shelter, Shido suddenly noticed Origami collapse to her knees as she held her head.

"Origami, are you alright?" Shido asked, Origami turned to her as her face sweat a bit.

"Yeah, just please go on ahead. I need to go get my medication from the nurse's office quick."

Origami whimpered, quickly going in the opposite direction the other students. Shido was worried about her needing medication, but more so about how it happened right as the quake did, enough he didn't notice she wasn't the only one who had also gone somewhere else.

Soon enough Shido began following the other students as they headed to the shelter, meanwhile outside the buildings and various places holding cars and such shifted as they were moved to safety or acted as transfers to the shelters.

"Everyone, remember your three D's! Don't push, don't walk, don't wait around!" A random teacher said, making sure everyone was getting to safety.

As they were, heading to the shelters, Shido took out his phone and began calling Mana to see how she and Kotori were, wanting to make sure they were OK. After it rang for a bit...

"We're sorry, the number you're trying to reach is currently not available."

"What?" Shido gasped, this was the first time they hadn't called him when they were heading to shelter, he was starting to worry. While maybe it was just bad reception he activated their GPS locations... and he gasped as they were in front of Danny's!

"Why are they there? Don't tell me..."

"If it's still possible eat here than we are going inside and eating!" Kotori's voice echoes.

'Kotori, Mana... no!"
Shido suddenly ran off to the surprise of many students and the teacher who tried to call him to come back, but Shido wasn't going to take shelter while his sisters were in danger. He'd rather die before he let anything happen to either of them.

As he ran outside, he noticed the deserted city as he tried to quickly spot Danny's, right now he had to use every second before the quake went off as he couldn't see the rippling in the sky just yet. Warning signs filled the streets as the Spacequake's threat alerted everyone to continue getting to shelter. As he ran, the thought of a scared Kotori having Mana hold her close entered his mind.

"Please... don't let me be too late! Mana, Kotori!" Shido shouted.

At that moment he turned, and suddenly his eyes widened in horror at the sight of the dimensional ripple about to touch the ground from far away, at that moment a dark purple burst of energy shot out. That color meant that this Spacequake... was a Class-S level, Shido could only close his eyes and hold his arms out to cover himself in what may be a vain attempt to survive, the recoil soon flinging him back.

When the dust settled, Shido found himself waking up, he saw the destruction around him as he realized he had been lucky and managed to be outside the blast radius by a very narrow margin. Gasping at this fact, he took his phone to check on his sisters... their phone signals still existed, and that meant they were still alive to his relief.

"They're OK, and I'm alive... of thank god. I still can't believe they risked this though." Shido sighed, feeling like he had just aged 10 years in the last few minutes. Shido soon saw the dust near the epicenter clear up more as the mana leaked around the area, knowing to reach Danny's he had to cross he prepared to continue, but suddenly as he did, he saw the last thing he ever thought he'd see as his eyes widened.

"What the hell?"

(*insert HANTEN Tohka*)

Standing in the epicenter was the silhouette of a person covered in the very dark colored mana that was scattered across the area, as it began to slowly fade from view, soon revealing the sight of a teenage girl around maybe the same age as him. She had very long, dark purple-to-white gradient colored hair tied back with a ribbon that looked like something of an evil dark violet butterfly with point edges, but a large portion of her hair remained untied as well.

Her eyes were a soft pink color with white irises, eyes that Shido had only seen on Kotori before. The outfit she wore was probably the biggest surprise to Shido, it was a dark violet dress attached with black laces and a set of grayish magenta-and-dark pink plated armor which adorned her shoulders and waist. The dress is open at the back and the front, in which exposed most of her skin and a two-layered, knee-length skirt.

'Is that... a girl!?' Shido thought in shock, why was there a person in the epicenter of the Spacequake? There's no way she would have survived, did she somehow survive because she was directly hit by it, or was there something else Shido didn't know he wondered. Right now, he was too shaken for his common sense to tell him what he should have really thought based on what he saw.

The girl in question slowly turned to face Shido as he saw her eyes directly meet hers, and in a moment, she held up her finger and fired off a small sphere of mana. Shido narrowly dodged it as it passed over his shoulder and hit the area around him, causing the same energy that made the space quake to burst off at a smaller scale behind him.
"No way..." At that moment, Shido's common sense finally broke in on how she was here... she had caused the Spacequake somehow. In fact, she likely wasn't even a human being at all!

He had little time to continue his thoughts as the girl was suddenly standing in front of him, her eyes glowing brightly and her aura making Shido feel like it had really been night and a monster was staring him down as he aimed another mana sphere forming on her fingers at him.

"I see, so you too?" The girl said, her voice in a deep pitch Shido didn't expect or think fit her. Shido only stared at what she meant, he was already fully clueless about the entire situation, and now he was about to possibly be killed by some alien girl's powers that had been attacking their world for the last three decades. Then right at that moment, the girl's face gained an angrier look and she said the very words that would forever change his life, and the fate of the entire world.

"Are you here to kill me?"

Inverse Tohka has made her appearance, and boy is she pissed off right now. First thing I should clarify is that this isn't the idea I believe only I may have used, I know I've seen it at least twice, one in a pure DAL story and another in a crossover I can't recall the name of right this second. The idea I'm referring to is part of the initial scene, and anyone familiar with a pink haired DAL character should probably realize who it is, and the scene... yeah, I don't think I need to bother hiding it, I kinda made it obvious that she's the First Spirit of this story.

New Timeline Origami is who I'm going with here, but unlike in canon there's no changing of the past, so the reason Origami's like this in this fanfic is very different than before. I think Origami fans will be happy to know that her arc will be MUCH earlier as well, how early I won't reveal so you have something to guess over and look forward too.

Some people might notice the opening scene and the background lore are a bit similar to the opening scene from another light novel series, the Asterisk War. This is the only time you should see anything like that except maybe some characters like Shido showing some strong physical abilities, and that'll mainly only be when he needs to fight.

The reason I chose to have most of Humanity decimated by the Spacequakes? Well... if the first managed to kill 150 million, and from what I saw wasn't even in the best area, then imagine how the more populated parts of the world like China or India would fair, their populations both reach the billions, so imagine how much damage they'd take if they had been hit while lacking and protection as well? Finally, I chose the year to be 2051 because DAL's tech doesn't seem too far ahead in the flashback to our technology now, and the light novels state April 10th is a Monday, which just happens to happen in 2051 according to calendars I checked.

I hope Tohka's arc will excite you, because despite this chapter mostly taking cues from canon, in the next chapter that will go off the rails entirely. How off the rails exactly? Well... I guess I'll tell you all right now for the entire Tohka arc, Shido won't have any help from Ratatoskr, it will literally be only him and Tohka against whatever comes their way, only after Tohka's sealed will Ratatoskr finally show up, so for now both Kotori and Mana are gonna be taking a short break from the story.

Also, I hope you don't mind the insert song. Don't worry though, that's not gonna show up in every chapter. Think of it as a way of showing what "season" the story's currently on, which
is currently the first. The choice of lyrics there aren't the official translation (well a few of them are), but what I'd use if I were to do an English cover of the song.

Next time on Chapter 2, see how Shido deals with the mysterious girl before him as more trouble comes, and soon another arrival leads to him having DOUBLE trouble.
Chapter 2

Here we are, the first official chapter of the Tohka arc. Just as a friendly reminder, as I said before in the previous chapter's end notes, this is the one arc in the story where Shido will not have any aid from Ratatoskr. He has to quite literally prove himself to have the power to save Spirits by doing so with Inverse Tohka on his own, using nothing but his own skills to do it.

I have a specific reason for this, I can't fully say what it is, but it relates to why Tohka is the main girl for the harem and it isn't just to give her and Shido some bonding. I mean that's both kinda expected, and a bit boring... plus isn't that technically what canon did minus the lack of Ratatoskr's aid, just without the Inversion?

Eh... ignoring all that, this chapter will also reveal something else that's a surprise, and... like Inverse Tohka at the start, I'm not the first person to do this, in fact I think it's actually required for having Tohka inverse at the start. It's also, for my fanfic at least, the reason why Tohka never drew out Nahemah during her debut scene in the prior chapter. Let's just say this... Inverse Tohka's only one being she considers worth using it against.

It'll foreshadow what'll be in the arc after this one, so I hope it excites you all when you see it. Now prepare for this story to begin its Spirited competition! *blinks* ...Why do I even make obvious puns like that? Those are the ones that are usually never funny. *clears throat* OK, never mind me, let's just start now.

Chapter 2, S1: Tohka Return, Part 1

"Are you here to kill me?" The girl asked, her angry look intensifying as she keeps staring at Shido, ready to blast him with her mana sphere at any moment. Shido's body could only shake at the scene before him, but he was now even more surprised... someone with her power asking if he'd kill her?

"Of course, how would it be any different for you? You came here to kill me just like the rest of them."

Shido's eyes widen as he heard that, his shaking stopped. Someone was trying to kill her? Wait... then all this destruction, all of the attacks aimed at her, was she doing them all out of self-defense and preservation rather than just to create destruction just for the heck of it?

"Wait, just wait a moment!" Shido tried to call out.

"Do not try denying you're here to kill me, I must deal with you and then the others before 'she' arrives." The nameless girl said, refusing to hear his words.

"No, that's not why I came here! I could never kill anyone!" Shido said, suddenly catching the girl's brief attention.

"...I will not fall for your tricks, know your place Human." The girl claimed, soon about to fire the sphere at Shido and kill him right there and then, before she did however, she noticed him cover himself defensively as she noticed something flying in the air.

Shido soon heard the sound of some kind of engine and turned to where the mysterious girl was looking, seeing a bunch of woman and about four men in a group of five dozen fly towards the area.
they were at. They began firing missiles at her, and suddenly the girl jumps into the air towards them. Shido panics as the missiles got closer and closer, and then sees the girl simply hold up the hand without the charged mana sphere, creating a barrier that captures every missile.

"Deploy all weapons, overwhelm [Sovereign] with everything you have!" A woman in the front screams, blasting out all her missiles. The mysterious girl gives an annoyed look, almost sounding offended.

"You would do well to realize the futility of your attacks."

The girl referred to as 'Sovereign' closes her palm, and soon the barrier contracts and swallows up every missile, compressing them into nothing, without even a single explosion setting off. The five-dozen people firing at her all panic and try to switch their weaponry before she suddenly appears before them, holding out her charged mana sphere before firing it, and making it scatter into tons of smaller ones that hit them, knocking most of them back and into the ground or buildings as Shido stared at it all.

'She isn't just any ordinary girl...' Shido thought, amazed yet terrified by the power this mysterious yet beautiful girl was using. She turned around at some of the people flying behind where Shido was and she turned, causing him to see her face at that moment... to his shock, the angry, cold and stern face she had? It wasn't there, all he saw was one of sadness and despair.

'But if she's that strong, why does she look so sad?'

Soon about 25 of the unknown group gathered and prepared their swords, mere handles that soon glow with mana after being pulled out.

"Rush her all at once, cut her into pieces!" One of the few men screamed.

The mystery girl soon fully turned around and crossed her arms like an X, in an instant she swung them causing an untold number of energy waves to fly out at them. Shido gasped and ducked as they narrowly avoided him, most of the unknown group were hit instantly and struck back, many beginning to bleed slightly form the wounds inflicted before the waves hitting the ground ruptured the earth, causing the remaining group to be smashed by the debris.

"Know your limits Humans, because you are mere insects compared to me." Sovereign sneered, barely even trying to put the effort into fighting them. In fact, she was already getting annoyed that she looked at the down fighters and charged a mana sphere on each hand.

"Or maybe I should show you... permanently."

Shido’s eyes widened in horror, she was intended to kill them. Maybe he didn't understand why but even if their reasons where vile, they didn't deserve to die. However, he felt so helpless as if he tried, this girl was likely going to do the same to him... perhaps she still planned to even, just not as soon because he had no weapons on him.

"Hmm?"

Sovereign suddenly dispelled her attack as the sight of another Spacequake occurred, a darkened white signifying it as another Class-S level, but this one was so high up in the air that it failed to do anything... however a silhouette glowing that same color was seen after it vanished away.

Soon the silhouette lowered itself to reveal who it was as the glow uncovered the being within it. She was seen wearing a black veil similar to that of a wedding dress that was currently covering her entire head and face, so Shido couldn't see anything, a spiked black crown or halo floating above it.
Her outfit was similar to Sovereign's, but where hers was more like a princess gown, this girl's kinda felt more like a wedding dress. (A/N: Think Tohka's Limited Astral Dress in Season 2's first episode for a reference, but with shoes more like Inverse Tohka's, Inverse Origami's stockings and butterfly bow, and no gloves)

Her outfit's color scheme was a very deep dark-white blue with silver plated areas, the dark color of her outfit even seeming like it was unable to fully become black yet had tried to, especially as the sight of white was seen on place like the ends of her veil and 'skirt' area, the butterfly shaped bow at the chest area of her outfit, the ends of the sleeves of her 'arm warmers' and the tops of her stockings. She floated color, looking at Sovereign through her veil.

"..." The new girl stayed silent as she got closer.

"Oh no... all personal retreat, [Devil] has appeared alongside [Sovereign]! All called reinforce, desist and fall back!" The leader of the group said, terrified as the second girl came into view. Soon they all took off, grabbing the injured and heavily wounded members of their group.

"So... you've finally come again, fine then. I'll finally finish our fight here for good." Sovereign suddenly said, her look being one that said she had known this being was going to show up at one point.

Suddenly the girl raised up her hand and a swirl of dust forms, then a small pulse of mana as a silver colored throne drops into view. Shido was surprised however when the throne reversed itself and lowered to her reach, she grabbed something embedded at the top of it.

"NAHEMAH!"

Soon the object in question was revealed as a handle as she ripped what was embedded into the throne out, making it drop as Sovereign was now seen holding a black two handed sword with glowing red lines, but she was able to hold it with just her one hand. Shido was surprised why she hadn't used it until now, was it because this second mystery girl was the only one she would use it again? Sovereign soon gave her enemy a fierce look, challenging her to attack. Soon 'Devil' raised out her arms.

"Satan"

From the ground, multiple feather black pillars suddenly rose, soon coming close to Devil and looking almost like wings that lacked connecting limbs as a result. She soon rushed forward at Sovereign, a piece of two of the pillars break off and attack to her hands, becoming like two swords while the pillars including the two with detached pieces turning to aim and fire beams of dark light.

Sovereign formed a mana sphere and shot it at the blasts, cancelling out as both dark purple and white energy rained over the battlefield. Soon she swung her sword as Devil neared her, both collided with powerful force, causing many shockwaves from the recoil of the striking force. Shido was knocked back by this, rolling behind some sturdy debris, and right in time as soon their slashes got faster and much more fierce.

"Grr..." Sovereign grunted, getting annoyed.
"Mmm..." Devil hummed, feeling she needed to get more serious now.

Soon the speed and striking power became so fierce that the mana they both held began leaking out and bursting through the entire battlefield, becoming so violent and forceful that it felt like an earthquake was happening. The city nearby getting ripped asunder and quickly looking like, in Shido's eyes at least, that it would soon encompass the whole city, maybe enough that the shelters
could be breached open and put everyone inside in danger... his sisters included

Shido, who wasn't even sure how he wasn't dead by this point, finally felt like he had to stop this battle. Gathering his courage, he stood up out of hiding and did something no sane or at least cowardly man ever would.

"STOP THIS! PLEASE, THIS BATTLE HAS TO STOP!" Shido shouted at the top of his lungs, causing the two to stop mid-collision with each other. Sovereign stopped because it had astounded her that a human had the guts and foolishness to stop their battle, while Devil suddenly felt her body shaking.

"Shi...do?" Devil whispered, so quietly even she almost didn't hear it.

Devil suddenly jumped away, and screamed loudly as she held her head, surprising Sovereign who had never heard her mortal enemy shriek, much less use such a loud volume when she had almost always been quiet or outright silent. Soon Devil began charging all of Satan's feather pillars to their maximum power, while Sovereign held up Nahemah and charged all the power she could into it.

Shido stared at soon both unleashed their full power onto each other, the destructive force of their dark purple and dark white mana colliding so intensely that Shido soon saw the entire area flash, making him scream before he was suddenly flung away far.

"STOOOOOOOP!" Shido screamed before he landed, and the blacked out.

Inside some strange realm, or something of sorts that Shido was sure he might have been in, Shido could only see a large psychedelic flow of pink before him. He looked around and saw nothing else, not even a change of the flow with his movement... heck he couldn't see his own body!

"W-where am I?"

[That voice, could it be? Is that... is that really you Shido? No, it has to be you, I know it. Finally, we meet again.]

Shido was surprised, trying to find the voice he had heard. It sounded... well oddly he wasn't sure, it was like it was everything and nothing, so no clue to it being a man or woman's voice. Soon enough a mouth appears before him.

"Who are you, and... how do you know me?" Shido asked, curious to who this being was. The mouth before him didn't move, but he definitely heard it speak again.

[I'm sorry, but... right now, I'm so broken that I can't even tell you. I want to... but it's as if the information's absent and unknown, despite being fully only barely out of my reach.]

"So... you can't tell me anything?" Shido asked, somewhat saddened. The way this voice spoke... he felt it knew everything about him, a key to his past, and yet that key was too broken to unlock anything.

[I didn't say that, I can tell you some things. It's just what I truly want you to know most that I've lost the strength to tell you... I'm sorry, I truly am. However, that doesn't mean it's been lost forever. I simply need help gathering it again.]

"Wait, are you saying that I might be able to help you?" Shido asked, suddenly feeling really hopeful.
[Yes. Now, I need you to listen carefully, the small bit I can remember is this... I was someone familiar to both you and Mana. How I cannot recall, but that's not the important part. I only know one way to begin the process that will lead to my recovery, and the answers you seek. You must remember... remember the person most dear to you.]

"Huh, but isn't that Mana and Kotori?" Shido asked confused, who could be more important? He knew he had amnesia but he was pretty sure if anyone else like that existed, they would have tried to find him and Mana long ago.

[No. There's someone you held even more dear, after all... even though you had only been mere children, you told that you loved her, just like she loved you. Come on Shido, please remember... remember the one who completed your heart.]

"My... heart... GUAH!" Shido gasped, suddenly feeling an intense pain in his head as the entire pink field faded.

[...Remember...]

Devil was seen flying through part of Tenguu City as she neared a forest area, soon crashing into a forest. She panted heavily for a bit before holding her still veil covered voice and screaming loudly. A flash of white burning off of her body before it changes into the Raizen High uniform, the girl known as Devil lifts up her head to reveal... Origami Tobiichi!

"Shido... that was really you, but how?"

Origami continued panting, holding her head more as her eyes, currently with whitened pupils, slowly went back to normal ones as she blinked a few times. She soon managed to regulate her breaths and calm down. She soon hugged herself and curled onto the ground.

"Not again... please, I can't go through that again." Origami said as she teared up, the screams of a man and woman ringing across her head. "Mom... dad..."

A 7 year old Shido stood before a girl of the same age who had most of her facial features and hair shadowed from view, what could be seen though was that the girl smiling brightly and full of cheer.

"I got you a present, come on and open it." Shido said, holding out a box towards her.

"Really? OK, I'll open it!" The girl smiled, fully of energy as she takes the box and opens it, inside it was something she held in her hands, though Shido couldn't make out what he had been looking at.

"You actually bought it for me? I love it Shido! Thank you so much, you're the best!" The girl shouted cheerfully, hugging Shido close to her. Shido smiled as her pet her head, making her blush happily.

"Hey, Shido?"

"What is it?" Shido asked, curious what she wanted to ask him.

"What I want most in life is to protect you, so I can always hold you close like right now." The girl smiled sweetly, making Shido blush a bit.

"Your welcome, it only felt right. Consider it a promise from me too, cause I'm gonna make sure to
protect you too! We'll always be together, and when we get older, then we'll get married." Shido said, holding out his pinkie to her. "Promise?"

"Yeah!" The girl smiled as she nodded, wrapping her pinkie around his. "I'm happy, very happy Shido. I love you... let's always be together."

"Of course, we'll always be together..." Shido said, his voice disappearing as he attempted to say her name. Suddenly a white flash filled the area and blinded the sight entirely.

Shido soon woke up a short while later, and gasped as a result as he opened his eyes, holding a hand to his chest as he felt his heart beat like crazy.

"Wait, am I still alive? What happened here!?!" Shido asked himself, soon looking around.

He saw that the destruction was still present... but neither of the supernaturally powerful girls that he had seen fighting each other earlier were still there. Both of them had disappeared as if they had never existed. Shido could only stare at the mayhem they left behind, and soon decided he should probably leave the area while he was with his thoughts.

'That person I talked to, who was it... and how do they know me?' Shido wondered, recalling the being he saw only by their mouth, and how they wanted to talk with him about his past but seemed like they lost the ability to do so, like the words themselves were stolen.

That wasn't what had shaken him most though... right before her voice had faded away, there was that sudden flash of memory he had. A girl he recalled from a time when they were both 7, not too long after the time he and Mana had their memories disappear.

"...I was in love with her, I remember now." Shido said, finally realizing what that voice had meant. Long ago there was a girl he had been really close to, a childhood friend. Even though he was young he was already sure how he felt, like any mother feels to a father, he a bond that was meant to be.

"But... who is she?"

That's what probably shook Shido most, and made him feel so horrible. This girl, the friend he had fallen in love with, he didn't even remember her. Not her face, how she looked, or even her name... she was gone from his memories except for the fact she existed. He unconsciously cried as that thought lingered in his mind.

"I'm so sorry... please, where are you? Because I swear I'll find you again." Shido stated to himself, soon walking far enough he was out of the quake zone. After walking for a long time, Shido finally found himself at the barely touched Danny's and hoped to see Mana and Kotori there, but to his surprise however they were completely absent. What he did find on the other hand?

...Their phones, they were on the ground, and Shido checked his GPS again to see the location was the same as when he had first checked. Kotori and Mana had never stayed here, they had simply lost their phones. Now that however made him more worried, where were they?

"KOTORI! MANA! PLEASE, IF YOU CAN HERE ME SAY SOMETHING!"

Shido shouted as loud as he could, hoping for them to respond... but nothing. Shido's eyes shook with horror and worry, he needed to find them. He had to... or he'd never forgive himself. He soon began running around the city, and soon after he reached a viewpoint, he panted and stopped as he ran out of breath.
"Kotori... Mana... please, please be OK. I beg you." Shido said, crying over the viewpoint fence.

"...What strangeness are you doing Human?"

Suddenly Shido gasped as he recognized the sound of that voice, slowly turning to see who said it to him.

[And that was the moment where everything in my life changed... just one question, and it's a question I don't regret being asked.]

Flying unseen through the land above England, a red ship that had somehow made itself invisible was traveling through the night sky. Inside the ship was a man with whitened hair and lifeless looking eyes wearing a black business suit with a pale-yellow tie, he had some wrinkles showing despite looking young, he wasn't actually as young as he appeared.

Soon behind him, a woman who looked to be around her mid-twenties with pale blonde hair and purple suddenly walked into view behind him, she wore a woman's business suit and had her hair neatly tied up in a bun. She stopped in place and the man soon turned to face her.

"Tell me, how did they all do against the Spirits? Just what did they see when they encountered [Sovereign] and [Devil]?" The man asked, quite curious.

Spirits... extraordinary beings that are supposedly from a different dimension, that's what the mysterious girl and Origami were. Every time they come through to our world, the resulting jump between the two dimensions create the phenomenon known as the Spacequakes. In fact, for the longest time, this man before us knew exactly what caused the Spacequakes but didn't say anything to the world. Would it have stopped suffering, yes it would, is that what he wanted? ...Absolutely not.

"[Sovereign] completely decimated them, by the time [Devil] appeared they were forced to retreat completely. However, I believe we've finally gathered data on how they fight to finally begin their capture Ike." The woman answered, barely moving or changing her tone.

Ike, or rather Sir Isaac Ray Pelham Westcott, was the name of the man standing before her. He was the founder of the DEM corporation, short for Deus-Ex-Machine Industries, one of the few companies in the world that create one of the many inventions that used Spirit mana to create the technology that helped repair Spacequake damage and make the shelters that saved Humanity, the Realizer.

However, what the world didn't know was Westcott was not a kind or noble being, he was a monster, a man so cruel that the tortures he had managed to think up in his life required someone to have one of the most twisted, sickest and cruellest minds in existence. Why does he want the Spirits exactly? He essentially wants it to turn the world on its head, in the form of causing chaos, in other words... he wants the power to equal God but become the Devil against the world itself.

"Very good Ellen, while we've still failed to replicate it with our [Material A] project, both of them are perfect Inverse Forms. I'm still shocked how they were forced into such excellent inversions beyond our notice. Their powers have developed to their peak, ripe and fully ready for the taking." Westcott smirked.

He still remembered the day, the Spirit known as [Angel] inverted 5 years ago, he had never seen any Spirit go through such an incredible power up. She had only just appeared yet was ranked as a AAA-Rank Spirit, then somehow her power changed into something more and became [Devil], and
while she gained a more erratic rate of appearances her power became even higher, still yet to be measured, but he was sure it was an S-Rank.

Then only sometime after that, [Devil] encounter another Spirit known as [Princess], another AAA-Rank who had been confused and constantly attacked by his company's Wizards, forces meant to fight the Spirits and take their powers. He wasn't aware of the situation and the cause behind it at the moment, but apparently as a result of their meeting, Devil had succeeded in transforming her into [Sovereign] in the process.

"Now we simply need to wait for when their next Spacequakes arrive, then we can-" Ellen began, only for a beeping to distract them. Westcott taps the table before them before the hologram of a girl appeared. She had black to white gradient hair and a pair of golden eyes, wore a black colored outfit similar to a western nun's with a gold, cross-like symbol on the hip area.

"(Forgive me for the intrusion father, I have urgent news.)" The girl said, catching Westcott's attention.

This girl wasn't a real person, but a synthetic AI that ran the entire ship the two were currently on, the "Arbitel". Her name was Marina, and she was an AI that had been based on a Spirit that the DEM had captured and studied on, leading to her creation as a AI that was also a Spirit.

"What is it Marina? Sounds like news I'll enjoy." Westcott said, smirking heavily at the revelation that would await him.

"We made an error, it seems that the only Spirit that went Lost was [Devil]..." Marina said before smirking the same as he creator did. "...[Sovereign] is still in Tenguu City as we speak. I believe this chance is too perfect, no?"

Suddenly Westcott gave an extremely dark chuckle, how fortunate favor had turned for him. He was prepared to wait like he usually did, but it seems this time that wouldn't be the case. He turns to Ellen still smirking.

"Well do you hear that Ellen Mira Mathers, mankind's greatest Wizard? It seems you'll finally get to fight someone worthy for you to defeat. Plus, you've done little as of recent, I wouldn't want my most capable asset getting rusty."

"Of course, I've been waiting for a while now to truly cut loose. Now's finally the time." Ellen said, her stoic expression disappearing as she gave a bloodthirsty and battle hungry looking smirk. The true Ellen having a chance to finally show after so long without anything to do. "Marina, talk to the Arbitel's Captain and get everything prepared for us."

"As you wish." Marina said, holding her dress and bowing before she blinked out of view.

Marina soon appeared in the main console of the Arbitel's control room.

"Captain Paddington, request all nearby Wizard personal and Bandersnatch units to dock onto the Arbitel. We're going for a worthy hunt in Tenguu City soon." Marina said, giving an excited smirk before giggling.

"...What strangeness are you doing Human?" A familiar deep voice said.

Shido gasped at the sound of that voice and turned to see none other than the Spirit known as Sovereign, and she was staring right at him with Nahemah still in hand. Was she here to finish what she had started with him earlier? Did she still see him as an enemy? Hoping maybe he was wrong, he
decided to talk.

"It's you, you're that girl."

Shido quickly shifted to the side as she raised Nahemah and slashed at him, cutting part of the fence and some of the rock beneath it apart. Shido coughed as dust covered the area, and soon looked at the Inverse Spirit that was trying to apparently kill him.

"Wait just a minute, I don't wanna fight with you!" Shido shouted, hoping to make her stop as she threw another slash wave as he said that. "Please just listen to me!"

"...What's your name, and why are you following me?" Sovereign asked him. Shido stared in shock at that claim. Following her... no way, did his search end up having him unknowingly get close to her?

"No more time for games. If you do not answer me, then I will assume you as my enemy."

"Uh... m-my name is Shido Takamiya! I seriously don't have any reason to fight you!" Shido panicked as he flailed his arms around, Sovereign had no idea what he was doing with that. However, if it was meant to harm her, then something would have happened. With that, she tossed Nahemah aside and it vanished into mana.

'Oh good, looks like she's not seeing me as a- ' Shido began to think, but soon felt his head grabbed by her hand tightly. 'Crap, too soon!'

"You claimed that you didn't come to kill me and that you couldn't kill anyone. The fact you're here now proves that it was nothing but a lie. There's no other reason you'd be here you mongrel."

Sovereign stated, giving the same stern look, but to Shido? It was the sad one she had given being hidden under it.

"...Your face, how come you always look so sad?" Shido asked.

Sovereign suddenly flinched at that comment, she knew that wasn't the face she was making... and yet it was the one she always hid. How did this lowly human before her see right through her?

Standing in a destroyed section of a city in Tokyo, the Spirit known as [Princess] began slashing her blade against the DEM Wizards attacking her. Unlike her current appearance as [Sovereign], she had very long, dark-purple hair usually tied back with a ribbon of sorts, and matching dark purple eyes with white irises. She wore a black, cream, and pink colored armored ballgown outfit with a set of purple-and-cream plated armor which adorned her shoulders and waist.

The Dress was open at the back and made up into a black corset that exposed part of her cleavage. A two-layered, knee-length skirt which has a pink-to-white gradient. Her hair was tied back using a more gentle and accurate looking butterfly shaped ribbon. She also wore a pair of gauntlets which had petal-like cuffs, both sharing the same color scheme as her attire, as well as a pair of armored boots.

"[Princess] is weak, get her!" The leader Wizard shouted, and 'Princess' readies herself as they came. She was on the ground and panting weakly, bracing herself as the last few wizards began to rush her.

Suddenly from the sky, beams of light rained down and smashed into all of the Wizards, making them scream as it ate and ripped through their CR-Units and knocked them out, causing the Spirit before them to stare in shock at what had happened. She looked up as Origami flew down into view,
and while Princess couldn't see her face, she noticed her eyes glowing. This girl, she was just like her.

"I don't believe it, there's someone else like me." Princess said in a much higher pitched voice, suddenly feeling happy for the first time. Ever since she appeared, she's had no memories of who she was, or what she was, but every time she appeared on this world she was attacked by the Humans that appeared.

"Please, can you help me? I don't know who I am."

Princess kept her happy and hopefully appearance up initially... but then noticed Origami turn towards her and aim Satan's pillars at her, confusing her before they suddenly shot at her. She screamed in pain as her Astral Dress was torn heavily and she tumbled across the field and through a nearby building that collapsed over her.

"What are you doing... why are you attacking me?" Princess weakly asked in fear, she didn't understand what just happened. Origami was the same being as her, why was she attacking her, why was... why was she acting no differently from the humans? Origami slowly walked closer, Princess kept screaming in pain as Satan kept firing at her, each blast ripping parts of her Astral Dress off, soon two of the feather pillars detached a piece to become like swords on Origami's arm.

"No... please stop, please don't do this. Please!"

Origami ignored her and began raising her arm, preparing to kill the Spirit begging for her life before her.

'Please stop, don't kill me! I'll do whatever you want me to! I don't care what... just promise me... swear to me you'll spare my life... please... don't do this... I beg of you! I... I don't wanna die!' Princess thought as the fear of death overwhelmed her.

Origami prepared to slash down, and at that moment her eyes widened as she screams louder than she ever had in her entire life. Right as Origami was about to hit her, Princess' purple colored mana suddenly changed into a dark purple. She rose into the air, her Astral Dress vanishes and her eyes turn into two purple pools of darkness, an empty look on her face before some kind of dark spirit power forms a hand that soon grabbed her.

"This is..." Origami muttered, feeling something familiar from this.

Soon the power flooded out everywhere across the city, like a cloud of smog slowly spreading out from a containment area. When it cleared up, Origami saw Princess had changed, she was now the Inverse Spirit known today as Sovereign.

"You tried to kill me... now I'll be paying you in full." Sovereign claimed in the voice Shido was more familiar with, giving a stern face... only the darkness of her power blinding out the light hiding the tears her eyes had been shedding.

"...You bastard, are you trying to trick me? If that's the case I'll destroy you so not even dust or memory remain!" Sovereign stated, this human was pushing her to the point she felt that for once, using her Demon King to kill a human would not be a waste. Shido grunts and makes a serious face.

"I'm not trying to do anything, and it's true! I have no reason to kill you or even just hurt you!" Shido shouted.

"Quit lying!" Sovereign shouted angrily. "Every human has tried to kill me, even one of my own
kind tried to murder me even when I begged her to not to! I'm like this now because of her! This whole world just wants me dead, and I won't lose to it!"

"I swear that's not true!" Shido replied with an equal shout.

"Why else would you come here then!?" Sovereign yelled, now trying to just prove she was right in her rage.

"I was looking for my little sisters, I have no idea where they are or if they're OK!" Shido shouted, hoping that convinced her. She simply swiped her hand, destroying the fence and anything that could now keep Shido from falling from a long and possibly near-fatal drop.

"I'm in no mood to joke around." Sovereign spoke venomously, and Shido grunted more before he finally had it with her inability to trust him. So, he was gonna make her see it and not even give her a chance to respond.

"Neither am I! If you want proof then I'll talk to you, I don't even care what it's about! Hell, you can just ignore me if you wanted to!" Shido shouted, Sovereign tried to reply but was stopped as he kept going without any fear. Because of one thought in his mind.

-I won't let you make that face again!-

"But know this, I'm not like every other human!" Shido continued...

-I won't let you make that face again!-

"Because... because even if the entire world rejects, that won't change the fact that I accept you!"

Sovereign's eyes suddenly widen, for the first time since Shido had met this girl, she had actually been surprised and gone completely speechless. Her eyes slightly shake, and he waits a bit for her reaction... she suddenly turned around for a bit.

'What is this feeling, why... why do I not feel angry? Or any hate, or even sorrow? Why do I... believe him?' Sovereign though as she turned back to him, Shido noticing her face no longer looking calm like before.

"You said your name was 'Shido' right, and you're being serious?" Sovereign asked, Shido's face widened a bit. He had gotten through to her... or at least he was making progress, he wasn't completely sure.

"I am." Shido replied, making Sovereign scratch her head. Turning and blushing a bit like a tsundere she faced him up close.

"Fine, I'll acknowledged you. Be grateful for that servant." Sovereign replied haughtily.

"My name is Shi-"

Shido was quickly shut up by Sovereign holding up a mana sphere charging on her finger to his face.

"...Did I give you permission to talk back to me servant?" Sovereign asked, Shido raised his hands and she dispelled it. Definitely only making progress if she kept calling him servant despite knowing his name.

"Oh yeah, what is your name? I only known you by that Sovereign title they keep using." Shido asked.
Sovereign suddenly went wide eyed, going completely quiet in response to that. Since she had appeared she was only called either [Princess] by humans in her prior form, and [Sovereign] in this one. Plus, with her lack of memories...

"I... have no such thing. I don't even know who I am."

Shido gasped at that, she didn't even have a name? That was awful. Worse, it wasn't even right for someone to lack a name, lack an identity. He knew how close to that he felt when he and Mana lost their memories and their names were the only thing that they really had left.

"...Then how about I give you a name?" Shido said, surprising Sovereign a bit. He would give her a name? She didn't want to show it, but... that made her happy. "How about... Mio?"

"Mio? Meh, but... I guess it'll do." Mio replied, as much as she felt the particular name was bland, at least she had a name now and she'd be nice enough to use it till she remembered her real one. That's when Shido noticed something he had never seen on her, a smile. "What, something on my face?"

"...You smiled."

Mio gasped at that, she had done what? She had never smiled since she had come to this world. Why was it that this human had changed her so much? He said he'd accept her, talked to her, didn't attack her, and then he gave her a name.

Shido Takamiya... just who was this boy?

"So, Mio... what can you tell me about yourself?" Shido asked.

"Well... I know I'm not a Human, at least I think I'm not. The noisy flying people, or Mecha Mecha squad as I call them, once referred to me as a 'Spirit'. I believe it was about only three month ago when I appeared out of nowhere in this world. I do think I have more memories, but they've become fuzzy, distorted. Regardless I was constantly attacked for one of those months." Mio began, recalling what she could.

The sight of Origami's Inverse Form staring at her entered her mind.

"Then that other girl, someone like me, attacked the Mecha Mecha Squad the one time. Back then I was called [Princess] before I... well, let's just say I didn't always wear black. I thought she might be someone to trust, but she tried to kill me, and then a dark power swallowed me, like my hope turning to despair reversed my entire being. After that point, I just stopped caring and attacked everyone."

Shido listened closely, and now it began to make sense why she had been so violent before. She had only known the act of defending herself from Humans who kept attacking her and was in a sense betrayed by one of her own kind. Not to mention that she was telling the truth about when she first appeared, originally Class-S quakes were always white in color...

'Wait a second, the colors of the quakes. Before Mio came we didn't have purple colored quakes. If each quake is a different color and that 'Devil' spirit came from white ones then...'

 Soon a red demon like silhouette, a blue silhouette with bunny ears, a black Gothic Lolita silhouette with uneven twin tails, two identical orange silhouettes, a light indigo silhouette with an idol dress, a yellow silhouette with a Chinese hair theme, a gray nun silhouette, a green witch like silhouette and finally a pink silhouette with no direct shape all appeared on a background within Shido's mind, soon a white and purple silhouette appear before taking Mio and Origami's shapes.

'No way, does that mean there's someone that causes each color of quake? That means it's not just...
Mio and that other girl, not to mention if people have realized they know about the quakes... why is that they're being kept a secret? Shido thought, his eyes shaking. Mio soon flicked his forehead.

"Don't ignore me, what were you doing there?" Mio asked, suddenly annoyed he had been ignoring her.

"Sorry, Mio... do you know about Spacequakes?" Shido asked, but Mio just tilted her head so he took it as a no. It's possible that she knew she damaged the world when she came into it but not how she did. "Well recall the white explosion that other Spirit made?"

"I do, so I'm guessing that's a Spacequake?" Mio asked.

"Yeah, before I saw you the first time, I just avoided a purple one. That was the one you created. Well... across the world there have been others that each have a different color. You've never seen anyone else like you other than the girl who made the white Spacequake?"

Mio blinked at that, she had honestly thought she and Devil were the only two of their kind. Why was it they never met them? Better yet, why was it that she and Devil always seemed to encounter each other in the same locations?

More than that, she was shocked she had been causing all that damage she saw. She had always assumed the world was already so damaged and broken... and yet after the fight she noticed a lot more intact. Was she, no, where her and the other Spirits all the ones behind this devastation?

"...Servant, I want you to show more of this city. I want to see what you humans are like." Mio demanded, catching Shido by surprise. "Come on, we're doing this. NOW!"

"O-OK! OK! Although... you might change into something else. I mean wouldn't you be recognized in that outfit?" Shido replied, pointing to her Astral Dress. Mio thought a bit and soon snapped her fingers as something came to mind.

She raised her hand, and soon she changed into an outfit she noticed someone wearing while she had been avoiding human contact. Shido watched as her Astral Dress glows and becomes a black long sleeved shirt, a purple skirt with a ruffled black trim at the end, purple and black stripped calf high socks and a pair of black shoes.

"W-whoa... you look good in that." Shido said, blushing slightly. That quickly ended when Mio quickly grabbed his wright, very tightly, and he winced in pain from it.

"Good, now come on."

Shido cried out in pure agony as Mio tightly dragged him along somewhere, the latter either ignoring or not caring about his pain.

Meanwhile the Arbitel began flying closer and closer to Tenguu City, still hidden and invisible to the world as it got closer to its target destination. Westcott looked over all the Bandersnatch units they had gathered, all looking to be top of the line and in mint condition.

"Marina, how is the construction of the Jabberwocky going at the moment?" Westcott asked, causing Marina to form from another hologram projector built into part of the wall.

"Forgive me father, but development on the project is still incomplete. We will not be able to deploy them here. Even if we did, the Bandersnatch are a better fit due to [Sovereign]'s higher strength and power, their slower speed would give them a disadvantage." Marina answered, Westcott shrugged
playfully.

"Oh? Well, I guess not every bit of coal can become a diamond. What about Artemisia and Jessica? Were they able to come, or are they still on their other assignments right now?" Westcott said before asking another question.

"Unfortunately, both are still returning due to their lack of success with chasing [Nightmare] and [Sister], it's quite likely by the time we finished that Ellen will have already managed to succeed on her own. Besides, isn't it more fun for a single wizard to bring her to her knees?" Marina asked, making the two of them both give their shared dark laugh together.

"Yes, to give no mercy with three just doesn't shine the same was as it would with just one person." Westcott said, smiling as the thought of his dream finally beginning to resume came to his mind. "Finally... after 30 years, I'll begin overcoming that woman's decisions to defy and delay me."

Soon at that moment, Ellen walked in her special Wiring-Suit and CR-Unit, Pendragon. The most powerful Combat Realizer Unit that the DEM had managed to create to date.

"I'm ready, how much longer until we arrive?" Ellen asked, barely able to hold her desire to fight.

"Estimations until our arrival are about another 3 hours once nightfall comes, the perfect timing for us to strike without suspicion to the general public, we just gotta force a quake alarm and it'll be easy pickings." Marina answered, smirking darkly at the thought of what they'd do to Mio after completely overwhelming her.

"Captain Paddington, status on the Arbitel's systems, check log #25."

"All systems green, maintenance registered at optimal capacity. All checks are solids. The Arbitel's fully ready to engage or prepare for a worst-case scenario." James Paddington, the ship's captain, answered.

"Good, and who knows... maybe we might just attract [Devil] during the chaos. Regardless of if she appears, we'll be walking away with the powers of an Inverse Spirit as of today." Westcott said, giving his usual expression as he looked towards the window.

'Time for you to see how I make my first move to destroy all you did to hold me back.'

Shido was staring at Mio with an odd look plastered on his face, she suddenly saw a bakery and all the bread inside of it and next thing he knew, she was planting her face on the glass while breathing heavily as she stared at it.

"Servant, I demand you gather me one of everything in this establishment!" Mio shouted as she turned to him, her ribbon somehow moving on its own. Shido paled as she said that. He looked at his wallet and clearly expected that he'd need to give it a funeral when this was all over. He walked inside and soon purchased one of everything before watching Mio devour it all in seconds.

"AMAZING!" Mio screamed to the surprise of everyone, licking her finger clean of the crumbs. Shido embarrassed as everyone stared at them. "Servant, you'll get me one of every edible item that we come across. Is that clear?"

"Y-yeah... crystal." Shido said, chuckling oddly as he swore people were whispering about him being called a servant. 'I wonder what's more likely to kill me? Her anger, or my embarrassment?'

As they walked around, Mio ended up forcing Shido to buy and then quickly devour into her
stomach a few meat skewers, a large ice cream cone, steamed pork buns, takoyaki, shaved ice, crepes, yakisoba, rice cakes, spaghetti, pork cutlets, fried shrimp, cake, a sushi roll, pizza, a giant burger, ramen and that's when Shido finally lost track of things. How much could this girl eat!?

"Servant this way!" Mio shouted, and Shido quickly began running. Catching the attention of the Talkative Trio.

"Hey guys, isn't that girl..." Ai began to say, for once the other two simply nodded. The lack of responses was actually kinda creepy, in fact had Shido heard it he might have been suspicious about it.

Soon enough they had reached the arcade area, and Mio stared at the machines.

"Shido, did you somehow take me into the secret base of the Mecha Mecha Squad?" Mio asked, Shido blinked as he swore her whitened pupils went red for a brief moment. Soon he shook his head no.

"No, it's just an arcade. You play games and such here."

Mio blinks before she gets a fierce glint in her eye, and Shido expected it to be normal at first. Mio began with a game where she had to punch nodes and soon her last punch shattered the game machine to everyone's surprise. Shido went white in worry.

'I'm dead if we have to pay for these.' Shido thought. Needless to say, Shido jinxed himself as every game that Mio played afterwards let to her somehow breaking the machine in some manner. First a war machine game, then a motorcycle race, and then a jet fighting game, followed by a bomb squirting game, a racing game and ending with a zombie shooting game which she broke after throwing something at it.

"WILL YOU PLEASE STOP THAT!?!" Shido panicked.

"Why? I beat the game servant, so I win." Mio said, neither one realizing someone had replaced the broken machines in advance. Shido sighed and takes her over to a crane game. "A claw grabbing? Hah, no need!"

Shido freaks as she punches the booth with bread shaped pillows inside, luckily, she didn't break it and just knocked a pillow into prize area. Shido sighs in relief as she takes it and then tosses it into his arms, and he sweatdrops as he realizes he had to carry it, he didn't seem to mind that much. Despite the oddities of the... I guess it was a date, Mio was actually having fun.

...And that made what would about to happen next all the more tragic.

So, some of you are probably gonna ask me this, why did I decide to have Shido name Tohka (for the time being that is) as Mio? Before Vol 16, it was a popular theory that Mio might be Tohka's actual name and that she and Shido actually knew each other before he lost his memories. In this story, despite that theory got debunked, I'm gonna reverse and make Tohka Yatogami her real name.

As for Origami's Inverse Astral Dress? I decided for this fanfic, it and her original Astral Dress will have different designs. Mainly because for one, her canon Inverse Astral Dress... I have no idea how to properly describe that outfit, I mean it's barely anything besides the bottom half.
The reason why Tohka ended up undergoing an Inversion because of the fact that she's been fighting ever since she first appeared on Earth based on what she remembers, so seeing Origami who she knew wasn't a Human gave her hope. She thought if they were the same, they would understand each other, but the fact Origami trying to kill her like everyone else and nearly succeeded... she gained hope that reversed into despair in moments.

The AST didn't show up, but I assure you that they will. That's all I can say without spoiling something that will start as of the second arc. As you can see, I also gave Tohka's Inverse form its own code name, I figured that Origami shouldn't be the only Spirit to have one for both her forms. While I can't guarantee that all of the Spirits' Inverse forms will appear in the story, here's what everyone's Inverse code names are in case they do appear:

- Origami - Devil
- Nia - Prophet
- Kurumi - Paradox
- Yoshino - Marionette
- Kotori - Phoenix
- Mukuro - Supernova
- Natsumi - Sorceress
- Kaguya and Yuzuru - Pandemonium
- Miku - Siren
- Tohka - Sovereign
I hope you're all ready for this, because... uh... hold on. *thinks* What's the saying I'm looking for? *thinks more and then gasps* Ah, now I remember! All of hell is about to break lose in this chapter! The DEM is going to begin their attack and Shido has to somehow go save Tohka from them... and he has to do so all on his own. Yeah, you heard me right, all the Wizards, the Bandersnatch, and even Ellen herself. Shido has to fight every single one of them by himself and win, he's literally facing what's the closest to impossible odds right now.

Also after a long absence, and having no mentions since the very beginning, I'm happy to tell you all that Kotori and Mana are finally going to be returning into focus since their disappearance and they'll finally have what happened with them since Shido found their phones on the ground near Danny’s explained, while Ratatoskr's existence finally gets revealed to Shido. I think you'll all be surprised by some of the members I've added into the organization in this story.

Also, get some tissues ready before you continue reading, because I'm pretty sure what I've written here is about to hit you all in the possible feels it can around the last few scenes in this chapter.

Chapter 3, S1: Tohka Return, Part 2

Finished up their fun at the arcade, Shido and Mio had ended up back at the viewpoint area, the Inverse Spirit currently staring at the now setting sun. She watched as some trains passed by the tracks and smiled at the sight. She wouldn't admit it to Shido just like not using his name, but... she had fun.

"So how was today Mio?" Shido asked, still holding her pillow.

"It was... more than I expected it to be. It wasn't a wasteland, no one tried to kill me, and most of all... I realize why they try to kill me now. I thought I was the victim, but I'm not, people don't understand me because my presence keeps ruining this world." Mio answers, making Shido gasp before he tries to say something, but Mio shakes her head.

"Don't try to fudge it servant, I know what I've seen. Besides... now I know how to not end up like her."

"Huh?" Shido wondered.

"That other girl, the one like me... she's already fallen too deep. I can try to clear this misunderstanding but it may not happen, but at least now I know I'm not a monster. That's all that matters to me." Mio replied, making Shido stare.

"You can't make it sound like that's it for you Mio! There has to be a way you can live in this world, and not just you either! Devil, and all the others... they all have a right to live here too!" Shido shouts, Mio stares at him in shock. As she did she suddenly sensed something and closed her eyes before she opened them again, a shadow over the top half of her face.

"...You should learn to watch your tongue servant, do you realize that fact!?" Mio said boldly, Shido surprised by her bluntness. He was about to reach out to her when... "Adonai Melek!"
Shido was knocked back by a bolt of dark purple mana as Mio's Astral Dress reformed around, and she soon began floating into the air.

"Mio!" Shido shouted.

"Stand down Servant, you're a mere mongrel. I'm only going to tolerate Humans like you I know have no knowledge of me. I don't seek to be accepted. So... either stay out of my way, or you will be a blood stain on Nahemah next we meet." Mio said coldly, Shido shook his head as he refused to believe what he was seeing. He tried to reach her as he prepared mana to boost his jumping skills when...

"Know your limits!" Mio fired a mana sphere at him, and Shido felt it knock him off the viewpoint cliff while shredding the bread pillow she had won. Mio became too far away for him to properly see as he ended up crashing into some trees and blacking out.

Mio pants after what she did, and after it fully sunk in... she gained a horrid look on her face. She knew what she had chosen to do what she had, but that didn't mean she enjoyed having to have done the act in the first place.

She soon walked to the punctured bread pillow, staring sadly and longingly at the damage, almost as if it represented the pain she gave herself. Why did she do it, she tried to lie to herself and say she didn't know, or that she still believed Shido had been trying to trick her from the start... but those would be lies. She knew danger was coming, and Shido would throw himself into it, she couldn't let him do that.

"I honestly believed that... maybe with you here, things would change. It's so strange, I've only known you for this one day, but it's been like I knew you before that. My servant, when you were by my side, I felt like... I could do anything I set my mind to." Mio began, soon beginning to shake as tears began to stream down her face for the first time since she had undergone her Inversion.

"But it's no use, what I felt coming... if you were here with me you'd just end up dying. You don't have the right to throw your life away for my sake! So, I had no choice, you must be gone from my life so yours doesn't end! Just like before, I must stay on my own, even if the whole world rejects me!"

Mio raises her hand, and suddenly a couple of familiar ripples form across the city, and in response to their appearance, the Spacequake alarm goes off across most of the city. Everyone quickly to rush to evacuate for what had been the third time that day. Mio's hair covers her eyes before she raised her head, she would fight this next battle... and she'd do it alone, so no one else would have to suffer because of her choices.

"I know you can hear me..." Mio suddenly said, noticing the sun finally begin to sink over the horizon and the night begin to start.

Suddenly the Arbitel gets warnings of a Spacequake incoming, catching the interest of Westcott.

"Interesting, do I mean to take this as [Devil] returning?" Westcott ask, turning to Marina who had walked into view in an android body she used under special circumstances. Marina's eyes glow and detect they were Mio's readings.

"Not even close, it seems that [Sovereign] is creating Spacequake signs. I wonder... it sounds odd, but could it possible she's sensed our approach?" Marina answered, before questioning the choice of the Inverse Spirit's actions.
At that moment, the Arbitel's screen suddenly picks up on Mio directly, while she didn't see them she was on the screen as if she saw them directly. She frowned a bit as the sun began setting.

"I know you can hear me..." Mio coldly said. "...So, may I ask why you've come here?"

Westcott suddenly smirked, he waves towards the others so they'd move to the side as he walks closer to speak with her directly. For some reason, she felt his presence as an illusion in front of where she was standing, almost like he had been touched by a Spirit, but in a negative manner that made him... well, she best described it as being less human than she was.

"I'm excited to finally meet you [Sovereign], I'm Isaac Westcott, the managing director of DEM Industries, or perhaps you know it as Deus-Ex-Machina Industries?" Westcott says as he introduces himself, Mio only gives a near silent growl at him.

"Strange, I wonder why you already don't like me? True most hate me eventually, but that was surprisingly fast."

"The name is Mio, not Sovereign. So, are you the one behind the Mecha Mecha Squads attacks on me? What exactly do you want." Mio asked coldly, Westcott simply ignoring her name. He didn't care for a Spirit having an identity, to him she was only [Sovereign].

"Oh, so is that what you call the Wizards I send after you on occasion? A good question though, the answer's quite simple. I want to harness the powers you have as a Spirit. Once I do, I'll use them to unleash complete chaos." Westcott says, giving a cruel smirk.

"...You sick bastard, I should have known. The only human I should have ever worried about is you. You're the very thing I thought all humans represent." Mio sneered, this man couldn't be human anymore. He was just a shell that had the same look as one.

"Unfortunately for you, I have reason to focus on you and another Spirit first because aside from the both of you... the powers of all other Spirits are just too stable." Mio's eyes widened slightly as Westcott said that.

"Compared to what you have, they won't do me good unless I discover what was the perfect trigger that pushed you towards the despair that made you Inverse."

"What do you mean?" Mio asked, confused by what he meant by 'Inverse' exactly. Westcott soon chuckles as he remembers his fight from 30 years ago with a certain pink haired spirit and the result.

"You don't know? It's simple, that power is your true form from the Dimension your kind came from. I still remember making contact to it, and the primordial Spirit there at the time. I wanted her power... but she didn't like my ideas, left me in this decrepit husk of my former self. If I want what I'm after, I need you all as you are in this state. Though I still don't know how to make it happen perfectly. What is it that causes it?"

Mio sweated a bit, but didn't let it show.

"Let's see... what did I try on that one Spirit we had before she managed to get away? Remind me Marina?" Westcott said as he turned to the AI.

"There was physical pain, from the skin down to their very bones. Then extreme electric shocks. We then deprived her of all oxygen. We thought of removing her fingernails and toenails after." Marina listed off, making Mio gasped silently at the sick torturous ideas one of her own had to experience.

"I even think you tried destroying her dignity as a woman, and attempted to find a friend or lover of
hers. Too bad she didn't remember if she did, unfortunately we ended up killing her, all I remember is that she had been the one who originally had [Diva's] powers. Such a shame interference kept us from keeping her Sephira Crystal."

Mio sweated a bit, what the hell was wrong with these people.

"Actually sir, I believe I've found the clue. Recall how she underwent inversion due to meeting [Devil]? There's never been an incident where two different Spirits met with one another until then, imagine how [Sovereign] felt to meet another of her own kind and expect someone to trust?" Ellen began, making Mio's eyes shake.

"Ah, struck a nerve I see. Then this theory of mine must be correct then? You gained hope from meeting [Devil], but she ended up trying to kill you as well only moments after you expected a friend. Perhaps she even managed to actually push you near the point of death? The sudden shift of hope to despair, that's most likely what did it."

Westcott gives a cruel smirk, and Marina gets a giddy smile and giggles while Mio's eyes shake at how easily Ellen had figured out her story, she tried to not respond to make it sound like she was wrong... but it was a doomed effort.

"A strong sudden shift from hope to despair, VERY interesting. I think we now have a few ways to twist the Spirits' hands closer into ours now. It won't be long before we invert all of them." Westcott said, and Mio finally snapped.

"YOU SCUM! I won't let you do that, I'll take all of you out before you ever do that! Your dream is going to die today!" Mio screamed, her powers flaring around her.

"I look forward to it, it's time to see how you've inherited one of the ten pieces of 'her' power." Westcott smirks, actually looking forward to what Mio will offer in her attempts to resist. After all, it was more fun when they struggled in vain than if they surrendered.

Mana's eyes soon scrunch as she begins to regain consciousness, she looks around and realizes she's in some kind of medical room, though it looked like it was more of a laboratory area than a place to treat the sick or injured. She got up and soon noticed Kotori rubbing her eyes as she woke up on another bed.

"Kotori, where are we?" Mana asked.

"I don't know, I already remember things got crazy when we had to head for the shelters and... I think we blacked out. We should call Shido to let him know we're fine." Kotori said, however when she went to grab her phone she saw it was missing. "AH! My phone, it's gone!"

Mana feels around and Kotori sees her pale, she gives a look and Mana nods to confirm she also doesn't have her phone. The two little sisters both sweat in worry as they were sure that meant Shido was panicking. In fact, they didn't know what time it was.

"Wow, you two sure are in a panic."

"Yeah, losing phones isn't enough of a problem to get you all worried over."

"That's so lame."

The two suddenly blink as they heard those voices, and turned to see a familiar trio of girls looking at them.
"Shido's fine if you ask, but right now I think we've got something more important you should know about." Ai replied, shocking the two girls even further.

The night sky over Tenguu City was quiet as the Spacequake alarm had ended yet everyone was kept locked up in the shelters like it was still going for one reason alone... the DEM warship Arbitel was going to be arriving soon, and the Inverse Spirit Mio, all by herself, would be fighting them off as they would do all in their power to capture her and use the power she had for her own game.

"Shido... you might not be here right now, but please lend me your strength." Mio said to herself, soon holding out her hand as a nearby clock rung as it became 7 PM.

"NAHEMAH!"

A dust tornado dropped the silver throne into view, and soon it flipped upside down as Mio grabbed the sword's handle and unsheathed it, the throne disappearing afterwards until Mio needed it.

"Even if my life ends today, I will not lose to these bastards!" Mio said, making a determined face.

Right as she said that, the sight of a ship flying overhead as it removes its invisibility and reveals its red plated structure. Multiple areas on the ship open up and soon a swarm of monstrous looking robots with claws and a single eye form, taking their shoulders conjoined as they flew through the sky, some that land disconnect them.

Mio looks as the Bandersnatch units surround the area, and in an instant, they all begin to charge at her with strong speed and ferocity. Using her free hand, she forms a sphere of her spirit mana and then fires it, it starts as a single sphere but then spreads into multiple smaller ones that cute through most of the nearby Bandersnatch.

"Fall to my strength!" Mio shouted, spinning around and creating a strong slash wave that cut through even more of the Bandersnatch. She soon jumps into the air and unleashes a flurry of slash waves that cut through the flying Bandersnatch units. Mio smirked thinking she got their best, but suddenly thousands more units of Bandersnatch suddenly appear to her shock.

"You've gotta be freaking kidding me!"

Soon Mio was suddenly hit by a beam from behind, and knocked around a bit from the result. She soon noticed a bunch of DEM wizards attacking her, Mio rose her sword and screams loudly creating a burst of power that spread everyone apart.

As she breathes out to recover from the sudden shock of having been caught off guard, she looked around and suddenly noticed a particular Wizard on the ground with pale blonde hair. Mio noticed she felt more dangerous, especially as Westcott was by her side.

"Well played [Sovereign], your power is truly impressive. Your time while inverted has been short but you've already managed to master your abilities. You'll be a fine match for Ellen, so you'd like to get start now?" Westcott asked, looking at his trusty number two and secretary who gave a fierce look.

"I'm ready." Ellen said, brandishing her special sword, the laser blade "Caledfwlch". She quickly rushed directly at Mio with all her speed and strength.

Westcott watched with a hand to his head to hold down his hair from blowing into his eyes, watching as lights of orange and purple cross between the two as their swords constantly clash and collide with one another. Ellen takes a brief moment to step back and charge again, however Mio
was still able to counter all her sword strikes.

"Fine!" Ellen said, pissed off at the fact she felt Mio was mocking her. Mio soon jumped to dodge a leg sweep Ellen attempted, but at that moment part of Ellen's Pendragon suitshifted and revealed itself to be a hybrid of a spear and a cannon, and in this case, she was using the latter ability.

"Go Rhongomiant!"

Suddenly a giant yellow laser blast struck at Mio, and soon it hits her hard, destroying any Bandersnatch that managed to get in the way while impressing the nearby Wizards with the power behind the cannon's blast. Seeing the smoke, she smirked triumphantly alongside Westcott, even if she died, the fact she was Inverted meant her Sephira Crystal was still a Qlipha Crystal and would suit their needs. However...

"I see, so you're not all talk."

The two of them looked surprised and saw Mio swing Nahemah to clear the smoke, only slight damage had happened to her Astral Dress. However, her hair now flowed freely as her ribbon had been undone and was now flying through the sky, sparkling as it began changing shape as it began blowing to a certain area. She raised Nahemah into the air again.

"I won't let you!" Ellen shouted, flying at her. However, it did nothing as Caledfwlch was blocked by Mio's free hand and soon swung her Demon King towards... Westcott! The man looked surprised, but luckily Ellen flew down and took some of the hit before using her territory to protect him.

"Thanks for the save Ellen, so be honest. How strong would you say she is?" Westcott asked, curious how accurate his guess had been.

"You once said your opinion of her strength compared to her AAA-Rank when she was Princess had increased to an S-Rank after her inversion, I disagree with that claim. In truth, she must be at least a SS-Rank at this point." Ellen said, begrudgingly admitting that this Spirit had been more difficult than she had expected.

It wasn't completely her fault though, she had never fought a Spirit with more power than Nightmare, so the DEM never expected to encounter a more power Spirit unless the First Spirit were to somehow return. The Pendragon was a strong CR-Unit, but hadn't been made for this situation.

"So admittedly I'm at a slight disadvantage against this spirit."

"I see, still... strength like this proves how much it'll be worth the desire of claiming her power as our own. Do you think you can still win?" Westcott replied, confident that Ellen was still capable.

"I'm not sure, not on my own at least. I won't get anywhere if I simply keep using my Rhongomiant over and over." Ellen answered, she didn't like the fact she needed any aid to fight a Spirit. However, her and Westcott's dream was standing before them. She wouldn't let her pride deny it, plus she could accept she may be a bit rusty for having not fought in a while.

"As loathe as I am to admit it, I will need the aid of the Bandersnatch if we're to beat this spirit. Marina, can you focus them all onto her?"

"Sure thing. I'd really love to see some carnage as she tries to resist everything we have." Marina said, smirking as she sat onto a chair and integrated with the ship. "Command, link all systems to the Marina control program now."
"YES MA'AM!" The entire control room staff shouted.

"Activate the Ashcroft Beta realizers from numbers 1 through 10, send all the created magic power to the Bandersnatch!" James shouted, some of the nearby staff nodded as they did so. Marina's eyes beginning to glow as she links to the systems, and gives a cruel smirk as she prepared to go all out.

Mio looked around as Ellen prepared herself in the air again, and soon noticed the soon empowered Bandersnatch units and the other DEM Wizards surround her. She gave a forceful look at them all as she held Nahemah with both hands. Ready to fight what was basically a war.

Shido feels himself in the strange pink realm again, the mouth of his unknown friend appearing before him.

[Shido, are you alright?]

"Yeah... at least mostly, is this gonna be a thing where we talk when I get conked out?" Shido asked.

[I apologize about that, truth is I can talk to you beyond that, but the time I should is something else. As you can't physically move it felt best to wait until moments like this. At least for the present situation we're facing.]

"I guess that's fair, although... Mio, I thought I had managed to reach her. Yet she pushed me away so easily, I think all I've done is force her into solitude." Shido said solemnly, recalling his fall and how she caused it. Most of all destroying the pillow she had won.

[You don't get it, do you Shido? She didn't push you away because you forced her to solitude. She pushed you away... because she understood you too well and because she expected something.]

Shido blinks, confused by what his mystery friend meant.

"What do you mean?" Shido asked, what did they mean about Mio's actions?

[She was protecting you, she sensed danger that was after her. She knew you'd risk yourself. You became something important to her, that she wanted to hold on tight, so she did what she did so you wouldn't walk into the danger ahead. Take a look through my eyes.]

Shido soon appeared by Mio after she shot him off the cliff, and she saw her sad face and her tears. Even how upset she was for ruining the pillow she had won and had him carry.

"Mio... she wanted to keep me safe, how could I have been so blind? But how was she willing to protect me so easily?" Shido wondered, how could Mio already be that close to him?

[Don't you remember what I told you Shido? You must remember... remember the person most dear to you.]

"Yeah, so you're saying it's a similar case? Has she become that important to me? I thought you meant about who I... I..." Shido began, soon holding his head in pain. The image of that friend who had her face and name blocked off from his memories burned his head as he thought of it.

"But who is it!? Why can't I remember her, please... I need to know! Who did I make that promise to?"
Shido’s mystery friend didn’t have her face visible, but she was clearly saddened by Shido’s reaction and wish she had more ways to help. As she thought that, she suddenly noticed something, and soon Shido felt himself regain consciousness, but moments after he did...

[It looks like the winds have heeded your wish Shido, look up.]

Shido blinks before he looks up, the sight of Mio's ribbon which had fully changed back into its original form after it's long flight through the wind. The moment Shido held it and looked at it... his eyes suddenly widened.

"This... this is!" Shido gasped, suddenly feeling part of his mind shatter apart. Not because it had just been broken, but because of something more, something he had forgotten had finally been remembered. In his mind the memory from before began to surface.

Shido found himself within the memory as he watched his younger self and the girl whose appearance was still hidden.

"Hey, Shido?"

"What is it?" Shido asked, curious what she wanted to ask him.

"What I want most in life is to protect you, so I can always hold you close like right now." The girl smiled sweetly, making Shido blush a bit.

"Your welcome, it only felt right. Consider it a promise from me too, cause I'm gonna make sure to protect you too! We'll always be together, and when we get older, then we'll get married." Shido said, holding out his pinkie to her. "Promise?"

"Yeah!" The girl smiled as she nodded, wrapping her pinkie around his. "I'm happy, very happy Shido. I love you... let's always be together."

"I loved her, I... I need to see her again, I have to! I have to keep my promise! I beg of you... let me remember her!" Shido shouted, the ribbon in his hand glowing brightly. He was suddenly surprised as it began shining towards the darkness covering the girl.

"Of course, we'll always be together..." Shido began, looking at her shadowed face. The light hit her figure straight on, and suddenly the hidden gift in her revealed itself to be the ribbon he was holding in his hand in right now! Soon the shadows around the girl broke, revealing what looked like Mio if she was seven, but more like her previous form as [Princess], the present Shido’s eyes shook at the sight.

"...Tohka." Shido finished, the girl now revealed as Tohka gave a large opened mouth smile.

"Toh...ka?" Shido said quietly, and soon his eyes shrank as he remembered two words.

Shido gasps as he becomes truly focused into reality again, and suddenly he connects all the dots he had just seen.

"Tohka Yatogami... that's the name of my friend, my best friend. Not just that, she's the girl I fell in love with and..." Shido muttered to himself, soon seeing an image of Tohka before seeing Mio in her normal and Inverse Forms shift place as she turns to face him in his mental image. "...she and Mio are one in the same! I can't believe it, she was right there the whole time, without me even realizing
He recalls seeing Mio... or rather, Tohka's said face that he had been shown and the one he saw from their reunion.

"What I want most in life is to protect you, so I can always hold you close like right now." Tohka's voice echoed.

"Consider it a promise from me too, cause I'm gonna make sure to protect you too!" Shido's voice also echoed.

Shido's fist tightens as he holds Tohka's ribbon close, and soon a DEM wizard is tossed back across the ground, he struggled to stay conscious. Once Shido saw his sword, he knocks the Wizard out and grabs it before running towards the tallest tree branch he could see before her.

"I finally get it, I remember. Now I know what I have to do!" Shido shouted to himself, soon imbuing mana into his body and jumping to the branch and swinging before slingshot himself up into the sky. "I'll always be there for you, and this time I won't fail to keep my promise! I'll protect you..."

Shido soon lands on the ground of the viewpoint, and rushes forward with the sword out, striking down any Wizards in his way as his inner mana multiplies his speed into an extremely fast sprint.

"TOHKA!"

"Take this you bastards!" Mio screams, swinging Nahemah against all the Bandersnatch and Wizards as they charge her with a blitzkrieg tactic and the occasional act of trapping her in a territory she had to shatter apart, Ellen also rushing in and striking her hard and quickly while her guard's down and focus is distracted. Soon a lucky hit from Ellen pushes her back a bit.

"Damn it, getting tired... I need to finish this. No more choice now. Nahemah, let us finish this.

While silent to all but her, the Demon King lights up in agreement as if it spoke a message to her.

[Agreed!]

Mio screams loudly making a wind push everyone back as the dust cloud drops her silver throne into view, thrusting Nahemah up, the throne shatters into pieces that swirl around the black blade before changing its form into a much larger sword. One that had a tip that looked like the head of what resembled a dragon or shark.

[PAVERSCHLEV!]

"Now face my Sword of Demise!" Mio shouted, the giant blade's 'mouth' opened and its 'eye' glowed red as it gathered a huge amount of her spirit power as a maelstrom surrounding her body. Marina notices this.

"This attack will be trouble. Captain, move the Arbitel into range, we'll use the territory to defend against it. Divert all power back from the Bandersnatch and activate all fifty Ashcroft Beta channels, focus the territory to the ship's front and defend the attack!" Marina ordered.

"Right, you heard her! Follow the instructions on the Marina program's screen on the double!" James shouted, pushing everyone to divert all their power around ASAP.

Soon all the Bandersnatch units begin to land before they all droop silently, their power shutting it."
down as it floods back into the Arbitel and forms its territory before preparing to focus it to the front once Mio began her attack. At that moment, Mio's eyes glowed as she began.

"PAVERSCHLEV... IT'S TIME TO DIE!"

Mio swings down and screams, a huge wave of her spirit power cuts down, ripping past the Arbitel and spewing across the areas of Tenguu City positioned near its sides as if gouging into the Earth itself, any Bandersnatch units there were destroyed while all Wizards moved out of the way. The Arbitel's territory having already moved solely to the front to defend against the attack and hopefully keep the ship intact.

"Arbitel's helm is holding, but the attack's output is even, success of defending is only 50%!" Marina said, her eyes glitching as she feels the strain. "Requesting attack time predictions, acknowledging re-confirmation of success rate!"

The control room crew all began typing as they gathered all the data they could, and soon one member found something.

"Sir! Way to increase success rate to 80% detected! Overload the control room sector and form a burst of power and then rush the Arbitel forward at the point of contact, requesting permission to execute?" Said crew member asked.

"Permission granted, we are not running like cowards or falling here!" James shouted, throwing his hat off. "We shall overwhelm that Spirit at all costs!"

The Arbitel's one control room instantly exploded at the side as the territory's power gives off a short burst, soon moving forward. Mio is surprised as she feels Paverschlev begins being pushed back. Everyone watches the two forces push... and soon the Paverschlev was the first to explode apart, causing Mio to gasp as the recoil flings her backwards. She screams as she crashes into a building, Nahemah reverts to normal, now a bit cracked.

"This is the Arbitel, status update in progress." Marina asked, smirking as her eyes go back to normal. "Condition yellow but operable, all Bandersnatch units have lost their link unit to the ship and will be turned onto autopilot. We'll be on standby for evacuation when requested until further notice."

Westcott smiled, their victory against [Sovereign] finally nearing itself. He began using a Bandersnatch to fly up to the large and vast rooftop of the city's tallest and widest building. The perfect ending battleground for their victory.

[Forgive me... master...]

"Nahemah... no, don't give up. We're still in this..." Mio said weakly, barely able to move. Right as she was able to get off the building, a sudden territory surrounds her and forces her to the bottom of its barrier, slowly rising towards the building top. Mio screams at the pain, she had never been in a territory like this one before.

"My territory is one of the three most accurate and powerful of all DEM Wizards, unlike the others you've been in so far all attempts to resist it will be futile." Ellen said, giving a bloodthirsty smirk at the helpless Spirit within her territory. Mio who was barely staying conscious gives her a furious glare.

"You think this will hold me!? Fat chance, just watch me break it!" Mio screamed before swinging Nahemah at it, but the Demon King's tip simply breaks off, some other shards of the blade also chip
off to Mio's horror.

She couldn't believe it... her Demon King was useless, and with how easily it shattered she even doubted it would have worked if had enough power to restore Nahemah to mint condition. At that moment, Mio began feeling herself barely able to stay awake, and fully collapsed.

"...I'm sorry Shido, we won't be meeting again. This is it for me." Mio weakly said, only having herself hear it as she lays on the ground, still conscious but unable to even move anymore. Ellen prepares Caledfwlch again.

"So, do you want her alive, or should we just take the Qlipha Crystal now? I may not have Artemisia's territory but it should be intact if I kill her." Ellen asked, hoping for the latter.

"It's your victory today, and it's been quite a while. You can go ahead and make the choice this time. After all, her power matters more than she does." Westcott answered, somewhat curious to see how an Inverse Spirit about to die would act.

Ellen prepared her blade and was ready to swing when...

"TOHKA!"

Suddenly Ellen and Westcott turn at the sight of someone on the ground slashing a DEM issued energy blade to cut across any Bandersnatch or Wizard in his way. Soon he charges mana into his feet and jumps up and slashes the building, using the debris and any nearby Bandersnatch to make it to the top. He lands and holds out his sword in front of the two.

"Toh...ka?" Mio wondered. She was confused why Shido had said that. Was she referring to this dangerous woman before them?

"This boy's just a normal human with an unusually high amount of mana, he's no threat to us." Ellen noted to herself, admittedly the amount of mana he had impressed her, it was rare for many people to be born with that many. However, without a Realizer or CR-Unit, she felt it would do him little good against them.

"Am I to assume you came here for the girl like in those damsel in distress stories?" Westcott asked with sarcastic surprise, then gives an insane laugh at the craziness of what this boy had done. "You're quite insane, do you honestly believe you can stop us and save this Spirit? I assure you that it's a fool's errand."

"We'll see who the fool is-"

Suddenly Shido was pushed to the ground by a second formation of Ellen's territory, his sword knocked away as it fell from the building top and out of his reach. Shido couldn't move and was only able to watch as Ellen neared Tohka, ready to end her life.

'Damnit! No... I can't let it end here like this!' Shido thought.

Ellen gave a bloodthirsty look, and Mio could only look as the image of Devil trying to kill her flashed in her place briefly. Only this time... no deeper power would save her, and it would be by the hands of a Human that she met her demise. Her eyes shook as the fear of death slowly approached her for the second time in her life that she could remember.

'Tohka... Tohka! TOHKA!" Shido thought, as the feeling of powerlessness began to overflow him, he struggled to move somehow. He wouldn't give up, he wouldn't lose her now after finally reuniting with her. "TOHKA! I NEED YOU!"
Without him knowing it, Shido's pupils whitened as his eyes become golden in color. Suddenly a bright flash goes off in front of Ellen right at that moment.

Kotori and Mana stared in shock, they were sorta familiar with Ai, Mai and Mii but they were confused how they were somewhere like here.

"What's going on? Please, tell us!" Mana suddenly shouted. Like her brother, the worry of the current situation got her into a panic because she wasn't able to personally confirm Shido's safety herself.

Soon the three grab the two and begin to lead them somewhere else, confusing the two sisters as they headed to their next location. Soon they were brought to a room where a bunch of other people and a bunch of technology was seen being developed.

"What the heck? Where are we!?" Kotori screamed, not even sure she was awake anymore.

"Oh hey, glad you two sleeping beauties woke up."

The two turned to see none other than Hiroto wave hi, surprising them as much as seeing the trio. However, that surprise changed into even bigger surprise as they looked to see Shido's homeroom teacher Tamae, a few other students from Raizen High, most being female, and most of all... a familiar silver haired woman with dark spots under her eyes walked into view wearing a suit.

"Forgive the sudden shock, I do believe you have a lot of questions. However right now I believe you'd like to help your big brother?" Reine asked, standing before the two shell shocked sisters.

A huge bright flash of light appears in front of Ellen right as she was about to cut Mio down, however instead she shows surprise as her sword breaks. After a few seconds both her and Westcott can't believe their eyes as a powerful looking sword forms in front of them. The same one Mio had used in her prior form.

"An Angel? That's impossible, she's still in her Inverse Form! She shouldn't be able to manifest this right now!" Ellen yelled, wondering what was going on. Why was this happening right as they were about to succeed?

Soon the Angel moves towards Shido and phases right through Ellen's territory to both her and Westcott's furthered shock.

"What... what are you?"

[I am... Sandalphon.]

Shido blinked as he felt it, this sword was like Nahemah, but... there was no negative feelings of anger, fear, sadness or despair. This blade... it was a representation of Tohka's will. Her desire, her believes, what she wanted most. However right now it had come to him.

[You've done it Shido, it may only work just this once, but let me lend you my strength here and now.]

"What? What's going on, why is this sword here?" Shido asked.

[Don't you get it? This is Tohka's Angel, Sandalphon it answered your call and came because of your desires. It wants to save her, and now it's allowing you to have the power to command
its strength. So... let's save her together!"

Shido smiled, while still in the territory he managed to move slightly and reach for Sandalphon.

"Alright, let's go and save your master." Shido said, grabbing the Angel in his hands. A strong aura blows out and a chill reaches Westcott and Ellen, in a brief moment, Shido feels the power of his mysterious ally flow to him, and readying Sandalphon for a swing... "THIS IS IT!"

Shido screams at the top of his lungs as he swings Sandalphon forward, and against all odds and expectations of the two before him... he completely shattered the territory holding him, and the energy wave he created as a result struck all the remaining Wizards, knocking them out. All the closest Bandersnatch to the building were all cut apart and exploded.

Shido panted a bit, his first time using Sandalphon having exhausted him more than it should have. Knowing she couldn't just let him do what he wanted anymore, Ellen rushed forward and used what was left of Caledfwlch to stab him right in the heart, making his eyes widen. Ellen smirked thinking he was dead, however...

"Get out... of my way!" Shido yelled, managing to slash her and knock he back a bit. Ellen noticed the cut and wound across her abdomen in surprise before seeing Shido rip the blade out, a purple glow flared out of his body and healed the damage to him.

"Try everything you can to stop me, but know this... I WILL. SAVE. TOHKA!"

"No... this isn't possible, how the hell are you still alive!?" Ellen gasped, soon taking out Rhongomiant in its spear form now that her sword was useless.

[I don't know why Shido, but I know those two are a threat, so promise me this... show them the taste of defeat they can't claim any victory or success from!]

Shido nods, and soon Westcott grunts a bit. Actually, slightly worried now.

"Ellen, don't hold anything back against this boy. I don't know why, but... he's achieved what I've failed to do, he's convinced the power of the Spirits to aid him." Westcott said seriously, something Ellen rarely heard from him as he only did so when things weren't as easy as he expected. He snapped and soon all the remaining Bandersnatch took flight mode and flew at him.

"Of course, I'll kill him without any hesitation or delay!" Ellen shouted, feeling insulted by the fact this normal human boy was actually daring to stand against her. Shido readies himself, and soon Ellen and all of the Bandersnatch rushed at him that instant. Shido feels the flow and both he and his mysterious ally focus their power together, Shido opens his eyes and they glow brighter.

"Hear me Sandalphon, respond to me..." Shido said as his entire body glowed with mana before it became purple like Mio's, and then covered him entirely. "With the power of my will to protect Tohka, let this savage force before me be sealed by their defeat!"

Sandalphon glowed brightly and the crystallized edge of the blade glowed with an iridescent hue. At that moment, Shido shouted at his loudest and rushed forward, swinging Sandalphon multiple times in a row.

Needless to say, in that one moment, Westcott actually felt fear for the first time in his life. In that one instant... all the Bandersnatch except the one that flew him up onto the building stopped moving before being slashed in half and exploding, and then Ellen herself froze before her CR-Unit broke and ripped to shreds, and she collapsed onto the ground barely able to move, Mio being freed of her
It wasn't just him either, all the members on board the Arbitel crew all stared in shock that Ellen had lost. No Spirit had ever managed to defeat her before... and yet this boy who wasn't a Spirit or trained as a Wizard just made the impossible become a reality and beat her. Shido was exhausted, but he stood with Sandalphon held out, so by all means... he had won.

"This isn't possible... I'm the greatest Wizard. I can't lose, not to... anyone..." Ellen soon lost consciousness and collapsed. Westcott grabbed her form and soon held onto the surviving Bandersnatch.

"Westcott to the Arbitel, we're coming back and leaving... we're been utterly defeated, all our loses amounted to nothing." Westcott sneered, and soon everyone on the ship went silent at the admittance before obeying his orders. Westcott soon gives a dark glare at Shido.

"You there boy... know that you've made a very dangerous enemy today, and this is far from over."

The Bandersnatch takes up and flies back into the Arbitel and once they do, the ship disappears from view as it becomes invisible again. Shido stares as he realizes the fight was finally over.

[We did it Shido... thank you, I may not remember why, but I feel at peace. Like part of a regret has been lifted from my chest.]

"You're welcome... and thank you for the strength you lent me." Shido replied back smiling, sighing in relief. Mio stared at Shido and what he had done. She had left him to protect him, but in the end, he was the reason she was still alive. Right at that moment however, the part of the building underneath her collapsed and she began falling, causing Shido to gasp at the sight.

'So... this is it for me? I guess that's it, yet I don't have any regrets.' Mio thought as she fell, her eyes closed as she accepted her feet. 'I never had anything before... I had nothing but my sword, and my powers, but I was still alone. I thought when I was about to die... that I just didn't care anymore.'

The memories of her day with Shido suddenly flashed by her mind.

'Despite that, I had been lying to myself. Deep down I wanted to find at least one person who would accept me. Shido, that was you... in the end, I'm glad I got to find you before I met my final moments. So... thank you.'

"...TOHKA!"

Mio's eyes suddenly flashed back open, and she saw Shido jump off the building rooftop and dive at her, Sandalphon still in hand. Soon that name rings through her ears as she saw a familiar scene to this one rush through her mind.

"TOHKA!" Shido's voice echoed, the sight of him catching a young girl as they tumbled down a hill together was seen.

"Who's... Tohka?" Mio muttered, right as Shido caught up to her and caught her before tossing Sandalphon which began falling alongside Nahemah. "What are you doing servant? You'll die with me!"

"Because... I'm here to save you Tohka, just like I said I would." Shido answered, making Mio confused again. Her name wasn't Tohka, she was sure of it... right? "Remember Tohka, it's me. Like we promised, I'll always be here for you."
At that moment, Shido closed the gap between them and kissed her, surprising Mio as her eyes widened, and their descent to the ground suddenly slowed as if her powers and his mana mingling together were protecting them.

'I don't understand, what is this man doing? He's... kissing me as we're about to crash into the ground.' Mio thought, suddenly feeling a burning pain in her head.

'Why? None of this makes sense, my... head is spinning!'

"Soon an image of Shido and Mio watching a newborn chick hatch."

"Shido!" Mio's voice echoed.

'Wait, was that... one of my memories?' Mio mentally gasped.

"The sight of Shido and Tohka walking in their Kindergarten uniforms, meeting for the first time."

"Tohka!" Shido's voice echoed.

'Tohka... every time I hear that name I feel strange, but...' Mio's thoughts continued, her eyes suddenly scrunching themselves closed.

"Her memory of Shido smiling at her during their date earlier today, and her brief smile back."

"Tohka..." Shido's voice echoed softly.

"Shido..." Mio's voice echoed quietly.

'. . .It puts me in a good mood!' Mio's thoughts finished, her eyes finally opened again as Shido stops the kiss. However, they were now the same as they had been before her Inversion, and at that moment... everything came back to her as she stared into Shido's longing eyes.

Their descent slowed further and soon they had begun falling while upright rather than upside down like before, and soon Mio... no, Tohka's eyes shake before tearing up as she saw Shido looking at her with a smile.

"How could I have forgotten you? The boy who stole my heart, the man who turned my existence upside down... Shido!" Tohka cried out, hugging him as she finally remembered her best friend, the boy she had fallen in love with.

"Tohka!" Shido smiled, hugging back.

Soon the two twirled in midair as they soon landed in the ground, except for the ribbon Shido was still holding close, Tohka's entire Astral Dress and both Sandalphon and Nahemah soon dissolved and faded away into mana, forcing Shido to hold her close so he didn't see her cloth-less form. Neither knew it yet, but Tohka's powers had been sealed away.

"Are you OK Tohka? What happened to you, how'd you gain these powers?" Shido asked, holding her close while blushing due to the odd circumstance that just happened.

"Uh..." Tohka blinked, trying to search the memories she regained but not finding anything. "I don't know, all I remember is helping Mana escape from somewhere and then getting captured. Then... nothing, I don't remember a thing past that."

Shido soon pet her head, making her blush.

"Never mind about it then, that's not important right now. What is important on the other hand is this.
Welcome home Tohka, and..” Shido started before holding out Tohka's ribbon, the one he had bought for her long ago. "...Happy birthday, I hope you don't mind getting the same gift again."

Tohka grabbed it and smiled as she held it close.

"This is the only gift I could ever want. I’m back Shido, thank you so much." Tohka smiled, closing her eyes as she rested her head on Shido's shoulder. Shido smiled and closed his eyes as he rested his head against hers.

’And I'm never letting you go again.’ Both thought, the holes in their hearts finally vanishing.

Everyone at the unknown location Kotori and Mana were at all went silent from the video feed they saw with what Shido did, and soon the two sisters all got surprised as they heard everyone cheer at Shido's success.

"Now that's how you do it man, and he did it all on his own without our aid in the slightest.” Hiroto smirked, quite impressed at what Shido managed to do to the DEM forces.

"Amazing... big brother managed to do all of that just for her?” Mana breathed, she still couldn't fully believe what she had just seen as real. She knew that it was though, and that she wouldn't fool herself otherwise. Kotori on the other hand moved a hand near her heart, as if seeing this awoke something within her.

"He did good, now that the danger has passed... come on everyone, let's go pick them up." Reine said, all the nearby crew nodded as they did. At that moment, the two sisters saw a ship take off towards Shido and Tohka's location.

Shido and Tohka were still in the wrecked battleground of the city they had just fought the DEM in, with Tohka's ribbon tied back into her hair and wearing Shido's coat so she had something on at least.

Shido was still unsure why kissing her lead to her Astral Dress vanishing, but he was sure as hell not letting his girlfriend go without something to wear. As they continued their trek, the two suddenly heard something.

"Shido, do you hear that?” Tohka asked, looking around for the source.

"Yeah, I do.” Shido answered, though no matter where he looked he couldn't find the source of the sound. However, after he recalled that the ship from earlier could vanish from view... "Oh no, Tohka stay close to me!"

Shido hugged Tohka close, and soon the sight of a blue and white ship appeared overhead, while not the same one the two were still cautious of the fact it may be affiliated to the DEM like the Arbitel had. Once it flew directly above them, the two suddenly felt themselves vanish from the spot they were in and appear inside the ship. Shido was apprehensive while Tohka held on closer when...

"You can relax, we're not your enemies."

Shido recognized the voice nearly instantly, and turned to see none other than Reine Murasame as the one who walked into their view.

"Ms. Murasame!?" Shido said, shocked to see her on the ship and in a military like outfit.
"Please, just call me Reine." Reine replied, preferring to be informal. "I'm guessing you'll want some kind of explanation? My apologies, but you'll need to wait until we reach our next destination before I can tell you anything. Plus, I think your lady friend here would like some clothes?"

Tohka blushes at the blunt reference to her wearing only Shido's coat.

"Y-yeah..." Tohka said softly, blushing in embarrassment. The two following Reine as she leads them somewhere else.

After getting Tohka some clothes, a plain white shirt and a blue short sleeve jacket along with matching shorts while being lent Reine's bear slippers, Shido and Tohka learned that the ship they were currently on known as the Fraxinus EX-Celsior, or just Fraxinus for short, was taking them somewhere.

"So... what exactly is this place we're being taken to?" Shido asked, curious to why no one was saying anything yet.

"Just be a bit more patient Shido, it should only be a little longer now." Reine answered. "I can at least tell you this. Mana and Kotori are both there waiting for you, and they're perfectly fine."

"They're alive? Oh, thank goodness!" Shido said happily, finally gaining some much needed relief he had needed in the past few hours.

After about another 20 minutes, the Fraxinus finally reached its destination and turned invisible as it landed inside of it, one the ship had finally docked and landed on the ground, Reine and the others all got up.

"Follow me you two." Reine replied, catching their attention as they followed. After a long trek, the two soon entered a large room where Kotori and Mana both ran up to Shido and hugged him tightly.

"SHIDO!" Both cried out in happiness and relief.

"Kotori! Mana! I was so worried, thank god you're both OK!" Shido said, hugging them like he never wanted to let go. Once Tohka saw Mana she gasped happily.

"Mana, it really is you!" Tohka said happily, getting the girl's attention as she didn't recognize Tohka. "Come on, don't you remember this face? It's me, Tohka!"

Mana blinked, and then suddenly after hearing that name and seeing her face... her face widened in surprise before she covered her mouth, tears beginning to glow from her eyes as it came back to her.

"You... you finally came back, I never thought I'd see you again..." Mana cried, barely holding it together before she hugged her tightly. "Tohka!"

Tohka hugged back, glad they were reunited. Kotori looks at Shido surprised, giving him a 'what am I missing?' look. Shido chuckled and rubbed her head giving a 'I'll explain later' look in return. That's when he saw everyone else from school.

"Ms. Okamine!?!" Shido called out surprise before seeing the others as well. "Hiroto? Ai? Mai? And Mii!?! What's going on, why are all of you here?"

"Allow me to answer that for you Shido." Reine said, walking in from behind him, his sisters and Tohka. Soon she clapped her hands twice, and most of the room shifts to the surprise of the four, becoming more like a futuristic base of operations. Soon a symbol showing what appeared to be a
green squirrel came into view.

"Shido and Mana Takamiya, Kotori Itsuka, and Tohka Yatogami... we welcome all four of you to Ratatoskr."

And we finally made it, we've made it to the end of the Tohka arc. I hope you liked the twist I made with Tohka being Shido's childhood friend, this is why she's the main girl of the harem in this story, because Shido already had feelings for her. It's rare, but there are some people who can fall in love at such a young age like that, the old elementary school crush I believe?

Now that was an awesome fight and turnaround that Shido brought, Westcott tasted defeat for the first time since his battle with the First Spirit over 30 years ago and it felt satisfying to have him so close to success but have it snatched by the one thing he couldn't expect or plan for and ultimately ended up underestimating in the end. I will mention this though, Shido didn't summon Sandalphon because he had yet to seal Tohka, but it did respond to him and summon itself so he could save Tohka. Now that Tohka is sealed, he actually can summon it if he needs to.

I hope you enjoyed the first part of the story, consider it a gift because today was a Monday and April 10th like in the actual novels, so I felt it was right to plan all these chapters in advance for the last few days to give you the entire first arc so you'd see what direction this story would go, and I hope I did NOT disappoint with it. So, get ready when for next time, because we'll be making a twist and have the second Spirit that Shido needs to rescue be none other than Origami Tobiichi herself!

I'm excited myself for how her appearance as a Spirit before Yoshino appears will affect the volumes ahead of now, and that's just the basis of my ideas. I've already got a twist for when Kurumi shows up that will truly turn the future of this story on its head. I can't wait to reach that far into the story, and I hope when I get to it you'll be excited for it.

Until then, thanks for reading this story's entire first arc, I hope you enjoyed it. Remember to stay awesome everyone ^^
Chapter 4

I'm glad everyone liked how the story's gone so far, it makes me glad I created it for all of you to read. The reviews I have so far even like how I've given some of the characters the first anime episode implied may be important, including our resident trio, a bigger role in this story (and possibly for Mii, actual lines, but no one's said that so I'm just guessing right now). Now it's time for the Origami arc to finally start!

Expect the changes I'll be mentioning in either the start and/or end notes, the craziness Tohka has to deal with as she comes to accept all of the Spirits will need Shido and decides to settle for Shido promising she's the first and foremost girl of his eventual harem, and the wackiness that comes from the personality of New Timeline Origami.

In regard to the AST having not been mentioned, I'll clear up here that they are NOT retconned from this story. I just didn't have any opportunities during Tohka's arc that could introduce them without being forced because with the DEM taking their roles for the earlier arcs, the AST is actually a sub-division of Ratatoskr that trains wizards. Though here it's not called the "Anti-Spirit Team", but the "Advanced Security Team".

Origami's arc will likely be the most different from its canon counterpart due to the fact that while I am using some canon scenes, since time travel was never involved, about 75-90% (by my guesses) of Origami Angel and Origami Devil are unusable due to depending on them. I find this a fresh experience since this is the one arc where you can't expect a majority of what I'll be doing. So I hope it doesn't disappoint you.

Now, let's begin!

Chapter 4, S1: Origami Unchained, Part 1

Origami was seen running through the flaming streets of Tenguu City in the neighborhood of Nankou, trying to search for her parents. She turns the corner as she suddenly notices more of the blazing inferno block the path she had intended to take. No one was aware what had caused the flames... but what everyone did know was right now, Tenguu City was best described as a hell on Earth as the fire had spread into most of the city with the current neighborhood experiencing the worst of it.

"MOM! DAD!" Origami cried out, trying to find them and hope they heard her. However, she didn't see anything nor did she get a reply from them. She began to tear up as the worst kept flooding her mind, that the fire may have already consumed them within it.

They had only barely gotten around it once due to the aid of a young boy, and there was no guarantee that they would make it out alive, even if someone else came to help them again. At that moment, Origami began hearing the sounds of another girl, probably younger than her going by the sound of her voice, crying out loudly.

Origami's body glowed and soon, she found herself in a new outfit to her surprise. She was seen wearing a short white veil similar to that of a wedding dress and a gold crown that spread out horizontally rather than vertically holding it in place as it slightly hovered over her head.
Her outfit was similar to her Inverse form's, but slightly less revealing minus showing her currently missing cleavage at her current age, and it had a bright and pure white color scheme with various gold plated areas, making her look like an Angel. (A/N: Like her Inverse Form, think Tohka's Limited Astral Dress in Season 2's first episode for a reference, but with shoes more like Inverse Tohka's, Origami's stockings and butterfly dress ribbon, and no gloves)

"(You should be safe from the flames with this, just remember what I told you. Most of all be careful with your new powers. Now go find your parents, I'll try to hopefully stop this fire.)" Some unseen being told her, making Origami nod as she ran off.

After a bit of running through the flames, Origami looked around a bit before...

"Origami!"

Origami turned in surprise at the shout, and the sight of her mother and father entered her view despite the flames' heat making them a bit hard to see in an area already darkened by all the intense smoke, the light of her Astral Dress must have let them notice her. She smiled at them as she prepared to run over and hug them, using her new powers to get them away from the flames and to safety.

Unfortunately, fate had other plans, and suddenly her Angel, multiple feather like pillars in the sky above, had one of them suddenly glow as it charged a beam and aimed at Origami's parents as it took the newly born Spirit's surprise as a threat nearing them. Origami's face soon contorts into one of horror, and before she could beg it to stop, the beam fired and her parents saw it come towards them.

"MOTHER! FATHER!" Origami screamed at the top of her lungs, right as the beam hits them. She stares in horror as the light fades, and soon walks to the ashes that stood where her parents once had, taking them into her hands. Her voice shook before she hags the ashes close and shed some tears... and then with a loud scream, her Angel fading with a similar yet deadlier shaped black colored feather pillar! Her Inverse Astral Dress formed on her body, and she almost lost all sense or control of herself as her Demon King began firing everywhere.

Origami suddenly wakes up, shooting upwards from her bed and gasping for air, her pajamas soaked in her sweat. She held her head tightly as she felt her pupils begin to whiten before she took some deep breathes... and her eyes went from Spirit state to their normal state.

"..." Origami panted more, trying to calm down. She got a cloth and wiped the sweat from her nightmare off her. It was rarer than most, but nightmares of her parent's deaths that were the exact same memory as when they died were so terrifying she nearly had her powers come back to her. "Not again... why am I always reminded.

Origami looks at her hands, at first nothing... but after breathing a bit she suddenly sees them stained with fresh blood. Looking at her current state in the mirror and then at some strange medicine she had in her room, she grimaced.

"I don't have much more time... soon, the block on my power will be gone. One that happens..." Origami began, imagining the battles she had with Tohka, but now sane and aware enough of everything rather than just an instinctual response from her powers. "...[Devil] will no longer be shackled, free to rampage across this world."

[My name is Origami Tobiichi, I'm a freshman at Raizen High and one of many trans-human beings
known as a Spirit under the code names of "Angel" normally, and "Devil" when my powers take on their more dangerous nature. What I'm known best as however? It's simple... I'm known, as a murderer, having killed two people over 5 years ago. The two people I killed... my mother and father.]

Shido groaned as he heard his alarm clock go off, he moved his hand to try and turn it off and after a few seconds hit it before he went back to sleep. Before he could get any rest however... a huge boom is heard downstairs, instantly making him shove away any feelings of tiredness and fatigue as worry flooded over them.

"Whoa! What on Earth was that!?" Shido panicked, he quickly ran downstairs and his house, which was shown from the outside to have been renovated and made much larger to house multiple people now was seen, making it look almost like a fancy apartment.

From one particular room, smoke was seen coming out of the window as Shido made it to see Tohka sitting at the table in her borrowed clothes minus the slippers, holding something in her hands next to some spilt Orange Juice.

"Tohka, what's wrong!?" Shido quickly questioned, worried what happened.

"Oh Shido... look!" Tohka asked with tears in her eyes, showing Shido's notebook which was soaked and distorted by the very spilt orange juice he had seen earlier. "Your notes from school, I completely ruined all of them! I didn't mean it... really!"

Shido suddenly panicked, some of Tohka's spirit powers flowing out. While he had learned they were sealed, seal didn't mean removed in this particular instance. For reasons no one in Ratatoskr fully understood, Shido had this strange ability to take a Spirit's power and store it within him, and since all Spirits so far seemed to be female, the sealed power stored inside him was undetectable by their and likely DEM's analyzing devices.

When Shido asked why, it's because the change into a Spirit was irreversible, it would be like trying to devolve a human back into a monkey. Not to mention the source of Tohka's powers was inside of her heart now and therefore removing it would likely end up killing her. Most of all, the seal fluctuated in response to Tohka's emotional state and her control of it, if she got too wild her powers would flare out like right now.

"It's OK Tohka, I'm not mad at you!" Shido replied, causing Tohka's powers to calm as she looked at him tearfully. "Really, it was just an accident. Notes are replaceable."

"Really? You're not mad at me?" Tohka sniffled, really hoping that Shido was being honest with her.

"Of course not, it's OK." Shido smiled, petting Tohka on the head and making her close her eyes and smile like a little puppy would.

[My name's Tohka Yatogami, I'm a... well I should be a freshman at high school, but I've forgotten about the last few years of my life and now I'm a 16 year old teenage girl. Though I'm also an evolved human type of thing called a Spirit, some call me "Princess" normally, and "Sovereign" when I go a little cray-cray. I'm currently living with my boyfriend Shido and his family ever since he helped my powers get under control by sealing them and stopping me from creating Spacequakes. I'm having trouble adjusting as you've noticed since I'm missing a huge chunk of my life.]

"ACHOO!" Tohka suddenly sneezes, causing another boom that reached Mana and Kotori. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to do that!"
"It's alright you guys, she just sneezed out her power again!" Shido called towards upstairs. The two groan as they both came downstairs, Mana was happy that their old friend was home, but Tohka's spirit powers were a bit of a tizzy at the moment due to Tohka being full of emotion, the very thing that made her powers set off.

Kotori on the other hand? Well... Shido and Mana weren't sure, it wasn't that Kotori disliked her, but things always seemed to feel odd when the two were together and Kotori would act weird. If Tohka and her weren't she was fine. The two siblings were hoping that it was just due to Tohka not being someone she had known before and being used to living with only the two of them.

"Really big bro? Reine told you to be careful, you've gotta keep her happy or her powers will shoot off everywhere." Kotori said annoyed, Tohka looks somewhat sad that that and her ribbon moves to match her expression as Mana pets her head.

"Come on and relax a bit Kotori, Tohka's only been here for two days, it'll be a while before things properly settle in for us." Mana replied, making Tohka smile again. "Well, since we're all here already, guess we should start the day now."

"Alright, let's get breakfast started then." Shido smiled, making Tohka's eyes sparkle as her usual love of food made itself known.

[Oh! You might be wondering how we got to this point, aren't you? We were at that Ratatoskr place the last time you saw us. Let's see... what happened after we learned about the whole group? Hmm... Ah! Now I remember!]

Shido, Mana, Kotori and Tohka all look at shock at the reveal the Ratatoskr organization just gave them.

"Shido and Mana Takamiya, Kotori Itsuka, and Tohka Yatogami... we welcome all four of you to Ratatoskr" Reine stated, answering the question of where they were. "I'm Reine Murasame, one of the founders of this organization and the commander of the Fraxinus."

"...OK, I think I'm gonna ask the question all four of us are obviously wondering right now." Kotori began, soon taking a deep breath. "WHERE ARE WE, AND WHAT THE LIVING HELL IS GOING ON!?"

Kotori's yell rang through his sibling's ears, while Tohka's eyes became outright spirals from the force and volume of it, having no experience unlike the other two did. Everyone else rubbed their ears as well.

"Yes, that would probably be a good question to answer." Reine replied, rubbing her one ear before looking at a wall. "Maria, bring up the information please?"

Soon the siblings and Tohka all see a girl appear from a hologram protector in the room, while none of them had actually seen Marina yet to notice, Maria was a color swapped version of the malicious AI with blue in place of the former's yellow.

"At once Commander." Maria answered, soon bowing towards the others. "Salutations to you, I am the Ratatoskr AI, Maria Arusu. I shall give you aid on here and the Fraxinus from this point forward. Also, if you really need to reach me..."

Maria taps on Shido, Mana and Kotori's phones, the latter two realizing Shido found them and took them back.
"I've added a link to my program on your phone, so I can physically appear on them if you truly need it." Maria smiled, not noticing the others sweat drop at the now apparent invasion of privacy. "Pay attention to this screen here."

They all do as a set of ten pictures form, the people show in them barely recognizable due to how blurry and distorted they were aside from their hair colors with the exception of the first picture which showed... the veiled Spirit that fought Tohka! Not just that, Shido saw Tohka's inverse form as the last image.

"That's Tohka on that last one, and I saw that girl on the first!" Shido gasped, realizing who were in these pictures. "These girls... they're all the other Spirits, aren't they?"

"Correct Shido, as you know the Spacequakes have appeared in eleven colors, and each one is linked to a specific spirit." Maria nodded, continuing her explanation quickly after. "Tohka was of the purple color, and I believe you've met the white Spacequake spirit already."

"Each Spirit has a code name we identify them by, as we still lack most of their real-life identities." Reine continued, everyone too distracted to see how nervous Kotori got for a moment. "For you Tohka, we knew you as Princess due to your outfit resembling that of a ball gown. While in your Inverse Form we called you [Sovereign]."

"Inverse what now?" Mana asked, tilting her head confused.

"Uh... well, the Astral Dress, the armor I was wearing that is... I think. Well that wasn't what it used to look like, after that other Spirit nearly killed me my power got all cray-cray and I ended up as that." Tohka explained.

"Correct Tohka, the Inverse Form is a manifestation of a darker yet truer level of a Spirit's power from its origin dimension..." Reine said somberly, soon taking out her show glasses and cleaning them. "...a sin I bare a part in creating."

Mana and Kotori blink in confusion, but Shido however had a good idea.

"Let me guess, it's about the Spirit who caused the original Spacequake, the spirit that came before the rest of them?" Shido asked, making Reine nod. "...Now that I think of it, why's she not listed here? There's only ten, but you just said eleven quake colors exist."

"Because..." Reine began, looking down a bit. "...She's no longer with us, we lost her shortly after she appeared years ago. When she went to stop Westcott but never returned."

The four all gasped at the revelation.

"30 years ago, I was one of the few who founded the DEM together. I was aid to the man who formed this organization, who alongside his current secretary were also part of it." Reine began, her eyes close as her left arm shakes.

"We made contact with another world somehow, and when we did... we pulled something in. The First Spirit. Her forced summon to this world did incredible damage to Humanity, and changed those of us who were at the summoning point. For one example with myself? I may look 20, but that's how old I was when the summon occurred. Aside from my inability to sleep, my cellular aging was lost. Essentially, I gained eternal youth."

"You'll live forever then!?!" Tohka said, the thought of such a thing excited her. Reine however shook her head.
"Actually no, I can still die. Just not by age." Reine sweat dropped, clearing her throat as she resumed. "Despite us bring her, the First Spirit grew to love Humanity and wanted to stop the damage she was causing. Westcott, his aid Ellen and two other close assistants of his however instead of fearing the damage just wanted it... they stopped being human. DEM became a spirit hunter group and tried to steal her powers."

Shido suddenly saw Tohka nearly collapse, and he had to catch her.

"Tohka, are you OK?" Shido asked worried.

"I'm OK Shido. I just remember that man tell me that... he intended to kill me, in fact he said he's already killed other Spirits who passed their powers on to someone else." Tohka said, her talk with Westcott still terrifying her.

"Yes, he's lying to the world under a mask, and when he succeeds we'll be meeting the Devil in human form." Reine said, breathing a bit to relax her nerves. "Eventually he came across the First Spirit for a final battle, and he defeated her... but before he could claim her power, she divided her own at the cost of her life."

"And that power..." Mana said, looking to Tohka. "Tohka and the others listed here, and many more who lost their lives protecting these powers, all of them became spirits and received it?"

"That's correct, the First believed in Humanity's potential. She entrusted everything to us so we could stop him..." Reine said, tearing up slightly as she struggled to hold in the grieving she had for her lost friend. "So me, Elliot and everyone else who knew Westcott must be stopped formed Ratatoskr. Ms. Okamine, Hiroto, Ai, Mai and Mii all joined us after we told they discovered the Spirits' existed. Our goal is simple... to save all of the Spirits, and stop Westcott."

Reine walks to the four, leaning a bit to meet them on eye level.

"Mana, Shido, Tohka, Kotori... we all need your help. The world itself needs your help. Everyone here has something to offer, so will you please join our cause?" Reine asked, the siblings and Tohka looked at each other, and after a bit..."You can count on us!" Shido said, and everyone present gives a smile at the result. "Although I do have a question... why did Tohka's armor vanish after I kissed her exactly?"

"That Shido is why you are our greatest asset, for reasons we still don't know... we recently learned you can seal the power of Spirits." Reine replied, surprising Shido and Tohka with this fact. "Why her clothes vanished I can't explain though. I do believe I have one theory, it has to do with your amnesia."

'You know about our pasts!?' Mana gasped, wondering if they could finally get some answers. Reine shakes her head however to her dismay.

"Sorry, but I do think I know what took the memories of it away..." Reine grimaced, showing a file about DEM captives. "The DEM took you both prisoner, you escaped luckily, but due to another captive inside aiding you. While captive, they may have somehow given you this power intentionally or not."

"Someone... inside of the... Augh!" Mana screamed as she held her head, falling to her knees to everyone's worry.

---Flashback Start---
Tohka and Mana were running through the halls of the DEM as they were fired at with non-lethal weapons meant to debilitate them, soon the doors began to close a bit and one in particular was the last door they had to cross. Suddenly Mana fell and twisted her leg.

"My leg!" Mana cried, unable to run now. "Tohka... I can't do it, I'm sorry!"

Tohka turned and soon makes a determined face as she ran back to Mana, right before the door closed she tossed her through it, but the DEM goons grabbed her. Mana looks in shock as Tohka slowly leaves her view.

"TOHKA!" Mana screamed.

"Mana..." Tohka cried, soon being dragged away. "...please, tell Shido I love him."

The door closed, and Mana soon cried as she limped out of the base, having lost maybe lost a friend forever due to one single mistake.

-End Flashback-

Mana gasps at the result, and suddenly looks at Tohka, surprising the purple haired girl as she begins to cry as the sadness from the memory reached her.

"I remember now, I was nearly caught by the DEM... Tohka and I tried escaping, but during the process Tohka got caught because I twisted my leg, she had to come back for me." Mana said, tears flowing through her eyes. "I'm so sorry Tohka, it was my fault!"

"Hey, don't cry Mana. Please don't cry..." Tohka said as she hugged her, nearly tearing up a bit herself. Mana soon calmed down a bit. "I'm here now, and I won't leave you guys again."

Mana nods, wiping her tears away.

"So I can seal a Spirit's powers... then that means Tohka's a human again?" Shido asked.

"No, the change into a Spirit can't be undone. We only know a special crystal known as a 'Sephira Crystal' causes it. They evolve the host, making them more than a normal human, and by extension that crystal becomes part of their heart." Reine explained, making Shido nod.

"I'd say it's more you've become the storage or management for her power. The seal can't break, but Tohka's emotions and will can let her take back her power, while also giving you the ability to use it. However, it's undetectable in your body. Essentially, the more Spirits you seal, the stronger you'll be in saving the others and stopping the DEM. I think you've noticed your eyes already, you're not just a normal human anymore Shido."

"You mean the fact the Spirits' have whitened pupils? Yeah, I noticed that my eyes changed since the fight." Shido replied, having seen his eyes get stuck as golden. "I think it's when I used Sandalphon that it happened. Or maybe that mystery voice I've met."

Everyone suddenly stopped what they were doing and looked at Shido, making him blink a bit.

"I'm sorry, but did you say mystery voice?" Reine asked.

"Uh... yeah, I did." Shido confirmed.

"WHAT!?" Everyone else screamed, making Shido cover his ears.
"...OK, please explain this." Reine demanded, her usual stoic expression having become more worried looking.

"Well, after I blacked out twice and during the fight with the DEM forces she talked to me. No one else seems to hear him... or her, though." Shido explained, rubbing his head. "Actually, I never checked. Hey mystery voice, can you talk to others?"

He waited for a bit, and then...

[That was the case at first Shido, but thanks to sealing Tohka, I'm now able to project my voice outside. If the others need to hear me, that's not a problem anymore.]

Everyone suddenly freaked out and panicked as they heard the voice, and looked around for it. Shido looked at himself after and finally realized the voice was coming out through his aura maybe?

"Uh... are you talking though my mana or something?" Shido asked, making the voice sheepishly chuckle.

[Uh... maybe, at least I think I am? Anyways, it's nice to meet all of you.]

"I don't believe it, this is-" Reine gasped as she tried to regain her breath, holding her hand over her heart. She had no words she could think of properly using right now. "...Who are you exactly?"

[Sorry, I don't know... it's like someone stole a word and while I feel it's there it's like everything about its hollow and empty. Though I guess maybe you can call me what Shido used for Tohka until she remembered who she was. So you may call me... Mio.] Mio replied.

"I see, it's good to meet you Mio. I hope we can get along and maybe help you rediscover who you are." Reine said, a brief flash of Shido's aura acting like a nod of approval.

"Alright, so... what do we need to do first?" Shido asked.

"First, we'll need to renovate your home. Since we're saving the Spirits it'll be a good idea to keep all of them close by." Reine said, opening a phone and making a call. "Guess I should also let the AST know it's time for them to finally act."

[Yep, that's pretty much how we got to us having breakfast right now and why Shido's got a bigger house than before. I do wonder what other Spirits are out there, and most of all... where's that Spirit who I had always fought with? The one they kept calling Devil?]

---

Origami was walking through town when she reached some kind of building that was also a secret base she learned about, she was here to visit some friends of hers that were part of the group working in this base for a quick visit. As she did, she noticed the two of them were already outside along with some others of their squad, their Captain absent due to some more specific work.

The first of the two was a girl with short brown hair in short twin tails, her name was Mikie Okamine, the younger cousin of Shido's teacher Tamae Okamine and a Wizard serving Ratatoskr under the AST sub-branch, also a freshman in Raizen High. Alongside her was the blonde and bespectacled Mildred F. Fujimura, a former DEM mechanic who left the organization due to reasons she's yet to explain, but have been implied to be related to a spirit and family/a friend.

"Oh, hey Origami, glad you made it." Mikie said, waving to her once they noticed her.

"Hey guys, why are you outside right now though? You usually are always inside, or at least aren't
"out here in a large group." Origami asked, honestly surprised. Then again, she wasn't with the AST, or aware of who they worked under and what they did. "Did I miss something?"

"Not exactly, more like we just got big news. Apparently, the group ours is a sub-division of just learned someone managed to save a Spirit and now her powers are sealed." Mildred replied, getting Origami's attention.

"Apparently, the DEM even made a bit attack that completely flopped on them at the last moment." Mikie added, recall other rumors they knew so far. "The one who stopped it all and saved this Spirit's name is... Shido Takamiya I think? He was at least involved in the whole thing, so I'm curious to how he helped out."

Origami silently gasped, and the two noticed her staring.

"Uh... Origami?" Mikie questioned, making Origami regain focus.

"Oh, sorry. I had a bad dream so I'm a bit distracted. Origami said, blushing in embarrassment. "It seems this is some good news for you at least, so congrats."

The three talked for about 5 more minutes before Origami left and headed towards Shido's house.

'TI need to talk to Shido, and privately' Origami thought, soon taking out her phone and sending Shido a text message about something as she neared his home.

Tohka pokes her fork onto the egg yolk of her breakfast and smiles as she starts eating it, soon moving to her seventh plate. Kotori sweat dropped at the sight of how much food Tohka seemed to be able to put down.

"...We are SO lucky Ratatoskr's got the money to help us pay for this." Kotori muttered, remembering Shido mentioning his wallet just had a funeral on the day he met Tohka again.

Suddenly Shido got a text from someone, and he took out his phone to see it, it said it was from Origami. The message said: "I want to talk to you, I'm waiting outside.", after seeing that and realizing he was gonna go shopping he finishes the last bit of his breakfast fast and stands up.

"Hmm? What's wrong Shido?" Tohka asked, her mouth still a bit full of food.

"Nothing Tohka, just got a good excuse to finally go shopping. Any suggestions for lunch today?" Shido asked, getting his shoes on.

"Oyakodon, it's been a while since we've had it." Mana said, Kotori nods as she eats some of her toast. Tohka soon finishes her most recent plate afterwards.

"I'll go with you Shido." Tohka said, but Shido shakes her head.

"No need, just enjoy your breakfast. I'll be back in a flash." Shido waved to everyone before he headed outside, and soon Tohka turned on the news channel to see the latest weather report. As it came on, the three noticed a report about some very odd weather.

Once Shido got outside, he looked around and heard a small metal tapping, he followed the source to see Origami hiding behind one of the metal polls for the electricity wires. The streets were filled with people at the moment, and Shido did learn Origami was kinda shy, so he figured that was it.

"H-hey Shido, I'm sorry if this is kinda weird..." Origami said, blushing a bit at the fact she was even
hiding like she was. "I'm sorry for just calling you out here like this. Though... can we maybe go somewhere with less people!?"

"That bad?" Shido asked, Origami nod and began sweating nervously. "Come on, I think I know a good place."

Soon Shido and Origami visit a public bathroom area that wasn't used much due to where it was anymore, so it was often a good place for people to talk privately. Origami seemed more comfortable now so it seemed to have worked.

"Oh yeah, what happened after the quake alarm the other day? I never saw you come back from the nurse." Shido asked, wanting to make sure his friend was OK. "What did you need medicine for anyways?"

"The nurse helped me over to the shelter, I heard you had left by then. For my condition... I'm not fully sure, but I suffer from strong headaches that debilitate me." Origami answered, it was technically true since her Spirit form reacted to mana and manifested, making her temporarily catatonic.

"Oh yeah, I left because I thought my sisters didn't evacuate. False alarm... nearly got me killed." Shido chuckled, rubbing his head. "They simply lost their phones by the-"

"Shido, you don't need to hide it." Origami quickly replied, surprising him. "...I know about the Spirits too, and there's no way you didn't see one while you were out there. Especially if you're still alive now."

Shido gasped at that, so Origami knew about the Spirits... but why wasn't she with Ratatoskr then?

"If you don't mind me asking... how do you know about the Spirits yourself?" Shido asked, hoping that he might get an answer from here.

"...It was the day of the Tenguu Fire." Origami revealed, making Shido gasp.

"The fire had broken out without any explanation beforehand, however I saw what created it. After you helped save my parents from some debris we got lost due to the flames, and I found her. The Flame Spirit - Efreet. She was crying, she wanted her family and couldn't stop her flames... and when I found my parents they died shortly after right as I saw, but by a different Spirit, one I never recognized except it used a beam of light to do the dead."

"Origami, please believe me. I've learned they were all former humans. The one who killed your parents likely did it on-" Shido began, but Origami held her hand to stop him.

"Don't get me wrong Shido, I'm not trying to make you misunderstand me. I don't hate the spirits for what happened." Origami softly replied, shocking him yet relieving him too. "If it's possible, I'd like to find that Spirit and tell her that I don't blame them. The fire was nature at work, you can't control what happens despite the pain it brings."

"Origami..." Shido breathed.

"Besides... I'm glad I have someone I can talk to about this now, it feels like you're finally treating me like normal now that I have nothing to hide." Origami replied, feeling like she had a burden lifted off her... only slightly that is. "Plus, if they really are former humans, they may be suffering as much as me, maybe more."
"...Guess I can't say don't worry about it, but even so, you did say I helped your parents back then." Shido said, scratching his head. "So, I'd like to be your friend, so you know that you'll always have someone you can depend on if you really need it. Is that a problem?"

Origami silently gasps and shakes her head.

"No, I... thank you Shido." Origami said, blushing slightly at his kindness. "Can I ask you this though? Do you really have the power to seal spirits, and... are you really human Shido?"

"Uh..." Shido blinked, he didn't know how to answer. "Well I'm sure I am, I mean I do have some spirit powers but not in the same way as Tohka."

"Tohka?" Origami blinked, not recognizing the name. "Wait, is that the first spirit you saved?"

"Yeah, that's..." Shido suddenly stops. "Wait, how do you know all about this exactly?"

"U-uh, I have some friends who know about the Spirits and they mentioned it. That's..." Origami blushes in nervousness and embarrassment. "...It's kinda why I wanted to talk with you in the first place. I'm sorry if I made myself seem awkward or suspicious."

Shido chuckled and pets her head, making Origami blush in surprise.

"It's alright, I trust you." Shido smiled, Origami unable to look him in the eyes now. "I bet you and Tohka would get along great, you should come meet her some time. Believe it or not we're actually childhood friends."

"U-uh... OK, if you ever wanna invite me over I guess we could meet." Origami replied as she twitched her fingers together, nervous about meeting the Spirit.

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Tohka hummed as she walked towards Shido's room with a vacuum cleaner.

"I'll get Shido's room nice and tidy as thanks for making us breakfast." Tohka thought, thinking of Shido petting her and saying she was a good girl. "Now let's get Started!"

As Tohka enters, she knocked over Shido's suitcase for trips, and the empty case opens... with a broken lock. Tohka panics over the result.

"Oh no, I broke Shido's storage box!" Tohka said, starting to panic.

"Tohka, try to calm down a bit." Maria said through Tohka's headset, making her breath slightly. "It's only a minor problem, and if you really want to fix the issue of you breaking it, as Shido's still out you can just take it to the repair shop."

"O-OK, I'll go take it over." Tohka replied, grabbing the box and quickly heading out the front door. One her way to the repair shop she passes by the bathroom area Shido was talking to Origami at, right as he walked out to see her.

"Tohka?" Shido called out, making Tohka yelp as she hid the case behind her in a badly done but convincing manner that Shido didn't see it from her distance.

"O-Oh hey Shido, I was just out doing some... jogging, yeah!" Tohka lied, quite badly no less. "Are you already done with the supermarket shopping? If not, go finish that and-"

Tohka suddenly sees Origami who sees her, the two both gasp at the sight of each other, but for different reasons.
"Y-you're with another girl?" Tohka stutters, suddenly collapsing to the ground and dropping the case. "Why Shido, why? You said you loved me didn't you, are you... are you now tired of me?"

The area cracks and shatters slightly as Tohka's power fluctuates again, Origami suddenly breathing heavy as the feeling Tohka's mana starts to react with her. However, Shido doesn't notice as Tohka runs off and he follows worried.

"Oh no... of all the Spirits he could have saved first, why her?" Origami panicked, she shakily reached into her pocket and grabbed a syringe to inject herself with. She began to sweat as her eyes flicker before going back, narrowly averting her spirit form waking up... at least she thought, until she felt it suddenly fluctuate faster.

"What? Oh no... no, no, no! The sedative's not working, why'd it have to be this moment of all times? It's happening... the seal is-"

Origami holds her head in pain as her eyes suddenly go from blue to light blue and become stuck in spirit form. She screams as the dark white spirit power floods her, her Inverse Astral Dress forming around her.

Meanwhile on the Fraxinus, the alarms suddenly go off as a Spirit's wave reactions are detected.

"A Spirit? Yes, there's no doubt, a Spirit wave reaction confirmed!" Maria said to Reine, who nod as she verified its existence.

"Which Spirit readings?" Reine asked, and soon saw the results and gasped. "Category E... then that means..."

"That's right, [Devil] wave reaction confirmed. However, it seems her readings are more erratic than normal... can we reach Shido or Tohka right now?" Maria asked, she knew Tohka at least had her headset and should be reachable.

"Uh oh, we've got a problem. It seems that Tohka's headset fell off without her realizing it and Shido doesn't have his in!" Kawagoe reported, and Maria paled at that.

"...Uh oh, this is bad." Maria sweated in worry, soon noticing something. "Wait... Commander Murasame, I've managed to detect something. It seems that this Spirit was nearby Shido and Tohka. Bringing up wavelength records now."

Reine looks as the spirit wavelength readings go back a bit until they end up stopping at...

"Wait a minute, didn't Shido go out to meet..." Reine gasps in response, suddenly piecing something together. "Bring up an image of [Devil] and then of the Raizen High Student Origami Tobiichi! Maria, analyze possible match readings in response!"

"Yes ma'am!" The crew shouts, getting the information.

Soon both images appear on screen, and after the associated data is applied, Maria looks over it before she analyzes how similar they may be. Soon she gasps as the results reach her.

"Commander Murasame, the results indicate that the result of similarity is..." Maria said, her eyes shaking a bit. "100%! Origami Tobiichi's identity as the Spirit [Angel] and [Devil] has been confirmed!"

"...And Shido and Tohka are in the line of fire as a result." Reine said, realizing they were danger.
"Maria, send the AST over to their location know! Deploy a Code Red!"

Tohka soon ends up at the viewpoint, which had been repaired since the time her Inverse Form broke it, and began crying as she looked out over the town. Shido soon finds her there and notices her tears.

"Hey, Tohka-

"DON'T TOUCH ME!" Tohka shouted, making Shido flinch and stop. "You like that white-haired girl better than me, don't you? That's the real reason why you left wasn't it!?

"No, not at all Tohka! I swear! I was only just meeting up with a classmate of mine." Shido tried to explain, but Tohka just looked away and didn't believe him, her face still tearing up a bit. Shido felt awful over the fact that this situation had even happened, hurting Tohka was the one thing he never wanted to do.

[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE!]

Shido and Tohka both suddenly react to that announcement.

"A Spirit, right now!? But which one is it?" Shido worried, only now just realizing he didn't have his headset in. Tohka panicked as she tapped her ear, only to realize she had lost hers somehow, right at that moment she notices a white flash.

"TOHKA!"

Soon Tohka notices Shido push her to the ground as the quake nears them, and the two were flung away by the recoil it left behind before landing in some bushes. Tohka stares in shock at Shido who had gotten badly hurt from the act.

"Shido... you protected me, even after what I said." Tohka suddenly teared up, now feeling horrible about having yelled at him. Her eyes closed as she began crying fully. "I'm so sorry!"

Before Shido could try to comfort her, he suddenly felt the spirit mana that had neared them and turned to see the Spirit known as Devil while still covered by her power. However, unlike last time, she was kneeling on the ground.

She slowly lifted her head up... revealing her veil was no longer hiding her face, and Shido gasped as he saw the fact of the Spirit standing before him. When the girl noticed his stare, she felt her face to realize the same fact, and that Shido had recognized her.

"Shido..." Origami breathed, realizing her secret had been discovered. "I'm sorry, but... please just stay away from me!"

Shido tried to call out and stop her, reaching out his hand. However, at that moment she disappeared, leaving him with the cold truth and revelation that had appeared before him, the revelation that the reason Origami had known so much about the Spirits had been because...

"Origami, why? Why didn't you let me know so I could help you? Why didn't..." Shido said somberly, wondering why Origami had trusted him but not tell him this.

"...Why didn't you tell me that you were a Spirit?"
First thing I wanna clear up, the fact what happened to the First Spirit came from 30 years ago, and her knowing Mana and Shido's names back in Chapter 1 may seem like a contradiction now, but hear me out. It will make sense, we just haven't gotten far enough in the story where I can give the proper explanation, if I were to tell you about it now, it would be a spoiler for one of Season 1's five planned arcs. I hope that cleared things up for anyone who was confused when seeing it.

Well anyways, whatever's been holding Origami's spirit powers back and had been giving her any manner of keeping herself as only Human... that's been shattered just by Tohka's power flaring out right at the worst moment. So now comes the biggest challenge between Shido since he began to officially work to save the Spirits, saving a Spirit who doesn't want to be saved.

Worse is at the same time, now Tohka's gotten depressed because she feels her anger got Shido hurt when she should have known him enough to trust that he'd never choose another girl over her, even if all the Spirits will need him in the future. Tohka's gotta learn to accept she's not the same kid she was between the gap of her memories and now, because Shido needs her if he's to succeed in saving the Spirits, especially since now the DEM will likely have detected Origami's powers fully re-awakening and will target her instantly.
Poor Origami, she gained Spirit powers and beyond her control, her parents were taken from her... and poor Tohka, she blames Shido for getting hurt in trying to protect her and now she's in tears over it. This is just a small sign of how this arc of the story will be full of tears and sadness. I'd honestly say at this rate, a certain emotion or feeling may play a role in each arc.

In Tohka's arc that emotion was happiness, centralizing how Shido gave it to her both before and after she got her memories back. As you'll notice for this arc and the next few until the Yamai twins appear in the story, the DEM will be showing up in more small scale attacks, this is because due to what happened in the prior arc.

The Arbitel's under some repairs, the heavy loss of Bandersnatch units means they can only send so many of them or other attack machines at once, and not to mention that Ellen's without a CR-Unit due to her signature Pendragon's destruction and therefore can't help at all until a new CR-Unit's made for her. I will however be making a certain DEM member mentioned in Tohka's arc show up, one I feel never truly lived up to her full potential in canon.

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Chapter 5, S1: Origami Unchained, Part 2

"Hey, Tohka! Come on open up!" Shido said, knocking on her door. "Please, I just wanna talk to you."

Shido soon heard a loud thump on her door as Tohka threw something at it her superhuman strength, making Shido pale as he saw the impact point.

"Go away! Leave me alone right now, just go..." Tohka scream, and soon Shido could hear her crying behind the door. Tohka wasn't mad at him anymore and the misunderstanding with Origami had been cleared up, the problem now however?

Well... Tohka took him getting even slightly hurt really hard, he had only been a bit bruised and Ratatoskr got that healed up pretty fast. However, to Tohka, it mattered how little as much as that it had happened at all. She quickly ran home after Origami had vanished, and Shido couldn't get in to talk to her.

"...Oh Tohka." Shido sighed to himself, wishing he knew how to help her. Not just her either. "How can I help both of them?"

Shido soon got a call on his phone and answered it, soon Ai's voice reaches his ears.

"Shido, I think I've got a way for me, Mai and Mii to help Tohka out. For now, go meet up with Reine and see what you can do for Origami." Ai replied, and while Shido would rather help Tohka, he sighed knowing right now Tohka might need to talk with someone other than him.

"OK, I'll head over to Ratatoskr now." Shido nodded, soon hanging up, He walked to a certain wall and knocked it twice to reveal a hidden door that lead to Ratatoskr. After about 5 minutes, Tohka suddenly heard a knock on her own door.
"Hey Tohka, it's Ai. Mind opening up for a second." Ai asked. "And no, Shido isn't here for when you open up."

Tohka hesitated for a moment, but decided to open the door and see Ai, and only Ai like she had claimed, standing there.

"Hey girl, I thought maybe you might wanna go get some lunch? You need a distraction." Ai said, and held up a bag by her. "I also brought some clothes to lend you so we can go shopping and get you your own."

"...I guess, I do need more than just this." Tohka said quietly, noting she still only had the one outfit Reine had given her and some sandals she borrowed from Mana.

Origami focused on the sounds of the voice she heard, trying to see if she could find the young girl she was sure had made the sounds of the voice she was hearing. She walked around a bit as she tried to see if she was getting closer or further away when...

"Sis... big brother..."

Origami finally found the source, and turned to see an entire building that was burning quite badly from flames engulfing the city. When she began to near it, she noticed by the intense fire present that it wasn't only as if this building was where the entire fire had begun, but was producing more flames for every second it was burning. At that moment however... Origami got a small glimpse of the person inside.

It was a red-haired girl with short twin tails tied by white and black ribbons with red tips, wearing some kind of kimono outfit, and something that looked like... Origami could only compare them to streamers having never seen anyone wear such a thing on any clothes she was familiar with. The girl suddenly turned as she saw her, and Origami noticed to her surprise that her pupils were whitened instead of black.

"Is that you, big brother... sis?" The girl asked, still crying.

Origami kept watching the burning hell fire before her, and soon realized that she was standing directly in flames without being hurt... no, she wasn't standing in them, she was creating them! It was even possible didn't have control of the flames she was creating, shocking Origami that this whole fire was being caused by this lost little girl.

"(I was too careless, I should have considered how well she'd be able to control it. She's not like her predecessor was after all.)"

Origami turned around and suddenly saw... no one? No, after a moment she noticed that something was there, but it was like the static in some bad video feeds she had occasionally seen before.

What surprised Origami most was that she could clearly make out this weird clear colored mosaic's shape, and it looked like a person. One that wasn't much older than herself or the girl inside the building. It wasn't just the appearance either, it's voice sounded both male and female, making it hard to know it's gender.

This figure slightly shifted, suddenly noticing Origami.

"(Oh? I'm sorry, I didn't notice you there little one. I'm guessing you're looking for your family in this mess?)" The being asked, Origami lightly nods, while this unseen... child based on Origami presumed, seemed friendly... he or she was scary to Origami because she couldn't see their face.
"(...I must apologize to you then, I indirectly caused this entire mess.)"

"H-huh? What do you mean, and... who are you?" Origami asked, this being was apologizing? The girl in the building seemed to be doing that, and by this point Origami could tell it was clearly by accident since her two siblings had to be in just as much danger.

"(I can't share my real name with you, but in the disguise of this nearly unseen form before you, I go by the name of Phantom.)" Phantom replied, introducing itself. "(This fire, I'm the reason this girl can make it. She had a wish she wanted to grant, and I gave her a gift... this blaze was the consequence of that act.)"

Origami showed surprise saw the figure pull out a white colored crystal and showed it to her.

"(I gave a crystal like this one, only red in color, hoping with its power she could achieve her desired wish... but she didn't have full control and caused this as a result. I've been trying to find her brother and sister for her since, hoping it might calm her down.)" Phantom answered, making Origami gasp. "(...I didn't mean for this to happen, not again.)"

"A-again?" Origami asked, suddenly feeling like Phantom's voice was... sad, guilty.

"(That little girl before you? She's not a Human anymore, she's something evolved from one... a Spirit.)" Phantom replied, making Origami blink.

"(Spirits are humans who've obtained one of these crystals, a power that is responsible for the Spacequakes. Over 30 years ago, a single man brought the original Spirit to our world, and rather than fear what damage it did... he craved more of it. That Spirit fell, and she shattered her power to keep it from him, and tasked me to make sure they're given to proper wielders that can protect them from that monster of a man.)"

Origami's eyes widened a bit.

"(However, I'm not very good, I've seen dozens of holders die, and I barely manage to keep the crystal safe and out of his hands. I recall Camael's previous wielder, and how painful it was to see someone so full of life to live lose it to someone who cares nothing for it. Now I've possibly subjected another to this fate, and this is just the first sign.)"

Origami was in shock, the Spacequakes were being caused by beings like this girl... but not because they wanted to. They were trying to protect something and like nature made it rain, those powers led to indirect problems.

"I... I want to help you!" Origami quickly said, surprising Phantom with her words. "Y-you said you didn't mean this right?"

Phantom nods.

"T-Then I want to help, if it means I can find my parents and save them then I'll take the burden of those powers! Please!" Origami shouted, once again surprising Phantom.

"(...I will if you truly want to, but I must warn you. The moment you take these powers you can never be an ordinary human ever again. If you're not careful with your powers...)

"(This disaster is what could happen.)"

"I'll be careful, I promise." Origami replied.

"(Alright then, first let me see if your compatible with Metatron's crystal.)" Phantom held the white
colored Sephira Crystal up to Origami, and once it did, it saw it glow brightly showing a strong capability to bond with her. "(...T-This is! I've never seen such a strong reaction! Alright then, it can work, touch this crystal.)"

Origami did so, and then at that moment... there was no turning back as Origami's pupils whitened.

Origami's Demon King, Satan, began firing its dark white beams of light across the entirety of the nearby town area. The blasts throwing around dirt and smoke which extinguished the flame, but did a lot of damage to the surrounding area. Origami's screams kept violently escaping her mouth, unable to calm down over the result of her actions as tears kept flowing down her face.

This would quickly stop as a mosaic shaped like a person appeared by her and suddenly tapped her head, a strong pulse suddenly making her Spirit power retreat inside her body like a lock and reverting her eyes back to normal, making Origami look like the human she had been only a short while ago. The being gave Origami a hug, it's body shaking before Origami heard crying from them.

"(I'm sorry little one, I never meant for this to happen. I didn't mean for your parents to die.)" Phantom cried, another failure and sin being weighed onto its already guilty consciousness.

"P-Please... bring them back, you have to have a way to, right?" Origami asked, the figure only cried more and looked away, making Origami scream and shed more tears. "Just kill me... please, I don't wanna live anymore! Not with my mom and dad!"

Suddenly Origami felt herself be slapped by Phantom.

"(DON'T EVER SAY YOU WANT TO DIE!)") Phantom yelled with incredible answer, stunning Origami.

"(Please don't... I can't bear to hear that again. I want you to listen to me, OK? For a while you may be lonely, but I swear to you that there's people out there waiting, friends that will become like family to you. Your parents would want you to live, so find those people and keep living for their sake!)

"D-do you mean that?" Origami stuttered, still crying.

"(I do, no one's born just to die. We're all born to live... live with others we care about.)" Phantom replied, hugging her closer.

"(I know for you it's not me, I've taken too much from you. I've even pushed your power to undergo an Inversion. For now, I'll give you the means to stay human for just a bit longer... but it won't last forever. I just hope by then those friends will find you... what's your name little one?)"

"Origami... Tobiichi." Origami cried.

"(Then live Origami, because someone's waiting for you out there. You just have to find them!)" Phantom shouted, soon waving her hand above Origami as she fell asleep. Phantom took the ashes of her parents into her hand and using her powers, imbued them into Origami.

"(May your souls hopefully watch over your daughter, please protect her from the struggles she has to face due to my mistakes today.)"

Origami suddenly gasped as she woke up within an abandoned building area she was hiding in, panting as the stress of her powers still fully returning to her, beginning to overwhelm her. She had
switched her Astral Dress into the outfit she had been wearing prior to reduce the stress on her slightly.

"I knew this day was coming... and I still can't accept it." Origami weakly said, almost swearing her sweat was because of a fever. Origami slightly laid down against the wall as she tried to rest her body.

"Phantom... I wanted to believe you, but now I think you were just lying to me." Origami stated to herself. "No one's waiting for me... I'm just a murderer who killed her own parents. It would be better if I just disappeared here and now, after all I'm no Angel, I'm the Devil."

Origami began to shed tears before she began crying, at this point she just wanted the DEM to arrive due to her powers alerting them and end her misery already. No one could help her... not even Shido who said he'd be there for her if she ever needed it.

"You can't help me Shido... you may have said that now, but the moment you learn what I did... even you'll think I'm beyond forgiveness."

Tohka was sitting in a restaurant alongside Ai, Mai and Mii who were sitting in the opposite side of the table. She had only gotten a small salad, her usual appetite fully absent. The trio began looking at each other knowing something was wrong.

"Uh..." Ai began.

"Err..." Mai replied, also unsure of what to say. Ironically it was Mii who sighed, knowing what they needed to ask her.

"Tohka, we'll get right to the point here. You've been really irritated lately. Please tell us what's going on." Mii stated, soon leaning a bit closer to the trouble Spirit. "But if I had to take a guess, this is related to Shido isn't it?"

"No! No, you're wrong! This has nothing to do about how Shido got hurt trying to protect me!" Tohka shouted.

"Tohka, no one denies like that if they aren't bothered by what they denied." Mii said as she slid back, Tohka suddenly realizing she only proved what was bothering her. Tohka stared for a moment before bemoaning as she grabbed her head and lowered her head, her hair covering her eyes.

"I don't know what's wrong... I'm in the worst mood ever and I don't even understand why." Tohka said sadly, the bottle on her feelings finally popping open to let them all flood out. "I've never doubted Shido before, I know he loves me... I've never believed he'd leave me. He proved that when he came to save me from those DEM jerks."

"Go on, let it all out." Mai urged, knowing Tohka was still keeping something held in.

"It's... it's just when I saw Shido had been alone with that girl, it felt so wrong. Nothing I believed stayed with me for that one moment as my anger flooded my head." Tohka said, tears flowing from her eyes. "That's never happened to me, I don't understand it at all. I'm so worried something's wrong with me."

The three sighed in relief, turns out Tohka's problem wasn't as serious as everyone thought. In fact, all she said answered just what the problem was.

"Tohka, nothing's wrong with you. You just don't understand what it's like to be a teenager." Ai
answered, making Tohka's head lift up as she looks at the three. "Think about it Tohka, the last time you remember seeing Shido and Tohka you were still considered a kid. Now you've suddenly come back with a gap of memories missing."

"Transitioning is a hard part to growing up, each year and the memories of what you learn is important." Mai followed up, putting a hand on Tohka's. "You just never got to have that, or it's been taken away from you. You're an innocent and naive girl, but that's not why this happened. It's because you don't know how to react to what's changed."

Tohka stared at the three.

"But... then why'd I get so mad at-

"Tohka, you said it yourself, right? You love Shido. For the last few years, neither of you knew where each other went and lost your memory of each other. Wouldn't you be scared if you felt anything could make you lose him or take him away again?" Mii asked, making Tohka gasp.

"See? That's why you got angry, and why you got so sad when you got hurt. You've just had to experience a lot of changes you never got ready for. I'm sure Shido would tell you the same. That's exactly why he didn't hesitate to protect you, he doesn't want to ever let you go again."

Tohka stares for a moment before crying again, this time with the three patting her head.

"Now come on, let's go help you buy some clothes and then go see Shido so he can see your smiling face again." Ai replied, after she let it all out, Tohka nods silently. She may have not known the three very long, but it nice to see so many people who cared about her well-being.

In a building far away from Tenguu City, stationed on a mass of land out in the ocean called Arubi Island, a building holding DEM's logo was present with Westcott in his temporary office as he gets off a video chat with the official DEM board of directors at the main branch building back in England.

He had just had to tell them due to recent events he would be unable to return until the Arbitel was repaired, and he had to hide his real expression under a fake smile as he was still angered how badly the plan to capture Tohka had gone... all because of one single boy. Soon from a spot on the table, Marina appeared.

"What is it Marina? I have you know right now I have no patience for things that are unimportant." Westcott said grumpily.

"Good news and bad news I'm afraid. The good news is that [Devil] has resurfaced father, but the bad news is she's appeared at Tenguu City." Marina answered, Westcott nearly snapped the holo-tablet he was holding.

"Damn it, it's as if we're being mocked." Westcott muttered, knowing they lacked the resources to launch another group to subdue her. Right at that moment...

"If it's a problem for you, how about I deal with it."

Westcott turned to see a familiar red haired girl with a smug look on her face walk in the room, he was quite familiar with her. While Westcott knew Ellen was the strongest Wizard in the world, and the top member of the DEM's wizards, there were other powerful Wizards in what he named the Adeptus numbers.
There were twelve Wizards who possessed this ranking. Though even among them the top three, Ellen being Adeptus 1, were all considered to be monsters for being the only ones to have actually killed a Spirit despite the failure to obtain their Sephira Crystals.

The woman before him right now was the one known as Adeptus 3: Jessica Bailey, an ex-torturer before becoming a DEM Wizard. What made her a powerful was that knowledge she had as a torturer, allowing her to kill the previous [Diva] two years ago by striking all her vitals and breaking her mind with mere words, giving her the nickname of "Scarlet Killer", especially once she became the only one capable of using a weapon series called the Scarlet Licorice.

"Jessica, I'm surprised you knew where to find us." Westcott said, seeing one of his strongest wizards helped amend the issue. "I take it you'd like to capture [Devil] then?"

"Of course, and it doesn't hurt that I stopped by and picked up a little extra muscle on the way here." Jessica smirks, snapping her fingers as a light glowed at the nearby hall. Westcott looks as the sound of a machine moving to the room is hard, making him smirk a bit.

"Jessica, you always seem to know just what you'll need." Westcott said with a chuckle. "Very well then, I'll leave everything to you. Take the Heptameron and bring everyone you need over. Perhaps a small force will avoid attracting that boy's attention to us."

Shido soon made it to the Ratatoskr base, Reine turning as he appeared.

"Shido, thank you for making it." Reine said, holding a bit of coffee in her hands and drinking a bit before continuing. "Just to ask, no problems after your earlier healing? Better we be safe instead of sorry."

"Yeah, nothing's off." Shido answered, soon he noticed the AST training nearby in the battlefield simulator and saw Mana with them wearing a blue CR-Unit. "Wait, is that Mana in there?"

"That she is, we learned her mana works well for the same purpose as a Wizard so the AST is helping her train so she can fight with you and Tohka." Reine answered, taking another sip of her coffee. "She's doing quite well with the Murakumo suit we made just for her. I'd say it shouldn't be much longer now."

Mana blocks an attack from a few wizards using her territory, then notices Shido and waves.

"Hey big brother!" Mana said, soon dropping the territory as everyone looked tired.

"Alright, take 5 everyone." The AST's captain, Ryouko Kusasabe announced. Once she did the AST members all went to have a lunch break while Mana walked over to her big brother alongside Mikie and Mildred.

"You looked like you were having fun here Mana." Shido chuckled, soon noticing the two who came up with her. "So, who are these two friends of yours?"

"This one is Mikie Okamine, she's your teacher's younger cousin. Mana stated as she motioned to her, and then Mildred next. "And this is Mildred. She's not a wizard, but she used to work for the DEM until something made her leave for Ratatoskr. She helped make the suit I'm using now."

"Hello, it's nice to meet you in person." Mikie smiled as she waved hello.

"Same here, if you need any help with a machine just let me know." Mildred said, giving a playful smirk as she put her arms behind her head.
"Nice to meet you both. Hey Mana, have you... you know, heard about Origami?" Shido asked, and noticed his sister give a somber look as she nodded. "I'm really worried about her, before she left she said for me to not help her."

"That is strange, but I know you can help her. She just has to be scared right now." Mana said, putting a hand on Shido's shoulder. "You didn't give up on Tohka so don't give up here."

"Yeah, thanks for that Mana. I needed to hear it." Shido smiled before walking over to where Reine went, Hiroto and Maria beside her. "So, what should we do to try and help Origami?"

"Well I've been comparing Origami's current situation to some of my dating sims and Maria's been helping me figure out what are some red flags." Hiroto replied, making Shido raise his eye brow. "What? This may be real life, but usually the best way to solve a problem is to know what not to do."

"Maria, is that his job here or something?" Shido asked the AI, who chuckles a bit.

"I'm not human like the rest of you, so Hiroto often helps me gather data for responses both good and bad by playing dating sim games and the like." Maria answered, scratching her cheek.

"I compile all of that data so if there's ever a situation with a Spirit we don't know how to respond to, I'll be able to help. While Hiroto and a few others give human input for situations I can't predict. Ratatosk's got someone for anything because anything may happen with the spirits. We've gotten some results so it works."

Shido blinked, and then just gave a shrug.

"Alright, if you think it's working then I guess there's really no reason for me to question it." Shido replied, even if he was still feeling odd about it. He soon makes a determined look as the four begin discussing a plan.

'Plus, if it helps Origami, then I'll use whatever I can take' Shido thought.

Origami was still laying down in the abandoned building she had been resting in, still panting as her spirit power kept stressing her body as it tried to stabilize from the years being sealed and contain, her Demon King - Satan floating around her protectively in case danger came by.

"Just let it... just let it end." Origami breathed, just wanting all of her pain to end.

[Master...]

Origami ignored the concern Satan tried to show her, but she was soon forced to notice something as she felt a mess of power gathered together near Tenguu City, she got up as she realized what it was.

"...They're here." Origami said, she soon rubbed her Demon King floating over her head. "This is goodbye, may your next wielder be someone without the curse I have. Phantom, regardless of if you were telling me the truth or not... I'll never find them, it's time I end this suffering."

[Master, please don't do it...]

Ignoring Satan again, Origami reformed her Inverse Astral Dress and flew off towards the area where her final battle would begin and end, and where death's embrace was waiting to finally end her sad story of a life.
Shido was seen waiting outside near the statue fountain area where Mai had told him to wait for Tohka at, wanting them to finally clear up things after the earlier incident which they helped resolve at least for how Tohka felt so they could both apologize to one another, and to also have Shido see her in one of the new outfits they helped Tohka pick out. He checked the time on his phone when...

"Shido!" Tohka called out.

Shido turned as he saw Tohka running towards him, and his eyes widened when they did.

Alongside her signature butterfly ribbon, Tohka was wearing a frilled pink dress shirt with a second white layer of thrills underneath and slightly poofy sleeves, a simple string necklace with a gold ring charm and a small turquoise gem hanging from the chain link holding the ring, pale blue jean shorts and brown sneakers. She also had a yellow purse hanging over her left shoulder.

Once Tohka stopped near him, she smiled briefly before making a confused face at his reaction.

"What's wrong Shido? Are you alright?" Tohka asked, worried if she had done something.

"I'm fine, it's just..." Shido began, trying to make sure what he said next wasn't dumb, stupid or weird. "Just seeing how you look in those clothes made me realize... how beautiful you've become since we were kids."

It takes Tohka a second to register that before her face goes red with a blush and her eyes go white, facing teenage bashfulness and embarrassment for the first time that she could remember.

"U-uh... thank you Shido, that's really sweet." Tohka said, hoping she didn't sound strange or odd. The two took a moment to look away and recollect themselves, and once they did... "Shido, I owe you an apology for a lot of things. I felt a lot of things I didn't really know about... I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive me."

"No, I'm the one who should apologize. You were the one I should have explained everything to." Shido replied, shaking his head. "I don't know why you were out at the time, but I should have at least said everything. Anyone would have found it weird and questioned me in that situation."

"Shido..." Tohka said softly, soon feeling Shido pet her head.

"Tohka, by now I think you know that for me to help the spirits they need to trust me like you do, possibly feel the same way as you. As painful as it may be..." Shido began, hoping he didn't screw up with his next words and make Tohka feel worse.

"...I just want you to know regardless of what happens, you'll always be the girl closest to my heart and most special to me. We have a bond I don't share with anyone else. We've known each other since we were kids and were sure about what we felt without any doubts. You'll always be first no matter what kinda girls become part of my life. That's something no one else can ever take away. So... never doubt what we have, because no one can take that."

Shido watched as Tohka blinked a bit, her eyes widened slightly... and then with a smile on her face, she sheds a few tears before hugging him close.

"Shido... thank you so much, this is exactly why I love you." Tohka sniffles a bit, a huge weight lifted off of her shoulders. Shido smiles and hugs her back. No matter what happened he would never abandon Tohka, or anyone else precious to him.

"We're stronger together than we are alone. That's why right now, I need your power, I need it so we can save Origami. The girl you saw with me earlier." Shido explained, catching Tohka's attention as
she nodded a bit. "She's... she's a Spirit like you, and I don't know why but she doesn't want to be saved."

"She... she doesn't?" Tohka asked as if she thought her hearing had been shot, someone who didn't want to be saved? It made no sense to her.

"I don't know why she said that either, but... she's like us." Shido continued. "Just like neither of us can remember our parents, Origami's lost hers too, but unlike us she'll never get them back because she saw them die before her. I can't bear to watch her suffer anymore, but I can't reach her alone."

'Shido, your heart is so... good. When someone's in pain you can't turn your back on them. Just like how you didn't turn yours' back on me.' Tohka thought as she smiled, remembering how much Shido did and risked for her against the DEM. 'Now it's time I do the right thing and finally pay you back, I want to save her too.'

"You can count on me Shido. Like you said, we're stronger together than alone."

Shido smiled and took her hand in his.

"Thank you Tohka."

[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE!]

Both of them suddenly gasp at the sound, knowing exactly what that meant. Both tapped their headsets in response.

"Reine, is Origami reappearing? If so then where?" Shido asked, although it was Maria who replied.

"It's not, the DEM's set it off!" Maria said panicked. "Origami's spirit wavelength definitely being detected, but no Spacequake is going off. It must be like with the battle against Tohka, they're making the public leave so they don't have any witnesses for what happens next. You need to go and help her!"

Maria soon appeared on Shido's phone and showed him a location on his GPS.

"Quick, both of you need to hurry to this spot. Origami's mental readings..." Maria said slowly, knowing how Shido might react. "I'm not fully sure, but I think she might be trying to purposely meet her end. Her will to live seems like it's almost dead. Please hurry!"

Shido's eyes widened at that, and soon he picks up Tohka bridal style, making her blush a bit from the sudden act.

"S-Shido!"

"Come on, let's hurry!" Shido shouted, charging mana to his feet he quickly runs towards the location while Tohka screamed a bit from the shock of his speed and holds on tightly to keep herself from falling off. "Anything else I should know Maria?"

"Just this, remember that Ellen girl you fought?" Maria asked, she sees Shido nod via the visual screen the Fraxinus was using right as Reine finally came back from what she was doing. "Ellen is the strongest of DEM, but due to a few factors. There are two others like her who've accomplished the same thing of... killing a spirit."

"Dang it... so one of them is part of the group that's coming?" Shido asked.
"That's right, though it's more like she's leading an entire group of attack drones like the Bandersnatch you've fought." Reine answered, typing something as she does. "Her name's Jessica Bailey, she's Adeptus 3, making her the weakest of this trio officially but not any less dangerous. Do not drop your guard."

"Right, now planning too." Shido replied, soon going faster as Tohka screams more from the speed, her eyes now watering from it.

Origami landed in some abandoned building that was planned to be demolished but had little work on it done cause of occasional Spacequakes as of recently. Origami walked across the ground before her and soon heard someone cackle a bit before Jessica walks into view in her CR-Unit, Mordred.

"So, we meet in person [Devil], I hope you don't mind this but I'm gonna kill you and take your powers for myself." Jessica cackled, not noticing Origami's blank look.

"...Go ahead, just kill me." Origami said monotonously, shaking the wizard. "I don't have any reason to live, not after spilling the worst kind of blood any person could splatter. I'd rather you end it so just do it."

Jessica stared oddly but soon laughed a bit.

"A spirit who wants to die? That's a twist, I guess a large force wasn't necessary at all, so I'm lucky I didn't bring one." Jessica said, snapping as a bunch of cat like versions of the Bandersnatch appear. "Go get her!"

The cat like robots all pounce forward towards Origami, at that moment...

[Master! I will not let you just kill yourself, even if you refuse I will defend you!]

Before Origami could stop her Demon King, Satan summoned the black feathery pillars and aimed at the cat like robots before it fired at them. One was suddenly hit and smoke formed, making Jessica smirk.

'She's smirking, why?' Origami thought, unaware of a shadow suddenly reappearing behind her. One of Satan's pillars turned, but was too slow to stop whatever it was, and Origami suddenly screamed in pain as a claw slashed at her Astral Dress. "What happened?"

Origami turned to see the cat robot that got shot with only a missing arm before it disappears from view entirely.

"Meet one of the many brethren models of the Bandersnatch, the Cheshire." Jessica said, a smug smile on her face. "Where the Bandersnatch like to fast and swarm you, the Cheshires are sneaky and stealthy. If you try to find them, they'll play cat and mouse with you before they massacre you like the rodents you are."

The hidden Cheshires soon all rushed at Origami, disappearing and reappearing as Satan's pillars moved erratically, unable to predict their movements before they all rushed and began striking Origami. Each time Origami was hit, she screamed in agony, and Jessica laughed as she decided not to finish off Origami slowly, refusing to grant any mercy.

Soon as one of the Demon King's pillars finally locked on, a Bandersnatch rushed and gouged its claws into it.

[Augh! M-Master! Look out, they're...]
Origami saw Satan slightly crack above her as each of its pillars were struck hard by the Cheshires' flurry and left damaged and unusable on the ground. Soon enough she felt the Cheshires begin to attack her again, soon causing her to fall to the ground un-moving.

"So, you really did wanna die, didn't you? I didn't even see some of your more impressive techniques or that blade form trick." Jessica giggled cruelly, stepping her heel on Origami's head and making her cry out.

"Well... then I guess this is the best fun I can have killing you, but maybe I should strike this city a bit in case I hit [Sovereign] during it."

Origami didn't even respond, just waiting in place for her to be killed, her Demon King too weak to help her in any form. Jessica frowned at this as she knew it wasn't any fun for her now.

"Hmm... yeah, I'll use your power to hurt more people. That'll be more fun than just killing you like you want." Jessica said, smirking dangerously as Origami gasped a bit at the claim. "Yeah, that's it! Now it's fun again! We'll do that!"

Jessica motions for a certain machine to come into view, and suddenly it suddenly grabs Origami by her hair. Right as Jessica was prepared to laugh again, she suddenly felt something crash through behind her and saw none other than Shido with slightly disoriented Tohka still in his arms.

"Who the hell are you!?" Jessica growled.

"We're this girl's friends, and for what you've done... we're going to make you pay!" Shido said, with Tohka regaining her senses and shaking off the daze.

"Yeah, you're in for it now!" Tohka added.

"Oh really? I'm in for it? Hah, I think it's time you dealt with the Cheshires!" Jessica smirked, the cat like robots vanishing from view again. At that moment Shido looked at Tohka directly.

"Tohka, are you ready? It's time we your power together." Shido asked, and Tohka nodded.

"I trust you Shido." Tohka said.

Shido soon closed his eyes and began to focus, about to do something he recalled Reine telling him about before leaving to meet up with Tohka.

-Flashback Start-

Shido looked as Reine sat down with him at a table.

"Shido, recall how I said you can also call upon Tohka's powers?" Reine asked, Shido nodding in response. "Similar to how Tohka's powers flow back into her when she gets emotional or depending on her will, the latter of which she's still yet to fully master, you can do a similar thing with her power sleeping within you."

"So how does it work, is it like when I used Sandalphon?" Shido wondered.

"It is, but more. By letting her power within you flow to the essence of the mana sleeping within yourself and linking with it, while you won't gain all of her powers like flight, you will gain her strength." Reine explained, showing it via a visual she drew on a tablet. "What depends on it working is your desire, what you wish for at that moment."
"So, saving a Spirit would be one way to draw it out." Shido realized, gasping slightly. "Alright, I understand."

*End Flashback*

As all of the Cheshires began to rush at Shido, he suddenly holds out his right hand and his mana aura glows a bit.

"**I call to the power welling deep beyond my heart, now break the dimensional bonds before me...**" Shido began, Tohka feeling something warm well up as Shido's aura became purple like her spirit mana. "**And let the spiritual force sleeping within be seen!**"

The source of the mana welling within Shido's body was seen before purple strings of spirit mana all cross and surge through his entirety, soon amassing and swirling towards his mana and connecting to it, making it glow brightly before it turned purple and burst out through his entire essence.

Back outside of Shido's body, he raised his hand up and grabbed the air before Sandalphon appeared in his grasp. Following this, hair and eyes soon took the same color as Tohka's did as her spirit power settled into his being, making her stare in shock, as well as Jessica's who saw the Angel in his hands.

"Shido..." Tohka breathed, completely amazed.

At that moment, with Tohka still in his arms, Shido rushed forward at the Cheshires and swung Sandalphon forward as a purple glow enveloped him.

"Hang on Origami, I'm coming to save you!"

And the battle to save Origami begins! I hope I had a good flow for the romantic interactions between Shido and Tohka, as I hope I did for helping flesh out some of the characters who are ascended extras in this story like Ai, Mai and Mii who had a good dose of it in this chapter. I had them take Reine's place in trying to help Tohka feel better over her slight depression for what happened to Shido, it felt right since I don't plan to use the whole triple date idea during Kurumi's arc.

While some of the other characters still need an opportunity to flesh them, I assure you I'll work on that in follow arcs. I'd say for the next Spirit's arc, I'll bring Hiroto and Tamae into a stronger spotlight, as I will some members of the AST such as Mikie, Mildred and Ryouko. Mildred especially since I've got a surprise twist for her reason behind leaving the DEM, one that'll be important during a certain arc.

I hope you like the Cheshire units I made, in DAL the name is used as "Cheshire Cat" via a CR-Unit that only appears in Date AST Strike, but since Artemisia's not comatose in this like in that manga, I've made it so that particular suit was never invented in this story, and I figured since there's already a Bandersnatch robot... why not make a Cheshire?

I did mention a Jabberwocky robot in Tohka's arc briefly for a similar reason. They'll be a slower, but bulkier, and more powerful and armored version of Bandersnatch. So expect to see more robots like that used, and not all will be named after Alice in Wonderland stuff either, I might throw in a few Norse creatures or such depending on how well their names
See you next time when Origami's arc finally reaches its finale, but unlike with Tohka's arc, the fight won't be the end. There's still one more hurdle for Shido and Tohka to overcome to save Origami... herself.
Chapter 6

Here we are, the conclusion of Origami's arc, and boy will there be a powerful moment at the end where the greatest enemy has to beat is Origami's own self that's insistent of being beyond saving due to what happened in her past. Now it's time for Shido to deal with the Cheshires and the rest of Jessica's army before she takes the stage and fights herself.

I'm sorry if I'm making Tohka seem like a damsel that's just along for the ride right now, but I'm not intending to. The reason I'm only having her being held by Shido right now because this is his first time using the... *thinks* let's call it his "Spirit Ascension" technique since I don't have a better name for it, so he needed her close by. Likewise, Tohka hasn't trained enough to be able to temporarily call back her powers to fight alongside him.

That and I need her there present so Jessica realizes she's [Princess]/[Sovereign] and the DEM becomes aware that Spirits are being sealed, shifting their plans as now the Inverse Spirits that Westcott has been after not only reverted back, but now he can't claim their powers the way he wants. This will slowly change his plans once Season 2 of the fanfic comes along where he starts going a much different, AND much darker, direction with his plans...

With that out of the way, let's continue on with the chapter now as Shido shreds some scrap metal with Sandalphon!

Chapter 6, S1: Origami Unchained, Part 3

Shido took a deep breath, and focused his gaze towards the enemies standing before him.

"I call to the power welling deep beyond my heart, now break the dimensional bonds before me... and let the spiritual force sleeping within be seen!" Shido shouted!

Shido raised his hand up and grabbed the air before Sandalphon appeared in his grasp. Following this, hair and eyes soon took the same color as Tohka's as her spirit power settled into his being. At that moment, with Tohka still in his arms, Shido rushed forward at the Cheshires and swung Sandalphon... and suddenly a Cheshire was cut in half!

"What!?!" Jessica screamed in shock, she soon turned her head as she kept hearing this same sound. Multiple shredding sounds were heard as Shido somehow found each hidden Cheshire and cut them apart, soon destroying every one that was left. "This is impossible, how?"

"Is it?" Shido asked, making Jessica look behind her as he was there with Sandalphon still held out.

"Shido... that was amazing. It's like your even stronger than when Sandalphon let you wield it last time, but how?" Tohka breathed, amazed by what she just witnessed

[That's easy master.]

"Sandalphon?" Tohka said surprised, she and Shido hearing the voice of the Angel only the two of them could hear.

[It's the bond between the both of you, your power is within Shido right now. It's not just me aiding him, it's you.]
Tohka stares at the sword in shock before looking at Shido who smiled back before returning his
gaze towards Jessica who suddenly pieced things after taking a good look at Tohka's face firsthand.

"That Angel, that color of mana, that girl's face... of course I get it now! That's [Sovereign] you're
holding in your arms right now!" Jessica growled, annoyed that this boy was ruining her plans.
However, he hadn't noticed Origami's presence yet which she'd use against him at the right moment.

"If that's the case I'll just capture her now! Come to me my Bandersnatch forces!"

Soon a bunch of the familiar Bandersnatch robots appear around the two.

"Bandersnatch, capture [Sovereign] now!" Jessica ordered, the Bandersnatch scanned for her
presence... but suddenly turned to Jessica and flashed off their error code. "Error!? What the hell are
you talking about, she's standing right there!"

The Bandersnatch continue blinking their eyes, stating they don't detect Tohka's spirit mana, as
[Sovereign] or [Princess]. Jessica's eyes pale at that revelation.

"Impossible... are you telling me this girl doesn't have Spirit powers? No, not just that, is she not
even Inverted now!? That can't be, the appearance she has, it's too similar now that I've recognized
it!" Jessica screamed, at that moment she snaps her fingers. "Come to me my army!"

Soon more Bandersnatch and Cheshires, along with a robot with appendages that folded into dress
like cloaks when they landed appeared.

"Let's see how you do against these along with their barrier model counterparts, the Alice!" Jessica
cackled, sure they were turn the tide as a united force. Soon they all rushed at Shido who shifted his
feet. "Now die!"

Shido rushed and dodged the claws of the Cheshire and Bandersnatch units, followed by evading the
mana shots the Alice models were firing. As he did he jumped into the air and then landed, soon
moving fast and slashing at each of the machines before him. Once he hit an Alice model, a territory
formed to protect them and some of the nearby units near them.

"See that? The Alice's territories are unbreakable barriers made by the Ashcroft Beta devices, you
can't pierce or break them!" Jessica smirked, snickering at the sight. However, Shido decided to take
a closer look at how he hit.

"A slash attack didn't work, how should I deal with this?" Shido wondered aloud.

"Shido, try a thrust. Just give it all your might." Tohka replied, making Shido look at her before
nodding with a smile. "Now go get them!"

Shido rushed ahead again, this time he thrust Sandalphon forward like Tohka had suggested, and to
his joy and Jessica's horror, the Alice's territories couldn't handle the more focused strikes and
shattered before Shido cut through them.

"No way..." Jessica breathed, not able to believe the Alice's barrier was overcome that fast, or even
at all. "This isn't possible... it's a nightmare. This isn't real at all!"

"Game over, you've lost." Shido said, pointing Sandalphon at her. Jessica growled and decided she
needed to bring out her trump card.

"Not yet, it's not over until I say so!" Jessica claims, snapping as a huge amount of smoke forms as
something jumps from the ceiling floor. Shido and Tohka cover their eyes as Jessica runs off to meet
the Cheshire that had taken Origami to the area she was planning to use her for something... 'special'.

Once the two could see again, they see a quintet of giant bulky reptilian like Bandersnatch models. Unlike their brethren models, they were about four or five times bigger overall and moved on all four limbs instead of just two.

"BEHOLD! This is our juggernaut unit, the might Jabberwocky, now my gargantuan monsters... take him down!" Jessica's voice echoed. Soon the five behemoth machines all begin to slowly walk before forcing themselves into run at the duo. Tohka soon moves one of her hands onto Sandalphon to hold onto it with Shido's.

"Tohka?" Shido asked in surprise.

"We wield the same resolve Shido, let's bring them together into one strike." Tohka said, her face showing her readiness to fight. Shido stared for a moment before nodding and tightened his grip.

With a might shout from both, the two run forward and the closest Jabberwocky swings down its fist, Shido dodges it's strike and then appears by the side of its arm.

"Here we go, Sandalphon... STRIKE!" Shido screamed, swinging the broadsword together with Tohka. They slashed through the behemoth machine before Shido jumped across its arm to the next, and then began cutting down on it.

When the third swung towards them, Shido slid under before slashing upwards and doing a spinning cut across its chest area. Then he zig-zagged around the fourth before the two swung again and then once they reached the fifth that was about to swing both hands down on them.

"That won't be... enough!" Both Shido and Tohka shout together, the strike it hard with a thrust and through it into the other five as cuts dig into all of them and they have trouble moving. Shido kicks his foot to launch himself before they thrust one final time... and soon all five glowed purple everywhere from the overload of Tohka's spirit power burning them from within and explode!

"We did it Shido!" Tohka cheered, making Shido give a toothy grin back to her.

"Now come on, let's find her and help Origami." Shido said, the two rushed ahead. After they ran for a bit they saw Jessica on the top level of the entire building's structure. By that point, they saw a Cheshire hand Origami to Jessica. "Hey!"

Jessica turns around at his shout.

"Oh, I'm so sorry. I'm afraid I can't listen to your complaints. Because..." Jessica begins before smirking and shoving Origami into a device that restrains her and starts draining her power from her. Jessica stands on top of it with a deranged smile before it's revealed to be a machine more massive than the Jabberwocky units form before.

"Now I'll use this spirit's precious power to murder your worthless existences out of this world for good! Let's see how you like Devil's power when it's inside this, the Spirit killer weapon Vanargandr!"

Using the broke shards of Satan's pillars from before, the Vanargandr turned them invisible and hid them throughout the field and as Shido tried to get near Jessica, the burst ended up knocking the duo back a bit as a result.

"What the?" Shido said surprised, Jessica laughed with her mouth wide open as they were now caught in her trap. "Shit... I think we're in trouble. I bet there's something we can't see around here."
Shido tried to think of a way around as Jessica suddenly blasts Origami's spirit power at her from, he takes a small hit to his arm and yells in pain before he starts dodging out of the way. As he did however, he causes a few more bursts to form from the unseen shards.

"We're sitting ducks like this!" Shido growled, but then Tohka touched his cheek and surprised him.

"Then don't trust your eyes Shido. Believe in more than what you can see, what do you feel?" Tohka replied, and that made Shido's eyes widen. With that he closed his eyes and breathed before he began walking again.

He knew unlike the Cheshire units they were almost too small to touch and immobile, so he couldn't rely on their size and movements to hit them... he had to go beyond his normal senses. Jessica looked at him strangely and then cackled.

"Are you insane from damage to your brain now? Good, then I can kill you for irreparable mental damage!" Jessica mocked as she summoned the actual pillars using Satan's powers and aimed them while preparing the Vanargandr to fire at them.

As Shido began to walk, he swung Sandalphon and suddenly cut the shards apart, making them visible as they dropped to the ground and their explosive energy dissipated away. Jessica stared in shock as this kept happening, then growled.

"So what if you can see them, I'm still gonna blast you out of existence!" Jessica screamed, soon aiming the Vanargandr's arm cannons and firing a pair of dark white beams at them. She smirked as the bright light of its force hit them. "And now you're dead!"

Her words were spoken two soon as Shido slashed through the light, showing the two unharmed as Sandalphon shimmered in the light of her beams briefly before they fully faded away. Jessica's eyes shook in disbelief. This nobody of a human boy before her, he was ruining everything!

"Strike him down now!" Jessica yelled, the two sword sections on the two pillars flew out and vanished, but Shido simply blocked them by parrying with Sandalphon and soon enough he swung one towards the other and sliced them in half. "What... no, no, no, no! Alright, time for the big guns now!"

Soon Jessica shouted loudly and forced all the power out of Origami she could, soon charging all of Satan's pillars with more power than they could normally wield, making it seem like multiple dark white suns were shining intensely in the sky before the two.

"They say the sun's the most dangerous thing in our solar system when it comes to its searing heat and radiation! Let's see you try something that takes its form to mimic the same result!" Jessica screamed with a deranged smile, the pillars near beginning to fly near them while the actual Vanargandr began charging its own blast.

"How ironic the one spirit who wants to die will have her powers kill you both! Now... let's see you be incinerated beyond death to a point that even if reincarnation exists, you never will again after I'm done with you!"

"Oh man... Sandalphon could cut them but at the range we're at... we'd probably get killed." Shido said, sweating as he became unsure how to deal with this. Tohka soon shifted out of Shido's grip and stood on the ground beside him. "Tohka?"

"There's something more Shido." Tohka began, getting her boyfriend's attention. "Remember the throne you saw me draw Nahemah from? Sandalphon has one as well, when neither sword is
enough on their own... the thrones that hold them can be destroyed and combine with them to reveal their full potential."

"And this potential may be what we need?" Shido asked, having never seen her Paverschlev to know it's power. Tohka nods in response.

"Stomp the ground and summon Sandalphon's throne, trust me. Do this and we'll prevail." Tohka replied, and Shido nodded as he saw the confidence and belief in her face. He stomped the ground forcing a golden throne to rip out of it before the two slashed it. The shards form around Sandalphon in no time at all.

[HALVANHELV!]

Soon an incredibly long golden sword was in their hands, making Jessica's eyes widen at the sight. Shido looked at Halvanhelev before turning to Tohka who gave him a smile, and both put both their hands on the sword's handle.

"Take this!" Jessica shouts, sending the pillars after them while the beam from Vanargandr kept charging to its maximum capacity for a charged blast.

"You won't stop us!" Shido and Tohka shouted together! They both pulled Halvanhelev back a bit before give a side swing at the pillars, cutting through all of them and splitting them into two. As the split halves kept flying forward, the swung another two times and cut through them too.

Soon the Vanargandr fired off a huge beam that covered most of the rooftop, the two raised the Halvanhelev and swung down with a large vertical slice! Jessica gave a frozen state as they did, soon cutting through the Vanargandr slightly, making its cannons fall off and spark a bit.

"S-so what if you beat me! I'll just take this spirit and still call it my victory!" Jessica claimed, preparing to run off as she ejected the destroyed Vanargandr's core which still had the captive Origami inside of it.

Upon closer look however, Origami's Astral Dress was now pure white and her spiky black crown was replaced by a golden one that was held horizontally instead of vertically, it was as if Jessica sapped away all of her Inverse Form's power and forced her back to normal.

"No, Origami!" Shido screamed, cursing the fact that imbuing Tohka's spirit power into his mana didn't give him her ability to fly. Just as it seemed like Jessica was about to get away, suddenly from behind, Mana appeared wearing the Murakumo, making Jessica turn in shock while surprising Shido and Tohka.

"Mana!?" Tohka thought out loud.

"It's strange, I've only just met you and piss me off enough to hate you!" Mana claimed, giving an angry look at her. She reeled back her fist as one of the Murakumo's swords attached to her left hand. "Then I hope you don't mind if I do this!?"

Jessica only gave a blank stare before Mana thrusts her right fist forward, punching her in the face and leaving a huge indent in her cheek as she was suddenly launched off the Vanargandr core's seating area. Soon she slashed at the core itself, freeing Origami from captivity. Jessica soon caught herself in midair, looking at Mana with eyes full of rage.

"THIS IS NOT OVER!" Jessica screamed, now full of nothing but loathing towards Mana for daring to strike her like she did. "I hope you like having an arch-enemy you little brat, because you've made one of me! Next time we meet, I'll make sure you suffer the worst possible death and
fate you could ever imagine!"

With that, Jessica furiously flew off with the fact that the entire plan to capture [Devil] had failed. Mana soon landed by the two, unaware of Origami suddenly feeling from the area and away from the three.

"Mana, when did you... how did you know to come here? More than that, why?" Shido asked as he releases his power, making his hair and eyes go back to normal. Mana smiles and giggle at them after her big brother's question.

"Oh that? Reine called me over, said you may need someone who can fly just in case," Mana replied, making the two both laugh as they realized just how much someone who could fly had been what they needed at that last moment. "She called it right."

"Good thing she did too, thanks to you we saved Origami..." Tohka said, but then then suddenly realized something. "...Guys, where is Origami?"

The two siblings suddenly gasped as they realized this, and all three looked for the now freed Spirit with no success. Soon enough, Shido's phone rang and he answered it to find Maria materialize from the screen with a worried look.

"Shido! Tohka! Mana! This is really bad, right after you freed Origami she just flew off!" Maria shouted all panicked, making the others worry. "It seems her readings changed too, she's not in her Inverse Form anymore and unlike Tohka, we never had the chance to register her regular state. We don't know where she's going!"

"Oh no, this is bad! I think I heard that crazy girl say she was 'the one spirit who wants to die', what if she tries to kill herself while we can't find her!?!" Tohka suddenly panics, surprising the other two.

"I knew she was suffering, but to want to die? Did she come here just to let the DEM kill her?" Mana mutters loudly, turning to her brother. "Shido, what do we do?"

Shido knew Mana only called him by name when she was truly in a panic, and soon he bites down on his nails in thought. He didn't know where Origami might go... until he recalled the place that he and Tohka had been when she had been revealed as a Spirit to them.

"I know where to look! Come on, let's hurry!" Shido suddenly shouted.

Origami Tobiichi, now once again the Spirit [Angel] instead of the Inverse Spirit [Devil], was standing at the viewpoint area where Shido had seen her and officially discovered she was a Spirit and the one who had fought against Tohka.

"...Why am I even still here? It should have ended for me there." Origami said, holding herself as she shivered. "Why is this world keeping me alive just to suffer?"

[Stop it master, don't do this. It's not-]

"Shut up!" Origami yelled as her eyes teared up, shutting up the Angel instantly. "How could you understand, it was because I even had you that my parents got killed by one of my light beams!"

Origami punches the guard rails slightly, and a certain memory returns to her.

-Flashback Start-
Origami’s eyes suddenly widen as they become a lighter blue and her pupils whiten, appearing on her form was a white outfit before a golden horizontally aligned crown appeared. When it was over, the young Origami looked at herself and then the crown which felt like the crystal she had just touched.

"This is..." Origami breathed, in awe at what she had become.

"(Congratulations Origami, you are now a Spirit.)" Phantom answered, knowing she was curious about the change that happened to her.

"(That outfit you are wearing is called an Astral Dress, a form of clothing that acts as your shield and armor to protect you from all harm and damage that come towards you, maybe enough to breach the flames without them burning you if they aren't spread too far in one area. Also, that crown of yours? It's called an Angel, your ultimate protective weapon to fight against those who try to hurt you. Yours is called Metatron, or the 'Angel of Extinction', a crown that controls feathery pillars that commands holy light.)"

"I feel... different, but I still feel the same." Origami replied, unsure why.

"(Like I said, you're technically still human. You've just evolved past being a normal one. Spirits are able to contain and wield more mana than humans can since the First Spirit's presence brought it into the world.)" Phantom explained, then kneeled to Origami. "(So be careful with it, promise?)"

"Yeah, I'll protect everyone with my new light powers!" Origami replied, knowing she'd keep this power and her parents safe from harm.

-End Flashback-

Origami’s eye ere shadowed as she stared forward at the horizon.

"...And I failed in mere moments." Origami muttered. "Maybe if I flew up as high as I could and just let myself fall, I might finally end it, and instantly so nothing delays or prevents it."

Right as Origami began considering the idea, Shido and Tohka both ran up the stairs, Mana tried to follow but couldn't due to being unable to keep up without flying as the quake alarm had finally stopped and she had to go back to avoid drawing suspicion.

'I know she's here, she has to be. Please... let me be right, don't let me be too late!' Shido said, soon reaching the top as Origami was about to consider her drop from the sky idea. Once he did, he stopped running and took a deep breath.

"ORIGAMI!" Shido screamed, catching the light Spirit's attention as she turned around. Origami looked as Shido and Tohka were standing before her on the opposite side of the viewpoint's ground.

"Shido? No way, but... how did you know?" Origami wondered, completely shocked they knew where to find her.

"How could I not know, I mean this is the place where-"

"Stay back, get away from me!" Origami shouted, catching the two off guard. "Stop trying to help me, I don't deserve it! If you really want to even attempt to do so..."

Origami cross her hands, causing the golden feathery pillars that were part of Metatron form from out of the ground before them. Soon they lowered themselves to the ground, surrounding the area behind
"Then I won't hesitate to force you away with my power if I have to!" Origami finished, she wouldn't kill them, but if she had to knock them to the point of unconsciousness to keep the away then she wouldn't hesitate to do so.

"Origami, what are you talking about? Why don't you want us to help you!?" Tohka asked, still not understanding why Origami refused to let anyone help her. "How can we understand what's wrong you if you won't tell us."

"...Fine, maybe once I do you'll want to stop trying of your own choice. I know you won't." Origami said, her ears tearing up. "Because who'd help a murderer!?"

This surprised the two a bit, why was Origami calling herself a killer? Even Tohka knew she had never killed while she had been in her Inverse Form. Shido tried to wrap his head around it, but nothing came to mind despite what he thought.

"You honestly never pieced it together Shido? I told you before, didn't I?" Origami replied, her whole body shaking as she kept Metatron aimed at them with her one arm.

"5 years ago, during the Tenguu Fire, I met a Spirit who created the flames. Shortly after when I met my parents again... I saw them die as another Spirit hit them with a beam of light and burned them into ashes. Don't you get it yet?"

Origami's eyes closed as her hand twitched, the memory flashing by again.

"Tohka, when you and I fought in our Inverse Forms, what was a common attack that I hit you with? And you Shido, during the entire time you fought that woman using my powers in that machine... didn't that bright light not clue you into anything!?" Origami shouted, almost as if trying to tell them to stop being so blind.

At that moment, both Tohka and Shido suddenly gasped as it pieced together. A spirit who killed her parents with a beam of light, and Origami's Spirit powers included... using a beam of light!

"Origami... are you saying that Spirit who killed your parents was-"

"That's right, don't you get it now? I'm the one who killed me parents!" Origami screamed, tears flowing from her eyes. "I accepted these powers from some being called Phantom to protect them and my parents, but the first thing they did was kill them! That's why... that's why I deserve to die!"

"Don't a loud of crap and you know it!" Tohka suddenly shouted, surprising Origami who looked at her. "So you're telling us you're a murderer because you accidentally killed them? Or are you telling us you actually wanted to do it!?"

"N-no, I didn't want to..." Origami stuttered, her body now shivering a little.

"Then you're not a murderer! No murderer would cry tears of remorse, even if they took a life in self-defense that's not considered murder because you didn't want to do it!" Tohka said, tears beginning to shed down her face. "Heck, you're even lucky you remember your parents! I can't even do that!"

Origami stared in surprise, Metatron's charge slowly faded as doubt began to hit her.

"She's right Origami, me and Tohka's memories are in shambles. We even forgot each other for a while!" Shido said, his face showing Origami it was the guiltiest thing he had ever done to her. "And then we learned we were captured, our memories probably erased! For all we know... maybe our
"And that's why we can understand your pain Origami, it's why we want to help you!" Shido shouted, making Origami gasp. "So please... let us help you!"

Origami stared at the two, and her whole body shakes as the shock settles in. As this was happening, she suddenly felt two hands on her, and she shifted her look to see the spirits of her parents, smiling and nodding at her that it was OK before the vanished.

"(For a while you may be lonely, but I swear to you that there's people out there waiting, friends that will become like family to you. Your parents would want you to live, so find those people and keep living for their sake!)

"Phantom..." Origami muttered to herself, shedding some tears. "I'm so stupid, you were right all this time. They were standing in front of me and I was too blind to notice."

Origami soon lowered her hand, and Metatron's pillars stop charging before they vanish.

"Shido... Tohka..." Origami cried, crying 5 years' worth of tears as she finally felt she had found her place in the world. Shido soon smiled and began walking near her, only for white spirit energy to suddenly surge from her to Origami's surprise, it flew into Shido and knocked him back.

"SHIDO!" Tohka screamed before diving to catch him, neither noticed their headsets had fallen out, now too damaged to work. "Are you alright!?"

"I'm fine... but what was that?" Shido asked, looking at Origami who was suddenly afraid and unable to stop her spirit power as it kept flooding out and she felt herself burning from within.

"Origami?"

The crew in the Fraxinus and those at Ratatoskr's base all looked in horror at the result of Origami's current state.

"What's going on, why is Origami sending out all that power all of a sudden?" Maria asked.

"This is bad... there is too much power flowing within her, since I realized her powers hadn't been fully present until today I was afraid this might happen." Reine replied, catching everyone's attention.

"What do you mean commander? Do you have an idea of what's happening?" Vie-Commander Kannazuki asked, knowing that Reine usually only kept something to herself if she thought it might be important later. She likely hadn't had time to confirm or deny it.

"A slight one. Because her powers had been sealed away to a degree that she was a normal human at times, too much of it built up, and now with her Inversion having been forcefully undone due to Adeptus 3's actions... it's now overflowing." Reine replied, and soon gave a grim look for everyone to see.

"At this rate, the overflowing spirit power will destroy all of Tenguu City... and then Origami herself."

Everyone gasped, that means everyone was within a blast radius that would take out the city, and probably before anyone could get to a shelter, even then they might not be able to handle the force. Kannazuki tried to connect to the headsets but failed.
"It's even worse, that first wave must have destroyed their headsets. We can't even tell them anything. Should we retrieve them to discuss a way to keep everyone safe?" Kannazuki asked, but Maria shook her head.

"No good. We don't have that kind of time, and no matter what neither Shido or Tohka can disappear right in front of Origami's eyes. We don't know how that might affect her." Maria said, clearly panicked but unable to express her terror. "All we can do now... is hope Shido can seal her, and do so right now!"

Everyone looked at the screen again.

"Come on Shido... we believe in you, so please save her." Reine stated, clasping her hands tightly as if to send her strength over.

Origami whimpered in fear, unable to understand what was going on.

"Shido... what's happening to me? I swear I'm not trying to do this!" Origami cried out, more waves of spirit mana coming out of her.

"I know... don't worry, I'm coming!" Shido said as he got up, Tohka held him and soon the two pushed forward, even as another wave of spirit mana struck them both.

"No! Stay back, it isn't safe!" Origami shouted, not wanting to see them hurt any more than they already were.

"Don't you dare say that Origami, there's no way... that we won't make it over to you!" Shido declared, making Origami gasp before giving a longing face as they kept braving the waves of power striking them. "You've suffered for so long, back then you claimed I saved you, but I couldn't even see your worries!"

Origami kept staring, unable to believe they'd risk so much for her.

"That's why... that's why we'll make it to you! You're not alone anymore Origami!" Tohka replied, making Origami shed more tears.

"Tohka... Shido..." Origami breathed.

"Origami! Take my hand, that's all you need to do and everything will be fine!" Shido shouted, reaching out his hand. Origami slowly reaches out to him... only for her spirit mana to heavily surge and launch her into the air, flinging her away from them. "ORIGAMI!"

Tohka stared before making a determined fast and grabbing onto Shido tightly.

"Shido... GO!" Tohka screamed as she threw Shido up towards Origami with a mighty toss, after catching himself, Shido reached out his hand again and Origami managed to grab it. Shido struggled as her powers kept trying to force them apart.

"Origami, do you trust me?" Shido asked.

"I do... I trust you Shido!" Origami cried out, wanting to believe in him.

"Then that's all I need, I can finally save you!" Shido replied, and soon Origami felt Shido pull her in closer, soon nearing her face, making her blush as he suddenly kissed her. Tohka watched as the suddenly rampaging spirit power swirled around them before Origami's Astral Dress faded away as
"You did it Shido..." Tohka said, smiling as the two began to float back down to the ground.

"Shido..." Origami said, blushing at the fact that Shido had been her first kiss and her powers felt like they had faded away... and then fully going red as she looked down and noticed she was now naked. "Ah! W-where are my clothes, I know I was wearing some before this!"

Shido quickly closes her eyes and gives her his jacket to cover her.

"I'm so sorry, I know this is weird but that's what happens when I seal a Spirit's powers! Though I did think you'd just go back to your old clothes too!" Shido said, looking away while Origami kneels down to make the jacket cover her fully while still embarrassed.

Jessica soon returns and stands before Westcott, giving her report on what happened. Needless to say, Westcott wasn't just angry over the fact that another Spirit's capture was thwarted, but by the same boy as last time no less?

Not to mention the fact Jessica had clearly seen [Sovereign], now once again [Princess] from somehow undoing her inversion, but the Bandersnatch couldn't tell she had been present because she seemed to have lost her powers? He broke the glass he had been holding and ignored the bleeding.

"Are you kidding me!?" Westcott said, clearly angered. "So not only was that same boy from before present, but Princess has both undone her inversion and her powers are gone? Is this what your telling me!"

"Not only that, but it seems like this boy had been able to use the powers she lost and completely ruined everything." Jessica growled, holding an ice pack on her face. "If it hadn't been for this... sister I'm guessing by her appearance, I would have been at least able to bring [Devil] to us."

Right at that moment, Marina suddenly came into view.

"It's worse than that... right after you sent me the data I did a check... [Devil] both undid her inversion and she's no longer registered either." Marina stated, making Westcott's eyes widen with even more rage. "I don't know how, but the Spirits we've tried so hard to catch are losing their powers. It must be those bastards from the Ratatoskr organization."

Westcott growled, almost as if the First Spirit's words had begun to mock him from the grave.

"Now we have no choice, we must find the other Spirits and force them into inversions." Westcott said, and soon Marina cleared her throat. "What is it Marina?"

"Well... I did have some good news." Marina said with her eyes closed, opening them again before she said it. "Tell me father, how would you react if I told you we've managed to discover a Spirit who can apparently undergo an inversion yet switch back at will?"

Soon enough, Origami had found herself at the Ratatoskr organization, and lent a similar outfit to the one Tohka had been given by Reine, where Reine was explaining things to her about their mission and what Shido had done.

"So... my powers are gone?" Origami asked.

"In a sense. You can't permanently lose them, but unless you get too emotional or will them into you
if needed, by all means you're just a normal human with unique eyes." Reine answered, and Origami nodded. "So... how are you feeling?"

"A bit... overwhelmed I guess." Origami answered honestly, she didn't know what else to say. "Especially since my classmates and teachers are all part of this."

"You'll get used to it, it's not too bad after a bit." Hiroto commented from afar, smiling as he did. Origami sweat dropped a bit.

"We'll be having you move in with Shido soon enough, it's best for the Spirits to all stay close to Shido." Reine continued, soon taking another sip of her coffee. "I can't fully imagine the losses you had to face. Just know we're all here for you now."

"...Thank you, Ms. Mur- oh sorry, Reine." Origami smiled. Reine gave a smile and rubbed her head a bit before she walked off to do some work elsewhere, Origami soon got up and bumped into Kotori by accident. "Oh sorry, I didn't mean to..."

Origami suddenly gasped as she saw Kotori, who in turn paled once she saw Origami, both recalling the other quite clearly.

"It's you, you're the Flame-" Origami tried to say, but soon had Kotori cover her mouth so much, she nearly felt like she was choking form it.

"No! Don't you dare say it, I can't tell anyone... not yet at least." Kotori shouted quickly, soon looking sad. Origami, managing to breathe again as Kotori loosened her hold slightly, looked at her a bit confused. "You wouldn't get it, but I beg you... don't tell anyone I'm the Flame Spirit Efreet."

"...I don't get it, but since you honestly don't want me too..." Origami replied, soon putting a hand on Kotori's hand. "For now, your secret's safe with me."

Kotori blushed a bit, but smiled before walking off. Leaving Origami to wonder why she wasn't willing to mention about her powers, though now that she thought about it... her eyes weren't whitened like before and she had actually aged, something she recalled Phantom telling her doesn't happen to Spirits unless something like what Phantom did to her occurred.

"Did Phantom do the same thing to her? If so, then why?" Origami asked herself, now having a new question about the mysterious child she met long ago.

Shido and Tohka were currently both outside, the two walking together after the whole ordeal to have some relaxation time together. Shido sighed at the end result's toll on him finally set in.

"Who knew things would end up like that by the end?" Shido asked, soon looking forward. "Hey Mio, did you figure out sealing Origami's powers effect you yet?"

[I did, and... I know why I can talk through you now Shido. I was left here by someone.]

"You were? Who was it?" Shido asked.

[...Your mother, before she went off somewhere and never returned. That's all I can recall from Origami's power being sealed, I'm sorry.]

Shido gasped for a moment, but rubbed his shoulder to let Mio know it was alright.

"Thank you Mio, it just means she's watching over me somehow. Maybe if she's still out there with
dad, you'll let us find them." Shido replied, and Mio made his aura glow to tell him that he/she was smiling in response to his words. Soon Tohka stops in place, and Shido notices her with a slightly annoyed look. "Tohka?"

"...Shido, didn't you tell me earlier that you should have told me everything?" Tohka asked, making Shido tilt his head confused.

"So why didn't you tell me having to seal a Spirit meant kissing them!?!"

Shido suddenly flinched at that, he had forgotten that Tohka didn't have her Astral Dress disappear immediately like Origami's had, so she might not have realized kissing equals sealing. In fact, Reine hadn't mentioned the kissing part either.

"Uh... it's not what you think Tohka." Shido said, sweating a bit as Tohka gives him a look saying 'I'm waiting' in regards for an explanation. "I just forgot you didn't know OK? Honest mistake."

"You forgot... really?" Tohka replied, she wasn't buying it to Shido's dismay.

"Uh... I'll make it up to you, I'll buy you anything you want." Shido said, Tohka's ribbon shifts slightly in response, but she turns away.

"Not gonna work." Tohka stated, turning her head and giving a small pout.

"Uh... I'll buy you all your favorite foods! How does that sound!?" Shido panicked, sweating as he was worried where this would go. Tohka's ribbon shifted again, but this time she turned at him with a smile.

"Alright fine, I guess for a little while." Tohka smiled, making Shido sigh in relief. However, as they were walking, Shido looked back to her and... saw she was giving a cat smile in response.

'No way... she had known all along, hadn't she!? Shido thought

[Hey Tohka, 'had' that not been real and you 'had' actually known about the kiss thing. I'd 'have' totally praised you for getting Shido to buy you all the food you wanted.]

"What the... really!?!" Shido replied, not realizing Tohka giggled. 'She totally guilt tripped me! Great, now I have to or she'll make me get her something bigger.'

'Don't underestimate the power of women Shido.' Tohka thought.

During the night in another area of Japan, a blue haired girl wearing a raincoat with a puppet on her hand was seen fleeing from a group of Wizards flying alongside some Cheshire units. As she flew away from their attacks, one of them hit and caused her to land in a building.

"Yoshinon... I'm scared, what will they do to me?" The girl asked her puppet, the puppet rubbed her head.

"Don't you worry Yoshino, Yoshinon will take out those bullies for you. Just rest for a bit." Yoshinon said, soon tapping her forehead against hers as the girl suddenly took a nap on the ground. The Wizards outside prepared to rush in attack the young Spirit, but suddenly were pushed out as a mass of blue spirit energy turned a dark blue color.

The same girl soon jumped out of the building, the main difference was the puppet's face was now different and the girl's blue hair had become a ghostly pale blue that was nearly white, a smile on her
face as her one visible red eye glowed intensely.

"...Astaroth"

Suddenly many screams were heard as the entire area for the next hundreds of kilometers suddenly was encased of a tomb of ice.

Well, I think we all know who the next arc is about, and now Origami's discovered Kotori is a spirit... the question is why is she hiding the fact from everyone and not letting Shido seal her? Is it related to why she was acting so off around Tohka when the arc began? I guess we'll just have to see, because it looks like for right now the possible next Ice Age starting in Japan will be a bigger worry soon.

Since I mentioned this the last chapter, the emotion that I'd say would be in focus for Yoshino's arc is fear, and I can at least hint to everyone here that Shido's going to face such an instance of this during the arc. The biggest question for Shido's group though? It's quite simple... how can a Spirit have free reign over switching between their Inverse state and normal state, and why hadn't such a Spirit shown this ability before this point?

The Inverse Form is only gaining more mysteries in this story, and I don't plan to stop with it here. So I hope you anticipate the answers and further details about Yoshino's when her arc finally begins.
I think I'm giving each arc so far a good name for the events and the word's connection to their respective Spirits. Tohka Return fit because the surprise twist was Tohka was Shido's childhood friend and love interest, and Origami Unchained was to represent both how Origami's powers became impossible to withhold through Phantom's seal and then later, Shido unchained her from her past. Considering the twist I pulled a chapter ago, I think we all know why I chose Yoshino Duality for this arc.

I'll mention right now in case any of you don't know, how I describe Yoshino's Inverse form here in the story is not something I've designed myself as will be the case for the others' (including Nia's since hers never got fully described), I bought the big art book that came out alongside Vol 16 and Date A Bullet, and while I can't actually read Japanese, it was the pictures that mattered more. However to my surprise, deep within the book, I saw a bit of an unexpected treasure buried within... a colored Inverse Yoshino illustration with her Demon King!

I don't know if this was an old concept or just Tachibana slowly revealing the Inverse forms outside of canon for us to see them, we never fully saw Nia's Inverse Form during her debut after all. So, I'm gonna consider this IS her official Inverse Form art since it wasn't in the concept art section. As we only got an image, anything else about it in the story is a creation I made because there's nothing we know about its powers and such.

OH! Before I forget, to anyone who follows this story and also reads "A Dragon's Heavenly Bonds", good news. Season 2's script is 75% done as of me typing this here (possibly more by the time you're all actually reading this), so the hiatus for it should be over soon. When I resume it, both of these stories will continue. Though this one will also start a hiatus once I reach the 5th arc which ends Season 1 for this story, leading me to the hiatus so I can plan out the second season properly, and in the meantime, I'll be beginning Itsuka Catastrophe.

Chapter 7, S1: Yoshino Duality, Part 1

A 9-year old Kotori Itsuka stares at the strange Kimono like outfit she was currently wearing, and the sudden red axe in her hands.

"W-What is this Phantom?" Kotori asked a bit scared.

"(That's your Camael, your Angel. However, it's known by another name, the 'Bright Burning Annihilating Demon', a name that's lead to all holders of it being called Efreet by the DEM.)" Phantom explained, patting her on the head. "Don't be afraid, even if you wield fire, Camael won't go out of control as long as you don't want it to."

"Will... will this really let me become stronger, not be a crybaby?" Kotori asked Phantom, wanting to be sure she made the right choice.

"(Kotori, this is a huge responsibility you chose to take, one you can't change your mind about. It may be hard but I assure you that learn how to be strong as you learn to protect this power.)" Phantom said, smiling at her through its unseen face... and then suddenly Phantom moved in front of Kotori and got shot. "(UGH!)"
“Phantom!?" Kotori called out in worry, Phantom soon looked at her to assure they were OK before blacking out. Kotori soon hears a cackle. "Who's there?"

Soon the sight of a girl in a black and red outfit came into view, Kotori noticed her one seen eye had a whitened pupil as she held two guns, a musket and flintlock pistol, with a clock behind her. This girl... she was another Spirit!

"Look at what we have here, if it isn't the new Efreet?" The girl laughs, soon giving a dark smile. "Now then... how about you and I engage in some 'spirited' competition!?"

The girl aims one of her guns at her as a one symbol appears on the side.

"ALEPH!"

She suddenly vanishes and reappears in front of Kotori, swinging down on her rapidly with her guns. Kotori forced onto the defensive completely, still having not even learnt how to use her powers yet.

"Is this really the best you can do!?" The girl mocked. "I have to say, I'm unimpressed! You can call forth an Angel and command flames, surely you can beat little old me, can't you? Oh well... guess not!"

"What are you doing, you're a Spirit too aren't you?" Kotori asked confused, unsure why this girl was fighting against her. "Aren't we supposed to be on the same side!?

The girl jumps back as Kotori swings her axe at her, giving a wicked smile.

"Oh, you trying to be cute? Well I think it'd work better if I had your pretty little head was mounted up on my wall!" The girl smirked, soon moving her gun at her face. "ZAYIN!"

Kotori was suddenly shot, and it froze her in time, suddenly from the shadows, something fired at her constantly until the girl shoots her in the forehead. Believing she had killed Kotori while laughing at her corpse... until Kotori's body burns where she was hurt and she gets back up.

"Huh? I'm alive, whoa... this power's useful." Kotori sighs in relief, almost positive she was gonna die.

"Damn it, she can already regenerate? Then I better waste her so that won't happen again!" The girl muttered before she aims at the shadows, giving a fierce smirk. "ALEPH!"

Kotori see's her firing before she's dogpiled, and she feels herself overwhelmed.

[MASTER! Call me!]

"Huh? Wait..." Kotori said, looking at Camael as if she heard it. "Are you speaking to me?"

[Call me master! Let us fight together, let's stop this crazy bitch!]

"Whoa... that's a mouth you have." Kotori breathed, sweat dropping before she readies a swing. "OK then... here goes. Cut her to pieces, Camael!"

Whatever had piled on her was hit away and the girl covers herself as the flames fly at her.

"Damn you!" The girl growled, starting to get angry a newbie was giving her this much trouble. "I promise you this, you'll be sorry you ever decided to mess with me!"
She aims her gun out again.

"YUD... ALEPH!"

Suddenly Kotori gets shock, but feels herself getting weaker as if her power was being sapped away.

"What's... happening?" Kotori panted, feeling tired all of a sudden. The girl began laughing at Kotori, however suddenly at that moment, Kotori's eyes suddenly change from red to blue.

"Camael... MEGIDDO!"

A different voice came out as Kotori raised up Camael, shocking the girl as her Yud Aleph's connection was cancelled out before it could finish. Camael taking the form of a cannon, scaring the girl before her.

"That's..." The girl breathed, suddenly full of fear.

"Turn them all to ashes, do it Camael!" 'Kotori' shouted before she fired at the girl, hitting her heard and sending her flying forward. At that moment, Kotori's eyes reverted to normal. "Whoa, when did I do-"

At that moment, Kotori noticed the beam of fire heading towards something and gasped in fear.

"CAMAEL! STOP IT, STOP IT NOW!" Kotori shouted, hoping it wouldn't be too late.

[I... I can't! There's no time to redirect it either, it's gonna collide!]

"NOOOOOO!" Kotori screamed as the fire hit and a huge explosion went off, sending a blaze of fire everywhere. Kotori screamed and began to cry as in mere seconds, a majority of Tenguu City was slowly consumed by the hellish flames she herself had created.

Kotori suddenly shoots up, panting as she felt her forehead sweating heavily. She looked around as she noticed she was in her room. Seeing her two hair ribbons on the dresser next to her bed, she reaches out and holds them close, quickly managing to calm down.

"Thank god, it was just a dream." Kotori said, that nightmare was one she often re-experienced often since she gained her powers as a Spirit. The fight against that dark Spirit who attacked her for no reason. "...Ratatoskr said only Tohka and Origami were inverted, so why was a normal Spirit attacking me? And..."

She recalled the moment her eyes had went blue briefly and her voice changed, she wasn't sure what happened, but she recalled for that moment it was like she blacked out and someone took over to protect her.

"...Who was that?" Kotori asked herself, wondering just who this other... 'person', inside of her really was.

Kotori lays back down in bed, noticing it had still been too early to wake up, and puts her ribbons back on the dresser and drifts back to sleep.

"Phantom... did you know about this person, or is she a mystery to you too?" Kotori asked, soon fading back into the unconscious embrace of her sleep.

After a few delays due to Spacequake damage, school had finally resumed for the students of Raizen
High, including those who were part of the Ratatoskr organization and the teachers who were part of it. Shido and Origami took their seats.

"We're finally back since the whole mess started." Shido said to himself, soon looking out towards the window. He sighed a bit over the fact a certain purple haired girl wasn't in school with them. "I kinda wish Tohka could have attended school with us."

"Why can't she, she's our age isn't she?" Origami, unsure of why Tohka couldn't be in school with them. She and Tohka had ironically become like best friends despite their former rivalry, Tohka was pretty forgiving to her surprise, she was sure that sharing Shido would put them at odds. She was glad that guess had been completely wrong.

"Oh, well... Reine mentioned it's not a good idea considering she's still a bit like a fish out of water with things right now." Shido replied, and Origami chuckled and sweatdrops as she realizes some of Tohka's antics at times.

While some of Ratatoskr believed that Tohka attending school with the others would be a more beneficial idea in the long run, Reine vetoed the idea due to Tohka's memory gap making things already confusing and out of place for her. Tohka didn't mind because she never liked school anyways.

"She'll be OK while we're gone, won't she?" Origami wondered, hoping she wouldn't get too lonely. "I kinda feel bad we have to leave her by herself."

"Oh don't worry, she's at the Ratatoskr base while we're gone. I think right now she's out shopping," Shido replied, making Origami relax slightly. If Shido was sure she was fine then she probably should stop worrying about everything.

Soon the two heard the bell ring and regained their focus as class started, Tamae and Reine both walking inside to do their teacher jobs for the day.

"Alright everyone, we've had a few days off due to the unexpected quake on the first day." Tamae said, still remembering how hectic things had really been to the lack of the public's knowledge. "So, let's finally start the second day of the year now!"

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Tohka was seen walking outside with a list in hand, currently wearing a yellow dress with an open pale blue short-sleeved jacket, blue jean shorts with tied strings on the sides and brown pump sandals. Since Tohka couldn't be in school with Shido and Origami, and Mana and Kotori also weren't home, she decided to pass some of the time and get today's groceries.

"I'd like some pork please!" Tohka asked a man at a meat shop stand, he bends over to grab some and hands it to her. "Thank you!"

Tohka soon looks at her list and soon notices she had gotten everything other something called... sata andagi? *(A/N: Fried buns that are similar to donuts)* She wasn't sure what they were, but Shido wrote the bakery would know, and luckily Tohka was in the mood for one of her favorite breads at Tenguu City's local bakeries.

"Kinako Bread!" Tohka said to herself, blushing slightly at the thought of having some. She heads to the bakery and walks inside. "I'd like some sata andagi and some Kinako bread please!"

"We have the former, but we just got sold out of the later unfortunately." The employee at the register replied, making Tohka pale as she notices the whole stand for kinako bread was empty.
Tohka absently grabbing the bag of the sata andagi handed to her.

"...Calm down Tohka, this is just one bakery. I'll just check another." Tohka stuttered to herself, she really wanted at least one Kinako bread. Then she visits the next bakery she knows, only to see they had sold out too. "Really?! No, calm down Tohka... they can't all be sold out, right?"

Soon Tohka visits the last bakery in the area, and sees them just put out a "sold out" for Kinako Bread too! Tohka's eyes go white as she slowly walks back into the Ratatoskr base, once she arrived, Maria notices her expression.

"Uh... Tohka, is there something wrong?"

"Where did the Kinako Bread go, where did the Kinako Bread go Maria?" Tohka teared up as she turned to her, making the AI realize the problem.

"Oh no, uh... anyone here know how to make it?" Maria asked, everyone currently in the area all took a moment to think.

"I don't." Kawagoe said, his ex-wives were the ones who always cooked.

"Fraid not." Nakatsugawa said.

"Uh..." Minowa muttered.

"I can make bread, but not Kinako bread." Shiizaki added.

"Nope." Mikimoto sighed, Tohka slid into her legs as Maria tried to pat her head, mainly failing because she wasn't in an android body and her hand phased right through. At that moment however, Kannazuki walked in carrying a bunch of bags.

"Sorry for running out all of a sudden, I was out buying all of the Kinako Bread." Kannazuki said, catching everyone's attention as they looked. Tohka's eyes sparkling as her awaited food finally appeared.

"Wait, that was you!?” Maria shouted, in shock. "You nearly made Tohka cry! Why didn't you tell us first!?"

"My apologies, I heard a report on the news that it'll be hard for Tenguu City to get any bread for a while due to something that happened in Tokyo and Okinawa." Kannazuki said, feeling Maria's gaze burn into him. "So, I figured I should get every piece I could so Tohka had some for a while."

"What kind of something?" Tohka asked, eating a few of the Kinako breads.

"I'm not sure yet, I need to watch the actual recording." Kannazuki replied, feeling the gazes fade odd as Tohka was fine now that she had some Kinako bread. Tohka nods and soon realizing the time, heads back home to meet up with Shido and the others.

As she did though... rain suddenly came, it was a mere drizzle right now luckily.

"Hmm? That's strange, the sky was clear a moment ago." Tohka noted as she walked back home, grabbing an umbrella she had brought with her as the rain picked up. As she was nearing home, she soon heard a splash. "Huh?"

She turned to see the sight of a young girl she was wearing a short white sundress under a large green raincoat that has a tail with a pink ribbon attached to it, with a pair of rabbit-ears on its hood,
green boots and on her left hand was a rabbit puppet.

As she walked in the rain puddles, she suddenly trips over to Tohka's worry, and once she noticed her puppet had fallen off, she suddenly gets worried and backs up near the closest tree, now completely scared. Tohka sees it and grabs it.

"Yoshinon... Yoshinon..." The girl quietly mutters fearfully, then feels Tohka suddenly tap her shoulder.

"Is this yours?" Tohka asked, holding it out to her. Without making eye contact, the girl looks at Tohka and takes the puppet before putting it in her hand, suddenly shaking the water off it's body.

"Thanks for saving me lady!" The puppet replies, surprising Tohka a bit. "And thanks for not bullying Yoshino, my name's Yoshinon and you have our thanks!"

"Uh... you talk via ventriloquism?" Tohka asked, the puppet tilts its head confused.

"Yoshino, do you know what ventriloquism is?" Yoshinon asked Yoshino, the girl shakes her head no. "Oh, then this lady must be one of those people who tries to make you laugh! How adorable! Well, see you later lady!"

Yoshino soon runs off somewhere, leaving Tohka to look at the direction she run off towards confused.

"...Huh?" Tohka says, her eyes going white as she tilted her head confused.

A while later while Tohka was attempting to cook everyone some lunch, after Mana and Kotori had already come home, the two little sisters heard the door open as Origami had come back home.

"Oh hey Origami, welcome..." Kotori stopped, realizing that Origami had been completely soaked. She was even shivering as her entire school uniform had made her body feel like a Popsicle. "Holy guacamole, did you not have an umbrella?"

"N-N-No... a-after all, the f-forecast said there wouldn't be r-rain today..." Origami stuttered, still shivering.

"Origami, how about you go take a warm shower? I'll get you some clothes and put your uniform in the wash." Mana asked, Origami nodded at that and she smiled as she helped Origami up the stairs.

After about another fifteen minutes, Shido finally made it back, similarly soaked everywhere, but not as badly because he could run a bit faster than Origami could.

"I'm back guys!" Shido called out.

"Oh hey, welcome home big bro." Kotori said, turning towards him with a smile as she was sucking on one of her usual Chupa Chups.

"I've gotta something to tell you all, but first, I'm gonna go take a shower." Shido replied, heading upstairs.

"OK big brother, we'll be..." Mana suddenly stopped as she realized something, and then paled as she turned to the stairs. "Wait, big brother!"

Shido opened the shower door, and then saw Origami who had just finished her own inside of it. The Light Spirit blushed as Shido saw her, and she saw Shido with only a towel covering his
unmentionables. Both of them screamed, alerting everyone in the house, before Origami pushed her hand against Shido's and knocked him to the ground hard.

"Ah! Oh no, I'm sorry Shido! Are you bleeding!" Origami panicked as she wrapped her towel around her, unaware she missed wrapping it around her chest. "No, not bleeding... oh no, you hit your head, do you have a concussion! I didn't mean it, please be OK-"

"Origami..." Shido groan, getting the white spirit's attention. "Remember to breathe, OK?"

"O-OK" Origami said, trying to calm down. However, once Shido got up, she saw him blushing and realized where her towel hadn't wrapped around, making both of them scream again even louder.

A while later, everyone was sitting in the living room, Tohka had put out the sandwiches she had tried making for lunch while Origami was staring at the ceiling catatonic.

"Shido saw my breasts, he... he saw them." Origami muttered in a trance. "I can't get married anymore... I've been shamed.

"Will you stop exaggerating, you're in Shido's harem so why does it matter if he saw your boobs?" Kotori bluntly replied, making her brother choke a bit. "I mean you and Tohka are both gonna have to marry him-"

"Kotori, you don't have to announce it!" Tohka pouted, even if she had accepted the whole thing because it was a necessity, that didn't mean she wanted everyone to advertise it like it was as natural as breathing. She patted Shido's back a bit before she remembered something. "Oh yeah, didn't you have something you wanted to tell us Shido?"

"Oh right, is Reine here yet?" Shido asked.

"Over here." Reine replied, making everyone look as they notice her adding sugar cubes to her coffee. "I've been here for a while, but didn't wanna be rude. I hope I'm not using too much sugar."

"It's fine." Shido answered, and soon everyone was sitting down at the table.

"You found another Spirit? But the space quake alarm hasn't gone off since we sealed Origami's powers," Kotori asked, wondering when this Spirit showed up.

"That's because it didn't show up here, at least that we know of." Reine answered, sipping her coffee. "They can sometimes appear of their own choice. We believed the quakes happen when they're forced into our world."

"Makes sense, I remember when I vanished from this world, I went to this dark space." Tohka said, remembering the realm she had gone to whenever she disappeared after a battle against Inverse Origami. "I'd go to sleep, then wake up against my will and be forced here."

"Hmm... I don't remember being in a place like that, but then again my case was different." Origami noted.

"So, is that what happened here?" Kotori asked.

"Hmm... hard to say." Reine wondered, bringing out a tablet. "Tohka, do you recall what Kannazuki told you? I looked into it and I found these images."

Everyone looked as she showed an area of Okinawa and Tokyo completely frozen in ice. The sisters and Tohka widened their eyes at the former picture.
"Hey wait a second, that's the image we saw on the news the other day!" Mana shouted, recalling how odd it was at the time. Now she felt dumb for not linking it to a Spirit. "So they were caused by a Spirit?"

"Yes, Spirit No. 4 to be exact, Hermit." Reine replied, and then saw them blink at her.

"Oh right, I never mentioned that part. The experiment I was part of 30 years ago that summoned the First Spirit? It was actually a way to tap into the theory of the Tree of Life, or the Sephirot, and call on 'God'. The First Spirit was the result we got, so in a sense we succeeded. Each Spirit's powers seem to represent each Sephira that makes up the tree, proof that comes from the name of your Angels."

"Really? That's interesting, and does this affect anything you know about the Spirits?" Shido wondered.

"To a degree. We know the names of the Angels, the numbers related to them and certain colors with Tohka and [Diva] being exceptions." Reine answered, tapping the top and bottom circles. "We do think the circle's traits are what decide on who can inherit a Spirit's powers though."

"So, I'm Spirit No. 10 and Origami's Spirit No. 1?" Tohka said, eating one of her sandwiches whole.

"That's right Tohka." Reine nodded. "Based on what we've learned from past Spirit holders and the Sephirot themselves, I'd say you were given Sandalphon because you're the most down to Earth. While for Origami more beyond it, due to being a prodigy her mind works a bit above a normal being's."

"Really? That's why I was able to take it, uh..." Origami blinked, unsure how to reply to that. "Wait, isn't this getting a bit off topic now?"

"Oh right, thank you." Reine cleared her throat, taking another sip of her coffee before continuing. "Hermit's powers have from our observations over the years been over the three phases of water, steam, liquid, and ice. However, what's worrisome in this case..."

Reine breathed a bit.

"She apparently did this after undergoing an Inversion."

Everyone gasped.

"Oh man, then that means her powers have become a lot more dangerous than before." Shido said, he had seen Tohka and Origami's powers in both states firsthand.

What he had learned from Reine for an example was both had one trait in common aside from a different fluctuation from their 'stats'. Both increased two ranks, and their Spacequake' ranking went up by one. Not to mention there was no guarantee other Inversions would be as tame as theirs' were.

"Luckily, we got a picture before her Inversion, one that's given us a clearer look than the one we had before." Reine said, bringing it into view. One Tohka saw it however she gasped. "What is it Tohka?"

"I... I saw her, she was that girl from earlier." Tohka gasped, making everyone's eyes widened. "But wait, this is before her inversion, right? Yet I saw her like this."

"What?" Reine said surprised, something didn't add up. "Wait a minute... could it be? I never considered it, but since Origami's inversion reverted from Jessica overusing her powers, could it be
possible that Hermit's learned to Inverse and change back freely?"

[Could that really be possible though?]

"I can't say for sure Mio, after all... until Origami had done it, we had never seen a Spirit undergo an Inversion. Maybe there's more than just falling from high hope to low despair." Reine stated, it was honestly just too big of an unknown for them.

"So... what do we do now? If she's here the DEM will try to take her, right?" Tohka asked, Reine however shakes her head. "No?"

"Shido, you saw Westcott yourself when you saved Tohka, and Jessica clearly saw you in saving Origami while Tohka was with you." Reine sighed, sipping her coffee again. "I don't think he'll simply let another Spirit appear here and send someone after it. This time, he'll wait until they've left to strike."

"Of course... if the Spirit appears outside the city, then we can't reach it!" Origami gasped, realizing Westcott's probably waiting for Hermit to leave. "Dang it, what do we do?"

"Luckily, there's an advantage to our lack of actions. Westcott underestimates our group..." Reine said, soon smirking slightly. "So he doesn't know we have a way to follow Hermit, making where a Spirit is irrelevant."

[Ooh! Reine, your words are giving me the excitement shivers. What are you planning?]

Everyone was soon in the Ratatoskr base as they were walking through the ship area, looking around at the bays containing other unseen ships aside from the Fraxinus. Soon they stopped by a particular door.

"The Fraxinus can beam people across locations, but there is a radius that limits its distance. So to reach one of the locations we need to go..." Reine began, soon putting her hand on a scanner by the door.

Soon the door opens up, revealing what was inside. Everyone walks in to look and soon they saw a sleek ship that was smaller than the Fraxinus but very aerodynamic and light, meant to move with high speed and precision.

"Everyone, I introduce you to our high-speed escort and recon transport. The 'Sagittarius' jet." Reine revealed with a smile, Mana's eyes sparkled in awe at the sight of it and began slightly drooling, making Kotori try and fail to wave her hand over her face to regain her focus.

"How fast is this thing?" Origami asked.

"By my estimates, it tops at Mach 5, and thanks to the Realizer technology installed, we have no worries about a Sonic Boom causing any damage." Reine answered. "Believe it or not Kotori, but it was your parents who designed this jet."

"What? My parents, they work for Ratatoskr too?" Kotori asked surprised.

"Not exactly, kinda like how the AST is a sub-division under Ratatoskr, your parents work under another sub-division, Asgard Electronics. They supply us with all our Realizer technology and more." Reine answered, the red-haired girl's mouth dropping open in shock.

"Now it's time for you to get going, based on our predictions, Hermit should end up heading back
towards Tokyo soon enough. So that's where you'll be heading off towards. The Fraxinus and Maria will be aiding you from here through it, and we won't be sending you alone. We've asked a few people to come with you."

The group turns as their aid walks through the door behind them. Hiroto walked in, and soon was joined by Mikie and Mildred, followed by Ryouko who saluted to Reine upon entering the room.

"Captain Ryouko Kusakabe of the AST, reporting for duty Commander Murasame!" Ryouko announced, making Reine sigh a bit. Ryouko was the one person who didn't seem to register how she preferred to just be called Reine. "I'm here to assist Shido Takamiya and his team in the mission to save Hermit!"

"Right, thank you Ryouko." Reine said, soon turning to Shido. "We'll be checking around in case Hermit changes to another location, be careful out there. While Hermit is a more docile spirit, anything could happen if she Inverses while you're out there."

"Right, and don't worry." Shido replied, giving a confident look. "You can count on us."

Soon everyone boarded the Sagittarius and it begins floating up into the air before taking off towards Tokyo, Reine watching before Kannazuki walks in.

"Those two have grown up quite well." Kannazuki inquired, soon turning to her. "When are you gonna tell them? It's not like you don't have a reason to."

"I can't, not yet anyways." Reine replies, shaking her head. "They need more to know me first, and... most importantly, I need time before I don't feel the guilt and pain when I think of them learning that truth. There are some questions we need answered that might chance the end result."

Westcott was at the DEM base located on Arubi Island, seeing the small DEM strike force's latest attempt to deal with [Hermit] and see if they could force her to use the Inversion that Marina had mentioned to him about.

"Hmm..." Westcott hummed as he watched, and then... "Oh, what's this?"

One of the hidden cameras that were able to sneak in noticed the rabbit puppet hit Yoshino on the head, and suddenly a blue sphere of spirit energy formed before going dark blue and cutting off the one camera. A new camera feed soon showed a slightly distorted video of the inverted Hermit using her Demon King and freezing a whole area of Tokyo with her power before reverting back.

"Ah, so the rumors are true. She can Inverse and change back at will." Westcott smirked, impressed at the result. If he could capture [Hermit] then he might learn how to do this to other Spirits they capture without any effort, maybe even a Sephira Crystal. "Marina, what data do we have so far?"

"Very little father, but we have decided to name [Hermit]'s Inverse form as [Marionette]. It seems that while Inverted, her Demon King gives her a puppet master ability over some of her ice." Marina replied, knowing Yoshino's two known cases of inversions had been too brief and quick for any better info.

"I see, let Ellen know we're ready to try the special Ashcroft Alpha unit." Westcott replied, moving his tablet to the schematics of a project. "I think she'll love piloting this particular beast from here, she does have a Princess to get revenge on."

Outside, the sight of something breathing a dangerous black flame at an ice based target was seen, a pair of four scarlet eyes glowing dangerously.
As the group neared Tokyo, Hiroto was sitting by Shido as he explained what Hermit's personality would probably like.

"Hermit's always been a more docile spirit, so she's likely quite shy and/or timid. She'll probably be friendly if you show her you don't need any harm." Hiroto explained, using the image of her as his reference.

"Tohka?" Shido asked, knowing she had seen her briefly.

"She seemed like that, though for some reason she acted like her puppet was alive." Tohka said, still confused over that.

"Uh... Hiroto? Is that normal?" Maria asked via his phone.

"That's... err..." Hiroto tried to think of a situation from one of his dating sims, but he had nothing. This was something new. "...I've got nothing."

"Well THAT'S reassuring." Kotori quipped sarcastically, making Hiroto hang his head down.

"Oh yeah. Ryouko, Mikie, Mildred... I never got the chance to ask, but how did you all find yourselves joining Ratatoskr?" Mana asked, catching their attention. "Reine said everyone there had a reason for wanting to save the spirits over those in DEM who want to kill or use them."

"Well... around 15 years ago when I around your age, I saw the original Nightmare, or Spirit No. 3 as she got murdered." Ryouko said, slightly grimacing at the memory of that day.

"The people attacking her all made it sound like she was a monster, but I saw Nightmare's face... she was the one afraid, the one who seemed more human. She was the one running, trying to just protect herself, and then... I saw the one known as Adeptus 2 end her life. It had been brutal, when I learned about what happened from Ratatoskr, no shock I chose to join them over the DEM."

Mikie thought about a certain memory before speaking up next.

"Well, I don't think you might remember, or have seen me there... but truth is I actually learned about the Spirits during the month after Tohka first appeared before her inversion." Mikie replied, shocking the purple haired spirit.

"Really?" Tohka asked, making Mikie nod.

"I had been out for a walk, when a Spacequake alarm went off, but in the hurry, I got my leg caught and the quake went off before I could get it free. I wasn't in the radius luckily. That's when I saw Tohka." Mikie explained, remembering how scary it had been at the time.

"At first I felt like I saw something monstrous, and then the DEM attacked her. They told me that Spirits were monsters hurting the war... but I didn't know them, so I called my cousin Tamae about it and she told me she'd show me the truth. Had I not, I would have probably not learned Spirits had been the real victims."

"So the DEM doesn't hesitate to increase their own numbers huh?" Origami stated to herself, soon looking at Mildred. "And you Mildred? Didn't you use to be a DEM mechanic, sounds like your reason is the strongest one."

"Well..." Mildred began, but soon gave a sad face. "...The truth is, while I don't have any proof, I think one of the Spirits might be my younger sister. She... ran away years ago."
Everyone gasped at this, even Mikie and Ryouko hadn't heard her story yet.

"Well, she's my adoptive sister, but still." Mildred said sheepishly before continuing.

"She was adopted into the family 10 years ago, and she got really close. I tended to braid her hair. Her name was Mukuro Hoshimiya. However, I failed to notice her worries and anxiety, she had been starving for love before adoption since she had no family. I always told her that I liked her hair long, but when one of my friends commented about it being too long... I think I made a bad choice in how I replied to her and kinda agreed with it."

"OK, following you so far." Hiroto replied, the story on her sister was a bit unique so far. "Though I'm not seeing how this relates to her possibly being a Spirit."

"That part's next... probably." Mildred chuckled. "The day afterwards, me and my parents felt like we had lost something, and suddenly most people we knew surprisingly forgot about us. Mukuro then told us we were all hers now, and... we got kinda angry over it."

'Forgot about them, could this be the reason Tohka, me and Mana lost our memories?' Shido thought, if Westcott was after Spirits, then maybe he captured a past possessor and used that power to erase their memories.

"Mukuro was devastated and then ran to her room, we realized we were a bit too hard and I went to talk with her... her window was open leaving a note saying 'goodbye'. That was 5 years ago" Mildred continued, sadness filling her face.

"We all felt guilty, everyone who forgot us remembered... but it meant little. Then I learned about the Spirits when a DEM member told me the one who made us forget likely took Mukuro away. So I joined them, but then I saw this one image of a Spirit... it was really blurry, but I thought it looked like Mukuro. That's when I wondered, what if the Spirit that did it was Mukuro herself? If that were true, the DEM was going to kill her. After that, I left when the DEM wouldn't notice and then Ratatoskr found me."

"So you still don't know for sure if it's her or not?" Mana asked, Mildred shook her head. "Wow... so your sister's possibly in danger and you don't know if it's as a spirit or something else. Well, if she is a Spirit, we'll find and save her!"

"...Thanks Mana." Mildred said, smiling a bit. Soon after a bit, the Sagittarius landed on the ground and became invisible.

"We've made it everyone. Hiroto, Mildred, stay on the ship and keep watch while we go look around." Ryouko ordered, both of them nod as the others headed outside. The sight of the still partially frosted area of Tokyo in view. "Wow, it's still frozen even now. Be on guard everyone."

Everyone walks ahead and through the city, while they did... they were unaware that by a nearby tree, a familiar rabbit puppet was seen looking at them. She looks a bit before the sight of Tohka's familiar ribbon enters her gaze, giggling to herself a bit before Yoshino looks at the puppet from behind the tree.

"Y-Yoshinon... who's there?" Yoshino asks nervously.

"Ooh! Looks like we have some guests, and the purple lady from before is with them too! Well, if they're here to hurt Yoshino..." Yoshinon said, her single seen eye glowing. "...They'll be sorry they ever came here, I'll make sure of that myself."
Looks like Yoshinon's weary of the group already, and now we've got the story I hinted about Mildred in the previous arc. In this fanfic, I'm treating Mildred as the older sibling that Mukuro mentioned in her arc. As a result, Mildred's a bit older in this story, about... *thinks* 20 years old, where in canon she's about Origami's age. As for the part about Origami mentioning in her thoughts that her and Tohka are good friends? Well... I figure why not, we've never really had a fanfic where the two don't have their rivalry, so I chose them to be close friends in the story, the next chapter hopefully showcases this better.

While Tohka is able to attend school in canon, I chose not to have her attend in the story because of the gap in her memories and Reine being Fraxinus' commander, compared to canon where her blank slate state helped her adjust to it due to having no memories, plus I'm pretty sure Kotori had her attend as part of Shido's "training", cause it's clear that Tohka can be stable without Shido by her 24/7. Living in a house next to his is proof of this. Luckily as time goes on, she'll have Yoshino, Natsumi, Nia and Mukuro to keep her company at home.

That and I felt being at school is a good place for scenes to give Shido and Origami a good chance to strengthen their bond for when Shido may need to use her spirit power instead of Tohka's for his Spirit Ascension ability, while Tohka indirectly lead us towards learning the problems that Yoshino has been indirectly causing in her attempts to outrun the DEM's constant attacks on her. Trying to fit every spirit into the same place as often as I can seems a bit too difficult and forced too, so it seems better to group them into certain areas so I only have to focus on some at a time.

You might be wondering why I had a strong focus scene for Kotori at the beginning of Yoshino's arc, well... I guess it won't hurt to reveal it here since it's probably obvious after seeing it, but the semi-final arc of Season 1 will be Kotori's arc, and it's going to eventually link to the final arc of the first season. Which after that dream sequence... oh who am I kidding, it wasn't a secret that she was fighting Kurumi there. Why her eyes went blue though? That will stay a secret until her arc finally comes.

As you've noticed, compared to the Phantom in canon, this Phantom's much more noble and kind due to who it is under that cloak. Though this Phantom's also not good with realizing possible consequences until AFTER they've already happened. The result of the stress the DEM's top three Adeptus numbers having killed many past Sephira Crystal holders, so she often chooses a new wielder based on their wishes, feelings and similarities to a past wielder. So Reine's not that far off about why Tohka and Origami were chosen as the final [Princess] and [Angel].

Now with all of that out of the way, be ready for the next chapter, where the DEM begins making their move and the group deals with Inverse Yoshino, discovering the truth behind her controlled ability to Inverse freely.
Chapter 8

Time to begin the next chapter, and time for Yoshino and Yoshinon to make their next moves. As you've probably already noticed, Yoshinon is a lot more connected and bonded with Yoshino then in canon. How much so? Let's just say while Yoshino was willing to trust Shido when Yoshino had gotten lost in canon, in this story she's not as trusting to others aside from Yoshinon just yet.

She's still kind and timid like her canon self, it's just that Shido's got a bigger barrier he needs to shatter, and unlike canon... Yoshinon getting lost or separated from her is only a temporary issue, for Yoshino that is. I won't say more because you'll see what I mean pretty early in the chapter, so saying it here would kinda be the equivalent of repeating myself. For everyone else, well... you'll just have to wait and see to find out, I did say that fear was the emotion that best represented this arc after all :3

Also since some of you keep telling me this... I unfortunately have to crush the dreams of many now. This fanfic is being similar to canon ON PURPOSE, that's why it's called Date A Re:Live, it's sorta me if I had written the canon story instead of Tachibana. If I had truly wanted it to be unique from canon, I'd have given the story a different name. I'm sorry if this upsets anyone, but I'm afraid this is how the story has been planned since day one, do I will apologize for not properly explaining it. I thought the title and summary were enough to imply it, but they weren't.

The only salvation I can give you is that it's being more different from canon than A Dragon's Heavenly Bonds currently is. My writing style works better with using a reference of some kind than being completely from scratch due to the fact I have Autism, ADHD and OCD. Don't get me wrong, I'm not using them as an excuse, and I can still make original content, but I'm honestly just the kind of person who does better when it comes to creations like fanfics by changing something that's already made or improving upon it, rather than starting from zero.

Oh yeah, to anyone who thought Origami changed back from her Inverse Form too easily? Let me assure you now, there's an actual reason for why she changed back so easily, but it's not going to be revealed until the Kurumi arc which isn't until after Kotori's. Let's just say the Vanargandr did what it was meant to, but neither Jessica and Westcott knew a spirit would change back so easily, the Inverse Form's origin is not the same as canon recently revealed, nor is it the same in the first place. That's the reason why the Spirits are still themselves, yet more unstable.

The only thing I can explain about this right now without giving anyone spoilers is that in this story, the Inverse Form only exists because of events that happened during the time of the Prologue's flashback scene and not actually part of the Sephira Crystals. Basically, the power of the Qlipha Crystals only exists in this story because of this, and by extension are only a minor part of the Spirit's powers as a whole. At best, the most often you'll see anything Inverse Form related in a constant manner is via Yoshino being able to freely do it.

Finally, one last promise from me. Since I just got back into the writing game, while I'm in "serious mode", I'm not in my "prime" mode. I honestly don't have the skills I used to and it
will take time to recover, if I were to compare my skills now to at their prime... I'd say I'd score only 25/100 points by my prime's standards. However, when they do, all the chapters in this story and every other one I've made will be redone so they'll be expanded and made to be the best they can be. So for now, please bear with my chapters being done with the skill level I have now.

So, here we go!

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Chapter 8, S1: Yoshino Duality, Part 2

-Flashback Start-

"Kill her! Take that Spirit down, no matter the cost!"

Yoshino flew through the skies of Okinawa as a whole squadron of DEM wizards chase and fire at her, as usual she was only dodging and evading while avoiding attacking them back despite the danger presented at her. Soon one rogue missile flew in front of her, and she gaps as it hits.

"AH!" Yoshino cried as she was flung away, she heard a scream and turned to see Yoshinon flew off her hand. "Yoshinon!"

Yoshino was soon fully terrified, without Yoshinon by her side she was now in a complete panic and began flying low to the ground, soon being hit by a few more missiles. Making her tumble, as a whole group of them began flying behind, soon she closes her eyes and screams as she slams her hand onto the ground.

"ZADKIEL!"

Suddenly a huge flurry of ice shards fly out as a mechanical white rabbit puppet with red eyes forms from the ground, Yoshino jumps on t's back and slides her hand into one part, making the Angel roar in response.

[DON'T HURT MASTER!]

Zadkiel blasts beams of ice that cause the wizards it hits to have their territories frozen, trapping them within. Even now the timid spirit refused to truly fight back. It did little good as the remaining DEM wizards just flew around and began firing capture nets, the amount that gathered on top of Zadkiel soon caused it to become immobile and fall to the ground, trapped in place.

"Yoshinon... Yoshinon!" Yoshino cried.

"We've got it, destroy her and capture the Sephira Crystal now!" The squad captain roared, and every Wizard aimed their weapons at Yoshino. Meanwhile on the ground somewhere, the puppet housing Yoshinon was un-moving... until it's eye glowed and it twitched.

"Yoshinon... you're bullying Yoshino, she's crying!" Yoshinon suddenly spoke, her movements in a spasm due to not being on Yoshino's hand. "I will not let you... bully Yoshino!"

Soon Yoshinon 'breathes in' and shouts.

"YOSHINO! LET ME IN!" Yoshinon yelled loudly, catching Yoshino's attention, having somehow heard it.

"W-what?"
"Let me in Yoshino! I will keep your safe, I'm your hero right!?" Yoshinon asked, and the frightened Yoshino nodded from where she was and closed her eyes. "I'm coming Yoshino!"

Suddenly, Yoshino floated into the air, and with her one red eye glowing, she suddenly zoomed towards Yoshino. Right as the DEM wizards were about to fire, they suddenly saw the puppet fly by and the confusion of the sight distracted them for just long enough to have Yoshinon bop her forehead onto Yoshino's, making her gasp.

At that moment, the entire squad suddenly gasped as a blue orb of spirit power formed before becoming a dark blue in color, when it disappeared, from within the sphere the sight of Yoshino jumping out was seen... but she was different now.

The timid looking blue haired girl with blue eyes was now gone, replaced with a pale light blue haired girl with an eye patch covering her right eye to only reveal her single glowing red eye. Her hood had now become black with the bunny ears sharper, a button eye on the left with a stitched 'eye' on the right. The mouth of the hood now seemed more like sharp teeth in shape as well.

The jacket area of the hood had opened up and transformed into a cape with a glowing blue tuft of fur lining the ends, and under it was a black two-piece bikini. Her left arm was still with a sleeve, holding the new Yoshinon which now had closed girl eyes and a upside down V shaped mouth while her right arm was sleeveless and had a fingerless glove, an icy shaped ring on her pointer finger, and finally toe-less black boots with the same puffball on her Astral Dress' "tail".

"You... you all bullied poor Yoshino." To the surprise of anyone who knew her, Yoshino was speaking in Yoshinon's voice. Now her puppet's new face and her eye patch were explained... Yoshinon and her had swapped bodies. "And now you'll be paying the price for it!"

"W-what? Did Hermit... just undergo an Inversion?" One of the wizards stuttered, and Yoshinon gave a dark smirk at him and the others as her visible eye glowed.

"I-Yoshinon... please don't kill them." Yoshino requested, making Yoshinon pet the puppet's head.

"Oh, don't worry, I won't kill them. We're not them... but I will do something to make them regret bullying you." Yoshinon replied, giving a cold look at the Wizards, never dropping the smile she had to a disturbing degree. She raised her hand into the air.

"ASTAROTH!"

Suddenly a huge blizzard began blowing, Yoshinon laughing as a black mechanical rabbit like that of Zadkiel appeared, only it's eyes glowed a fierce light blue, and its maw along with parts of its body emitting similar colored fire that was actually a heat sucking plasma that drained any warmth nearby. Yoshinon got on top and put only the hand with the puppet in the control section.

"Now, how should we take care of this... I know. Astaroth, freeze them into this entire area!" Yoshino shouted, the Demon King roared with a ghastly shriek before ice pillars formed, and the Astaroth along with the pillars fired off concentrated blizzards, making all the wizards screamed as they and the entire district of Okinawa they were in be completely frozen in ice. The only thing that could be heard was the sounds of Yoshinon's laughter.

"Let the world know this, if anyone bully's Yoshinon... I shall freeze this whole world to protect her!" Yoshinon said darkly.

-End Flashback-
Yoshinon chuckles darkly as she remembers that moment, she would show no mercy to this group if they were gonna hurt Yoshinon. Soon however she felt Yoshino's other hand tap her on the head.

"Huh? What is it Yoshinon?" Yoshinon asked, the shy girl looking at her a bit scared.

"Um... you scare me when you do that." Yoshino said, making the puppet close her mouth and cover it with her hands.

"Sorry." Yoshinon replied.

Yoshino and Yoshino followed the group from far behind, not wanting to let themselves be seen. As the group was walking, Tohka and Origami were having a conversation with each other about a Spirit related thing.

"So Origami, has Shido managed to use your powers for his Spirit Ascension trick yet?" Tohka asked, making Origami blink at the name she just used. Tohka blushed realizing she hadn't told anyone yet. "Oh, uh... that's what I named that thing he did where he imbued my power into his body. You know, when he took out the machine holding your prisoner?"

"Oh! Well..." Origami began, soon looking down and sighing a bit. "No, not at all. According to Reine we don't have a strong enough bond for it to work. I feel so useless, while you still can recall your powers yet, at least he can borrow your power from you... I'm just a burden to everyone right now."

Tohka panics as she sees Origami start tearing up, threatening to become a full blown cry. Not sure how to make her feel better, Tohka panics and swings her arms around, looking left and right before slamming her fist onto her hand as she gets an idea on what to do.

"D-don't cry Origami! It's not as bad as your thinking it is, I mean Shido and I have a strong bond, but we knew each other for years by then." Tohka stuttered, soon getting Origami to look at her. Her ears still full of tears.

"Plus, me and Shido made a promise to protect one another, until I get my powers back we're both in the same boat. I promise you that we'll both work hard to do it. After all, we both love Shido right, as long as we believe in each other we can make anything happen!"

Tohka's eyes sparkle and she grabs Origami's hand as she says this, Origami stares a bit before laughing. Making Tohka's eyes briefly becoming cartoon-ish dots in confusion before Origami smiles and uses a finger to wipes the tears off her eyes.

"Tohka, don't ever change. OK?" Origami laughed, Tohka's words combined with her theatrics near the end had helped her stop focusing on her worries and doubts. Tohka blinked having no idea what was going on, but then just closed her eyes and smiled since Origami was happy again.

Soon the group makes it inside the grounds of Tokyo where they saw the effects of the district being frozen firsthand, everyone struggling to try and remove the ice or continuing their usually daily routines with the ice and snow effecting how they were done or could be done. Mikie shook a bit as she recalled the damage Tohka had left from the time she had seen her. What Yoshino had done was very different, it was like comparing an earthquake to an avalanche.

"My god..." Mikie said, she hugged Ryouko close as the AST captain patted her head. She could understand the feeling. Just because they knew the Spirits weren't doing this of their own free choice didn't mean they didn't fear their power, especially if one made Humanity their enemy.

"To think Hermit did all of this? She's such a docile spirit normally... just what is her Inversion like?"
"I don't know, so we better find the source of where she initiated the attack that froze this entire district." Ryouko replied, breathing to calm her nerves. Knowing they had to focus on saving Hermit before this could continue elsewhere in the world. "If our information network's right, there should be at a shopping complex where this happened."

Mana looks around and soon notices an area with a lot of ice congregated by it.

"Hey Captain, I think I found it." Mana stated as she pointed to it, making everyone else notice the focused mass of ice.

"Good eye Mana, let's check it out then."

Everyone got closer, though noticed a bunch of police tape and guards blocking the way over to it.

"Great, now how do we get over there!?” Kotori moaned, hating how much this felt like one of those movies were the police made things harder for everyone.

"Mikie?" Ryouko asked, looking at her. The young wizard nods and walks into an alley before equipping her yellow and sand colored CR-Unit and motioning the others over. Everyone saw a territory form around them as they mimicked a Realizer's Invisible function.

"Mikie's CR-Unit, the 'Sphinx', allows her to mimic a Realizer's ability to hide a ship. While it lacks the ability to phase through some objects like a real one we can use it to sneak through undetected."

"Wow, that's a useful ability Mikie." Origami noted, making Mikie briefly blush a lot in response. "Mikie?"

"N-Nothing!" Mikie quickly replied. 'Why am I so embarrassed by her comment?'

Soon the group slipped by a gap in the police barriers and got closer to the mass of ice, and after getting far enough inside the area, Mikie dispelled her territory and everyone was once again visible to the world.

"Alright, so is this the place?" Shido asked. Rather than an answer, Ryouko soon equipped her own CR-Unit, the "Lynx", and it deployed some weaponry the scanned the area. "Ryouko?"

"Just a moment Shido, I'm scanning the area of any clues or traces." Ryouko replied, looking at the information on her suit's wrist until... a beep goes off as they found something. "Looks like we've got a lead. Now, time to take a look into this ice."

Ryouko pulls out an energy sword and cuts into a chunk of the ice, revealing a hole in the shopping complex. She and Mikie, followed by Mana as she equipped the Murakumo all fly in closer.

"Whoa... this place is a wreck, so is this really it?" Mana asked, she looked as Ryouko checked her wrist and got a long repetitive beeping alert before nodding.

"...It is, she definitely underwent an inversion here."

"I'll get the others up here, keep an eye out." Mana replied before flying down to go pick them up, none of them aware of Yoshinon staring at them from behind a mannequin.

'Hmm...' Yoshinon thought, curious to what they were doing. 'It seems like they're looking for me, the question is it for trouble or something else?'

Soon after all the others get inside, the group looks around.
"Whoa... this feels like one of those scary movies." Tohka commented, shaking a bit.

"D-Don't say that idiot!" Kotori said, now suddenly terrified.

Shido walked around for a bit, only for a puppet to suddenly appear in front of his face upside down.

"Hey."

Shido quickly screamed in response to the puppet’s sudden appearance, falling over a bit. Everyone soon notices Yoshinon was standing on the ceiling before floating down and turning over.

"Oh? Well, if isn't the lady from before, it seems you've returned for more!" Yoshinon commented.

"Uh... hi, your names were..." Tohka said, the sudden entrance made her forget.

"Oh, how rude of me. Did we not properly introduce ourselves before? Well then..." Yoshinon soon waved her arms in a circle. "My name is... YOSHINON! And this is my best friend Yoshino, aren't our names cute!?"

"Uh... yeah, they are." Shido quickly replied, feeling a bit odd. 'Crap! What am I supposed to say to a puppet!?'

Suddenly Shido's phone lights up and Shido sees some stats appear, he showed some shock before a screen with Maria and Hiroto appeared to the side.

"Hey Shido, don't be afraid of what just came up. We noticed you're unsure and now the headset and I, with Hiroto's aid, will be helping you decide on how to respond to Hermit, or rather Yoshino, at this moment." Maria explained, noticing Shido's shock.

"The stats to your left are a sign of a Spirit's emotional state and what feelings are showing high and low numbers." Hiroto followed up, pointing towards them. "Normally they'll be all you see. If you need it we'll offer you a suggested response or multiple choices."

Shido lightly nods, and soon a suggested response came up. It said {Glad you have each other, a friend is always good to have when you don't know where you are}. Shido breathes a bit and gets ready to make the reply.

"I'm glad the two of you have one another, it's always better to be with a friend when in a strange place like this." Shido replied, and soon Yoshinon giggles as he sees her happiness levels increase.

"Aw, that's so sweet mister. Though now I have a question..." Yoshinon replied, getting closer to Shido. "Why did you come here?"

Everyone flinched at that, and soon three choices appear via the headset.

1. Honesty Response - "Because I was interested in you."
2. Situational Response - "We were just interested on where the source of the ice had come from."
3. Funny Response - "Oh me, I'm just a wondering Vagabond!"

"Uh... Maria, I'm still not sure what to say here." Shido whispers.

"Not to worry Shido, if this is still an issue, we have Ratatoskr agents at the ready to recommend their choices." Maria explained, soon sending the request over. "You'll see voting results soon, this should help you decide."

1. "Because I was interested in you." - 51%
2. "We were just interested on where the source of the ice had come from." - 16%
3. "Oh me, I'm just a wondering Vagabond!" - 33%

I did consider option 3 to be funny, but perhaps being honest would work well. Option 2 is a no go for sure because that sounds too suspicious." Hiroto added, adding his two cents. "Either 1 or 3 works Shido, go with the one you think."

"...Because I'm interested you." Shido replies, catching Yoshinon by surprise.

"Ooh? I didn't realize I was so popular, it's nice to be appreciated!" Yoshinon claps, soon she and Yoshino jump on some monkey bar like structure and Shido panics as Yoshino barely keeps her balance.

"What the hell is that doing in a store??" Kotori screamed, the others all nodded in agreement. "I mean it's a store, not a playground or gym!"

"Hey mister, tell me what you think!" Yoshinon giggled, enjoying herself while Shido panics to be ready to catch her. "Am I cool or am I the coolest!?"

"Yoshinon, get down! That's not safe!" Shido panicked.

"I don't recall asking you if it was safe, I asked if I was cool or the coolest- Ah!" Yoshino soon fell forward, prompting Shido to kick his legs forward and catch her. The way he does causes them to accidentally kiss.

"Ah!" Tohka and Origami both steam up at that, kinda wishing it had happened to them instead... however nothing happened to Yoshino.

"Wait, nothing happened?" Mana asked.

"That's strange, I guess kissing alone must not work. It can't be willing kisses since you didn't do that with Tohka and Origami... maybe it has to do with your trust?" Maria wondered, considering how the Spirit Ascension relied on their bonds, Yoshino likely didn't trust Shido enough for a sealing to commence.

"Oh my, I'm so sorry about that!" Shido panicked, and Yoshino got up and brushed herself... only to see Yoshinon had fallen off. Making her panic a bit. Shido sees her emotional state suddenly drop into the low area. 'Oh no, this is bad!'

Shido looks around for Yoshino but can't find it.

"Everyone, find her puppet quick! She's starting to freak out!" Shido replied, but unfortunately... that was a bad word choice.

"I'm sorry... did you just call me a puppet?" Yoshinon asks, suddenly floated as everyone turns to face her, suddenly shocked it was moving on its own.

"I-I'm sorry, I didn't realize you were alive. I mean it's just that you've been the only one talking and-"

"I knew it, all of you... the reason you were here is to bully Yoshinon! Taking her first kiss is proof lucky lecher!" Yoshinon growls, her eye glowing. "No one... bullies... Yoshino!"

"Yoshinon... help me!" Yoshino said, curling up by the monkey bar like objects.
"I'm coming Yoshino!"

Suddenly everyone saw Yoshinon fly towards Yoshino and collide their foreheads.

Back at the Sagittarius, Mildred suddenly sees the jet's readings detecting a massive influx of spirit power coming from Yoshino. She suddenly screams and makes Hiroto nearly drop his phone from the surprise shouting.

"What the hell Mildred!?!" Hiroto panting, gasping for some air.

"This is bad... Hermit's just registered a Category E! It's an inversion!" Mildred panicked, making Hiroto and Maria via his phone begin to panic alongside her. "Come on, we've gotta get the ship back up in the air now!"

"Everyone back now!" Ryouko screamed as she began running, the others followed as everyone outside ran as the Spacequake alarm sounded off. Soon, Yoshinon jumped out of the building in her Inverse Astral Dress. Staring at the group before her.

"You're not running away, no one bullies Yoshino and gets away with it!" Yoshino smirks darkly.

"W-what the? Isn't that the puppet's voice?" Tohka gasped, surprised by the fact.

"Wait... the puppet moved on its own, didn't like being labeled as a puppet, and then the inversion happened when their heads..." Origami mumbled before she widened her eyes, realizing what happened. "Yoshino's inversion... she can do it freely because her inverse form's personality IS the puppet! They've switched bodies!"

Yoshinon looked at them before raising her hand.

"ASTAROTH!"

The black mechanical puppet rips out of the shopping complex and give sit's signature roar before Yoshinon got on its back and put the Yoshino puppet inside. Soon breathing a powerful frozen beam at the group. They all gasped as it neared them before Shido took the front of the group.

"I call to the power welling deep beyond my heart, now break the dimensional bonds before me... and let the spiritual force sleeping within be seen!" Shido shouted, Tohka's signature sword appearing before him.

Shido grabs it as his hair and eyes assume Tohka's color, and he swings the Angel down to cut through the icy beam aimed towards them, slashing it into two. Yoshinon stares at him annoyed.

"So, you're gonna keep bullying Yoshino and me? Alright then, if you want me serious then you've got me serious!" Yoshinon screamed, soon raising her free hand up into the air, making Astaroth's body glow. "HRAESVELGR!"

Soon Astaroth's outer armor breaks off and takes the form of triangular pieces that looked like paper airplanes with bunny ears and blue eyes, soon burning with the ice flames behind them as they flew. From Yoshinon's fingers, blue threads of spirit power appear, she motions her fingers and the Hraesvelgr puppets all move in towards the group.

"Now dance to the rhapsody of my song of frozen solitude!" Yoshino chuckles in a joking manner, making Shido hold up Sandalphon.
Mikie and Ryouko all begin firing their CR-Units' Audlist guns at the Hraesvelgr puppets, but they quickly dodge and soon rush at them. The two use their territories to defend themselves from the blasts.

"Suck on these!" Mana shouts, her Murakumo's shoulder gear shifting to fire energy strings, Mana using her finger to guide them. While the Hraesvelgr puppets were still easily dodging them, she was able to at least hit a few. Dodging the others that tried to strike her. "Damn it, these things are so unfair!"

"At least your hitting them!" Shido yelled out as he tried swinging at them, but they moved too fast for him to swing Sandalphon at them. He growled at the fact he wasn't able to do anything. "I don't think I could even get near the Demon King with its puppet minions right now."

"Come on Origami, we gotta try to do something!" Tohka shouted, sweating at the situation before them, neither of them noticing Kotori as she suddenly walks off without their notice. Origami panics and nods slightly. "Come on... please, just lend me a bit of my powers! Anything!"

"Me too... please Metatron, I need you!" Origami shouted.

Both of them have their outfits take some traits of the Astral Dresses for a moment, but after that moment they end up changing back. Both Spirits sweat dropped and growled at the result before them. If only they could push just a bit more power out and recall their Spirit mana.

"Now my Hraesvelgrs, finish this!" Yoshino called out, laughing madly as she did. Soon the Hraesvelgr puppets all begin flying around in circles around the group, as their speed picks up, a huge blizzard forms, the three wizards of the group saw their territory begin to freeze.

"Dispel your territories! If you don't you'll freeze up!" Ryouko ordered, making Mana and Mikie nod as they did so and forcing all three to land. The group soon stood back to back... and that's when Mana noticed their absent member.

"Oh no... Shido! It's Kotori, she's not here!" Mana panicked, catching everyone's attention.

"But she was here a second ago, where'd she run off to?" Origami paled, worried something bad happened. At that moment, the Hraesvelgr puppets all get pulled back and re-forge Astaroth's armor to its original form. Soon the Demon King roars heavily and pillars of ice begin to form around the blizzard.

"Now... let's see how you like the permanent cold shoulder!" Yoshinon asked, looking quite bored and unimpressed with the machine before her.

"Don't try to resist [Marionette], as you just saw, try to resist me and the Nidhogg will make your
death painful instead of painless." Ellen's voice projected through the giant machine, the Nidhoggr soon charges up it black flames and fires them again. Yoshinon simply smirks and holds her hand out and Astaroth breathes out ice that counters it.

"What!?"

"You really thought I was being serious before now angry lady? If I went all out from the start, I wouldn't have fun breaking everyone into not bullying Yoshinon anymore." Yoshinon chuckles, but soon frowns and gives a serious look. "I'll make an exception for you though."

Astaroth roars and soon it and the pillars of ice all fire at Nidhoggr as it blasts fire to defend itself. Yoshino smirks darkly and soon has Astaroth rush behind Nidhoggr's backside. Yoshino wipes her hand and Astaroth brutally rips its claws into the machine before chomping onto it and ripping it to shreds.

"Ha ha! See that, you ended up being all talk!" Yoshinon laughed, kicking her legs up in down while laying her back on Astaroth.

"Y-Yoshinon, look!" Yoshino spoke, catching Yoshinon's attention.

Everyone soon showed shock as mana threads suddenly sprouted out and began reconnecting the destroyed machine, and in mere moments the Nidhoggr was repaired as if Astaroth never did any damage.

"Do you honestly think we didn't prepare for this? The Nidhoggr is like the beast it's named after, it can survive even the deadly winter of Ragnarok." Ellen projected through the machine, soon blasting black fire at Yoshinon who has Astaroth dodge its fire again.

"Then that machine is indestructible?" Mikie gasped, this Nidhoggr weapon couldn't really be unbeatable... could it?

"No, it has to have a weakness. For it to be able to repair itself there's a source." Ryouko replied, making Mikie sigh in relief. "The question is it using that allows it to repair itself from such near-irreparable damage?"

"Well let's find out, come one everyone let's-" Shido began, but soon an icicle nearly missed him.

"Stay out of this!" Yoshinon shouted, Astaroth's ice and Nidhoggr's black fire colliding with one another. "You bullies... get away from Yoshinon. Stop making her cry, stop scaring her, stop... STOP BEING MEAN TO HER!"

Suddenly Astaroth roars incredibly loud, actually knocking everyone to their feet and disorienting the Nidhoggr's flight systems for a moment.

"ABSOLUTE ZERO!"

Suddenly a powerful burst of ice flung out everywhere, like an icy volcano erupting within a blizzard.

Meanwhile the Sagittarius finally managed to begin taking off, but once it however...

"Huh?" Maria suddenly blinked, looking around.

"Maria? What is it, something wrong?" Mildred asked, curious to the AI's sudden actions. At the
same time, she admitted it was getting chilly. "Say, is it getting colder or is it just me?"

"Guys, I have a bad feel-" Maria suddenly gasped. "Mildred, watch out!"

Mildred turned and soon the flurry of the icy storm began to hit them, the ship began to tumble as it was tossed and turned as the two passengers and the AI inside all screamed in fear.

"Oh no, something tells me something went wrong on Shido's end!" Hiroto tried to say through his screams.

"Everyone hang on, I'll try to keep us from crashing!" Mildred yelled, soon having to turn the ship sharply as the controls went haywire from some ice breaching into the ship.

Nidhoggr stayed steady and kept burning its fires to keep it from freezing while the others were barely able to keep their ground against the intensity of the icy flurry being emitted. Grunting a bit, Shido tries to get closer to Yoshinon.

"YOSHINO! YOSHINON! PLEASE STOP THIS!" Shido screamed, hoping his voice would reach them. However, Yoshinon ignored it, completely obsessed over the rage that the thought that everyone wanted to hurt Yoshino filled her with.

During this, a large portion of the icy attack began flying at Shido, causing Tohka and Origami to gasp and run at him.

"SHIDO!" They both cried out, pushing him out of the way. Shido turned at that moment as the attack hit them. Shocking everyone, Shido's sudden shriek at the whole thing caused Yoshinon to briefly regain her focus and look. When she did... everyone saw Tohka and Origami frozen in a block of thick ice.

"No... this can't, this can't be real." Shido stuttered, trying to tell himself it was a bad dream. "Come on you guys, please tell me this is just you hiding behind the ice. You're not really frozen... right?"

Yoshinon could only stare as Shido began acting similar to Yoshino would when scared or hurt.

"What... what have I done?" Yoshinon breathed, her only movement being brief shakes. Shido kept staring, his fake smile soon shattering as tears flooded his eyes before he screamed up towards the heavens.

"TOHKA! ORIGAMI!"

Uh oh! Kotori suddenly walked off and is now missing in a battle zone, Ellen's remotely controlling the Nidhoggr, the weapon briefly seen in the prior chapter... and now Yoshinon, who's the Inverse personality of Yoshino's spirit powers, just frozen Tohka and Origami in incredibly thick ice. Now the Nidhoggr only has her to fight it and it seems that while they're even, the Nidhoggr's regeneration means it's got the advantage and will outlast Inverse Yoshino.

What will Shido be able to do now? He's gotta fight against a flying enemy when he lacks the power of flight himself, the Sagittarius is coming, but due to the storm there's no guarantee that they'll even manage to make it through to give them aid. Most of all... will Tohka and Origami be alright in that icy tomb, or is being frozen inside actually dangerous for them despite or even because they're Spirits? Guess we'll find out in the next chapter, until then,
pray that these two will manage survive being frozen.

To anyone that wonders why I chose the machine to be named Nidhoggr? For the very reason actually stated, in Norse mythology, Nidhoggr is a Dragon that will survive Ragnarok, which is also known to be a giant and longer winter. As Yoshino is the spirit who commands ice and water, I felt this was the perfect opportunity. For that same reason, the Nidhoggr was made to repair any damage it takes as long as it's core isn't destroyed, as for why it creates black fire? Nidhoggr's part of Helheim, which is like Norse version of the Underworld, and black represents death.

Here are Inverse Yoshino's stats in case anyone wants to know them, as a friendly reminder, remember that these stats are exclusive to the story:

-Inverse Yoshino (aka Yoshinon)-

Demon King: Astaroth - Zadkiel's Demon King counterpart, emits incredibly powerful heat sucking plasma in the form of light blue flames that consume all heat within its vicinity, freezing anything that it makes contact with.

- Alternate Form: Hraesvelgr - By shedding its armor off into triangular pieces, Astaroth halves its defense in exchange for tripling its speed, with each detached shard of its armor taking the form of miniature flying rabbits known as the "Hraesvelgr puppets", being commanded by Yoshino's right hand through threads of spirit mana.

- Alternate Form: Trishula - The Inverse counterpart of Zadkiel's Siryon technique, the only differences are rather than an armor of ice overlaying her Astral Dress, the ice flames overlay it instead. Less of Astaroth is "worn" by Yoshino as well.

- Powers: Unlike the original Zadkiel, Astaroth is able to form ice from long distances and transfer its will into pillars of ice briefly to attack from multiple areas at once. This will only work if Astaroth is immobile, leaving it and Yoshinon vulnerable.

Risk Factors: AA

Spacequake: B

Spirit's Astral Dress: B

Demon King Ranking: AA

Strength: 135

Consistency: 104

Spiritual Power: 217

Agility: 185

Intelligence: 177
Chapter 9

Before we begin, I'd like to give thanks to my friend and fellow author Cryocene, author of the amazing DAL stories "Alternate Reincarnation" and "Angelic Darkness", for sharing something in his/her review about my mythological references I wasn't aware of. But first... my apologies for my choice of wording about Ragnarok in last chapter's end notes, I meant to imply more along the lines that a long winter was important to it, not the entirety of the event.

Anyways, what this review included was how Surtr is the one who ends Ragnarok by giving the whole world a fiery death, so my choice of giving the Nidhoggr machine black flames worked even better, because it shows I'm using two of prominent parts of Ragnarok together which I really like. Not to mention that there's a dual motif to water in ice in many religions, such as the spring of life, and yet it also represents the depths of death.

I honestly hadn't realized I had managed to make such a deep and different connection with Yoshino and Yoshinon as a result, or how fitting making the arc's name "Yoshinon Duality" as a result. I honestly only had Yoshinon take over Yoshino's body because the Inverse illustration implies it via Yoshino wearing an eye patch and Yoshinon not wearing one. I'm happy it managed to evolve it something much more than that.

With that thank you and bit of trivia out of the way, let's finally bring an end to the Yoshino arc.

Chapter 9, S1: Yoshino Duality, Part 3

"TOHKA! ORIGAMI!" Shido screamed.

The sight of the two heavily frozen spirits entered everyone's view as they could only look in horror at what they were seeing. Shido had been nearly hit by an intense mass of the freezing ice flames and both Tohka and Origami rushed in to push him away, only to take Shido's place in the prison of ice before them now. Shido screaming as tears flowed down his face, and Yoshinon stared in horror at what she had done.

"I just... I just made someone scream, show the same terror as Yoshino did that day." Yoshinon mutters to herself, her one visible eye shaking. She held her hands on her head as she struggled to avoid losing it with little success. "I'm... no different than the ones who bullied Yoshino. I've become the bully."

At that moment, Yoshinon screams loudly, nearly clawing at her face as her Demon King turns to her in worry.

[Master? Master, please calm down, don't-]

The Demon King never got to finish as it roared in pain, the black flames of Nidhoggr blasting it and sending it and Yoshinon flying. The Inverse Spirit tumbled and rolled across the ground until she crashed into a building and Astaroth was simply thrown into a wall of a building, cracking slightly as it takes damage.

"Good riddance, without those two in the way and you a complete mess, capturing you will be little trouble." Ellen said, her smugness projecting through Nidhoggr's speakers as parts of the machine
open up to prepare an additional two spots to blast its black fire. "Now, time to kill you and take your."

Suddenly Shido gave off an inhuman scream at that moment, his anger flaring off to a degree that everyone felt it, even the Nidhoggr machine did before Shido suddenly ran up a building with Sandalphon in hand, both Tohka and Origami's spirit power flaring off of him like nuclear radiation.

[What the? This is, no... Shido! Stop this right now, if you don't you'll-]

Mio's voice suddenly became too overwhelmed by the mass of power and she screamed, Shido roared even louder and the purple and white waves of power emitting off of Shido actually spread out and grew even stronger than before.

"What the hell?" Ellen wondered.

"What's happening?" Ryouko breathed, suddenly terrified. Mikie hugged her and screamed with her eyes closed. Feeling a panic attack as she recalled the fear from the time she was nearly caught in one of Tohka's Spacequakes.

"Big brother... oh no, his rage. He's losing himself to his anger." Mana breathed, soon running closer and screaming. "STOP IT BIG BROTHER! Don't do it, don't give into your rage! You have no idea what could happen while you're using your powers!"

Shido screamed as he swung Sandalphon into Nidhoggr endlessly, looking like a rabid animal mauling and ripping into its prey, either for food, enjoyment or as of killing for mere sport. He only kept slashing to just attack the machine as it keeps regenerating and healing from the damage left it.

"Ellen! This is your fault, if you weren't here the two I love would still be here! It's because of you that Yoshino froze them in ice!" Shido roared, still slashing into Nidhoggr without bothering to try to find the source of its regeneration.

"It's you! It's always been you, and everyone else working for that madman! You took everything from me, took everything from Mana! Took so much away from Tohka I didn't even know what you stole from here! Everything in this world since that day is your fault! You'll die today, I'll smash this thing until you bleed to a bloody death from your end! I'll give you the cruelest and most unmerciful death you can imagine!"

"My god... there's no positive emotion inside her right now. All that's there is sadness, rage, despair and even fear." Ryouko gasped.

"You honestly think you can kill me via a machine? I think I'll just take you out-" Ellen began replying, though suddenly she heard some alarms go off from the Nidhoggr's sensors. "Huh, what is... wait, what!"

Soon even more spirit power began to flood and flare off Shido's body, and soon it began to spread where the Nidhoggr's own arm began to slightly burn while some of the city begins to crumble. Spacequake alarms begin flaring off everywhere.

"W-what's happening!?" Mana gasped, suddenly looking around for ripples but seeing none.

"This is... are Shido's powers starting to go out of control?" Mikie gasped, having opened her eyes in worry when they heard the alarms went off. "Captain Ryouko, Mana? What's happening!?!"

"...I don't know." Ryouko said, only able to stare at the monstrous power Shido was emitting. Mana simply shakes her head to show she was just as clueless... all anyone knew was that the spirit power
sealed within Shido was go rampant from his rage.

"He's... lost all control." Mana breathed.

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Meanwhile back at Tenguu City, the Spacequake alarms had somehow managed to be activated despite Shido's presence in Tokyo. Everyone in Ratatoskr were rushing to discover what could be going on.

"Spacequake are being detected in Okinawa as well!" Shiizaki replied, checking some readings. "We still can't get into contact with Maria to confirm the situation either!"

"It's not just Okinawa, the entire Kanto prefecture is getting Spacequake warnings all at once!" Nakatsugawa adds, seeing the caution signs appearing in Japan's middle east section.

"What's happening out there? It sounds like that this rate that the entire middle east of Japan will be destroyed!" Kannazuki replied, suddenly sweating at all the reports showing up. "Commander Reine, do we have any idea what's going on?"

"...There's only one thing I can think of." Reine answered, getting all eyes on here.

"I think we all recall how 13 years ago there were two spirits who had their quakes collide, because they weren't equal in timing and magnitude they amplified each other. The only luck we had was at the time, these quakes were over the ocean where damage was next to nothing. For this however... we're witnessing the power of two Spirits' stacked on each other. That can only mean something's happened to Shido, and while maybe not a Spacequake, a force just as bad might be about to fire off."

"B-but what could be making Shido emit this? Are you sure it's even Shido?" Tamae asked, hoping that it wasn't as bad as everyone thought.

"It has to be, and his rage would need to be extremely high for this. Which means..." Reine soon showed a single drop of sweat, and that was enough to worry everyone. Reine rarely ever showed such strong signs of worry.

"...Something's happened to Tohka and/or Origami"

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"Damn it, this is bad." Ellen muttered, grunting as she got the readings from the Nidhoggr's scans. "At this rate Arubi Island will be in the vicinity of mass destruction, and there's no way I can get Ike away in time. Nor can anyone else on the island."

Ellen tries to make the Nidhoggr shake Shido off, shaking, turning and even flying upside down as Shido kept striking with the full intent to keep attacking without interruptions.

"...I must kill this boy now!"

Nidhoggr sets itself ablaze, and Shido was finally forced off, but Shido keeps screaming and rushes at the dragon like machine again. Nidhoggr blasts its black blaze at Shido who simply slashes through it and then jumps at Nidhoggr again, soon slamming the Angel down on it before smashing it into the buildings before it. It's regeneration activating again as it tries to fly back up, firing at Shido again.

"Ah!" Mana screamed as she, Mikie and Ryouko combine their territories together to try and block against the destruction around them. "Stop it Shido! At this rate, the entire city will be wiped off the
map before the rest of the immediate area!"

"I WILL DESTROY YOU!" Shido screamed, still smashing the regenerating machine, no closer to defeating it than before.

"It's no good... right now she looks no different than Tohka did during her inversion. Like he only considers murder as the best option." Mikie gasped out, shaking in pure terror. "I don't think we can do anything..."

"Wait, can't we just get Tohka and Origami out of the ice?" Mana questioned, but Ryouko shook her head in her surprise. "Huh? What do you mean no!? If we free them, then he might stop and calm down!"

"It's not that we shouldn't, it's that we don't know if it's safe to break them out." Ryouko answered, she knew the fire was some kind of plasma that ate heat molecules. Combined with the fact a Spirit had done it...

"If were to try breaking them out, there's no guarantee they'd get out without harm. It could be like permafrost or amber and then we'd end up killing them."

Mana and Mikie gasped, soon turning to stare at Shido and Nidhogg's apocalyptic looking battle. Yoshinon was soon seen still lying on the ground, but not due to being unconscious... she was staring at the wall of the building she crashed into lifelessly. Yoshino soon got up and moved herself near Yoshinon.

"Yoshinon, please get up." Yoshino said softly, shaking her body in an attempt to get Yoshinon to react.

"...why bother?" Yoshinon replied.

"Huh?"

"Come on, your part of me... you saw what happened. I'm no different from everyone who's bullied you. No... I'm even worse, I'm the real bully, the real monster." Yoshino answered, her body shaking at the horror echoing through her mind.

"I was born because you wanted me to be your hero, to have someone to protect you. I thought I was doing that, I didn't think that it was wrong to use such force against the people that attacked us. Yet look at me now... I took everyone who neared you as an enemy, yet that girl brought you back to me when you dropped me and were scared. Then that boy's screams... it was so awful, they were the same as yours. Now two innocent people are frozen forever, if I try to help I'll only bring more damage."

Yoshinon's single eye sheds tears as a crying whimper begins to escape her mouth, the puppet with Yoshino inside it stares for a moment, but then suddenly the V shaped mouth opens along with the eyes to become blue dots.

"...Then let me be your hero this time." Yoshino said.

"Huh?" Yoshino suddenly gasped, looking at Yoshino in surprise. "What?"

"You remember don't you, why you were born. Why you became more than just a part of me." Yoshino asked, moving closer and cupping Yoshinon's face.

"You were who I wanted to be, someone so brave, so strong, someone not so pathetic. The greatest
person that I wanted to become... but I knew it was who I'd never be. I'm just a shy, scared and timid girl who's too afraid to hurt others and just runs away rather than even trying to fight back."

Yoshinon just keeps staring.

"I realized it so easily... that I don't like pain, or being scared, I'm a big scaredy cat. I thought anything that feels had to despise them, even when they attacked me I was sure everyone did so was as scared as I was. Maybe I was wrong, I still don't know if I really was or not. When I got afraid, I'd freeze up, I couldn't move, think or speak and that left me doing nothing but standing there hoping I'd be saved. Then you came, you saved me, gave me the strength I didn't have on my own."

"Yoshino..." Yoshinon breathed.

"You were by courage, my strength, and most of all... you were my friend. Now, I want to be there for you. You've given so much to me, it wouldn't be fair if at least once I didn't pay you back for everything you've done for me." Yoshino finally finished, holding onto Yoshinon's hand. Yoshinon's visible eye shined at that.

"You'd still trust me? Even if I end up making another mistake like this one?" Yoshinon asked, and Yoshinon nods at her. Yoshinon's single eye closes before tears come out of it and underneath the eye patch.

"You're... so kind Yoshino, I don't know what I did to deserve you."

[Master, I will fight with you too!]

Yoshinon and Yoshino look to see the still damaged Astaroth get up and walk towards them, soon picking them up and tossing them on its back.

"Astaroth..." Yoshinon breathed, soon looking outside and noticing Shido's rampage. "...Come on, we started this mess! Now it's time we clean it up!"

Astaroth's eyes glow in approval and rushes forward, soon taking to the skies.

"TRISHULA!"

With that call, Astaroth's big body became distorted and was absorbed through the control strings connected to Yoshinon's fingers. The dense light stored in the strings coiled around Yoshino's body as a dark blue light formed. The others all notice it and turn around to see it.

The light settled down and soon, Yoshinon could finally be seen. She was now wearing a black armor, though if one could call it that was the question as the material couldn't be taken as metal or resins has joined together with the ice flames to cover Yoshinon's Astral dress as if she was wearing Astaroth.

"Let's do this Yoshino!" Yoshinon shouted with determination, soon shooting forward at Nidhoggr and pushing Shido out of the way. The act distracted him briefly as cold air surrounding Yoshinon's body.

After Yoshinon was fully covered with cold air, she thrust both her hands forward and joined her fingers, a cyclone-like blizzard covered her arms and formed a gigantic cone. She gave a mighty yell as she twisted her joined arms with all her might and drilled through Nidhoggr.

"What the!?!" Ellen's voice projected from the machine, surprised by Yoshinon's sudden power.
"Today is the first day-" Yoshino began.

"That we fight together, rather than alone!" Yoshino finished, the Ice Spirit flying towards the Nidhoggr as it regenerated and began charging its fire at her again.

"Let's do this!" Both shouted together, blasting Nidhoggr with ice again. As they did this, Ryouko noticed while Shido's readings were still going crazy, they were slowly dropping while Yoshinon kept him from landing a hit on Nidhoggr.

"Everyone, it seems that Shido's powers won't worsen while she's got that machine's attention." Ryouko replied to them, but her expression didn't get any happier. "Yet... that may only be a temporary solution."

"Then either we hope she can destroy that machine..." Mana began, soon looking at the frozen Tohka and Origami. "Or they can somehow get out of that ice. Please, both of you..."

Mana soon walked near the ice and put her hand on it, closing her eyes like she was paying with all her willpower.

"Please... save Shido, he needs you!"

---

Meanwhile inside of Tohka's mind while she was entombed by the ice, she was laying against a, endless black void with her body grayed out, almost as if to represent what was happening outside... her life being sucked away by the cold eating away at what she was.

"[...What do you think you're doing?]" A strange voice asked.

Tohka's body shifted slightly.

"Who's there?" Tohka's voice echoed out.

"[Why are you lying there doing nothing when something terrible is happened to Shido at this very moment?]

"...What can I do right now?" Tohka's echo replies, slowly graying out "As I am now, this is probably it for me... and for good this time."

"[...Don't you remember?]" The voice replied.

"Remember... what?" Tohka's echoed questioned.

At the same time, within Origami's mind, she was also in a dark void under the same conditions, but where Tohka had been laying on her back, she was laying on her stomach on the cold dark ground.

"[...So, this is all it takes to finish you off?]

Origami's hand twitched briefly.

"...Who are you?" Origami's voice echoed out.

"[Is this really how strong you truly are?]" The voice questioned, sounding disappointed.

"Say what you like, I couldn't do anything." Origami's echo replied, graying out as the seconds passed. "Now I truly can't... and I'm about to perish."
Soon the two voids begin to slowly inch closer to each other.

"[Didn't you say you wanted to help? While Shido's been off fighting or doing something, you've just stood on the sidelines. So much for promising to always protect him.]" The voice replied.

"What... no, that's not true!" Tohka's echo yelled out, her body's graying slowed as it tried to move. "I want to help him more than anything, but I can't! How can I help when I can't, you think I want this!? I want to walk by his side to the bitter end!"

"[Then what's stopping you Tohka Yatogami? Don't you realize, you've always had the means to finally rise up by his side.]" The voice stated.

"Huh?" Tohka's echo asked.

"[Don't you love him? No, I don't need to ask, you DO love him. For that reason, in the end...]

Soon a figure of pink energy walks by Tohka's body.

"[...That's all you need to stand by him.]" The voice revealed, taking hold of her left hand.

The voids keep closing in on each other.

"[Did you already forget? For years, you were consumed by your despair, you had nothing inside of you.]

"No, I haven't forgotten..." Origami's echo answered, her body frowning a bit as it's graying slowed. "I had no hope, no future, I was only living because Phantom said I had to try to keep living."

"[And who was the man who gave you that hope you were searching for, who told you what it meant to live again? It was Shido, so why are you just lying here now?]

Just like with Tohka, a figure of pink energy walks by Origami's body.

"[No, you DO have the strength. It's the same thing Shido gave you. You must give it back in return, don't you see? What your strength is...]

"[...it's your love for him. Those feelings are all the strength you need, so believe in them.]" The voice smiled, taking her right hand into her own.

At that moment, the two voids fuse, and Tohka and Origami's eyes open up. The two look and see the pink figure, and for a brief moment, they saw her visage's actual appearance within the pink mass of energy. She lowers her head to them slightly, smiling before she fades away.

"Shido..." Both of them reply, their bodies soon stop graying and regain their colors as their spirit power begins to well up. "Don't worry, I'm here for you!"

Soon their Limited Astral Dresses form, before a bright flash takes over the entire void, turning the black into a bright purple and white.
Shido roars as she zooms at Nidhoggr, and Yoshinon was soon knocked out of the way.

"No... not yet, please." Yoshinon said weakly as she flew off, tears in her eyes. "I can't fail here, I can't. If I don't stop this then we'll all die!"

Shido screams and launches on a building, forming Sandalphon's throne and then smashing it to create Halvanhelev. After it forged, he shoots at Nidhoggr and starts slamming the giant blade on the gigantic machine, his strikes spinning it around like a tumbling dice.

"Damn it!" Ellen growled, the warning signals kept growing. "No choice, I'll just have to do this the hard way."

Nidhoggr begins glowing brightly and burns brightly, blasting all it's dark flames on Shido, Shido growling as they push him back. He raises Halvanhelev high and the sword glows red as it overloads with all the power could flood into it.

"PREPARE TO DIE! I don't care how much I have to destroy to do it, I'll annihilate you so badly that it'll be like you were never even born or existed in this world!" Shido screamed, his power making his entire body shake as his power was finally about to detonate to everyone's horror. "Now, time for you to-"

Suddenly a stream of purple and white spirit power flies off from behind Shido and strikes the Nidhoggr, the machine was struck hard and fell onto the ground, crashing into a building. Shido gasped at the sight and suddenly looked to see energy forms of Tohka and Origami on his sides before disappearing.

"Tohka? Origami?" Shido asked, suddenly looking behind him. The others including Yoshinon and even Ellen via the Nidhoggr all watched as the ice began to glow brightly with their respective colors as the bodies of the two frozen girls were seen glowing, and soon the ice slowly cracked... before it shattered apart!

"No way..." Yoshinon breathed out in shock.

Soon from the glowing mass of the spirit power's light, two figures were seen walking out. Tohka walked out of the purple, followed by Origami who walked out of the white, but both of them hadn't walked out in the outfits they had been last wearing... but in their Astral Dresses!

"You're OK... You're OK!" Shido suddenly cried out, his savage flow of Spirit power finally quelled and retreated back into him as he lowered back to the ground and the two walked over to him. "And you've managed to recall your powers? But... but how?"

[This is... it's a miracle!]

"It's simple, we realized just what we were missing. It doesn't take great strength or an unyielding force of will." Origami began, taking Shido's left hand in her right.

"I promised that I would protect you, and Origami said she'd always be there for you. Human or Spirit we will stand by you. That's how we finally achieved recalling our powers to fight alongside you, because..." Tohka finished, taking Shido's right hand in her left. The two both smiling at him.

"Because we both love you Shido." Both said together, Shido smiled and shed some tears before giving a determined look at them in return.

"That's right, this is our bond!" Shido began, and soon he felt a new power well in him. "And now, it's time I showcase that bond to Ellen first hand, so let's do this together!"
Yoshinon flies down before her Trishula armor changes back into a healed Astaroth.

"I'd like to be part of this too, room for one more?" Yoshinon asked giddily, the three smile and nod. "Alright!"

Ellen could only stare in shock through Nidhoggr's visual screens, but it wasn't the fact that [Princess] and [Angel] were with this boy... it was that the readings Nidhoggr picked up from them stated that neither of the two were Spirits. That didn't make any sense! She clearly saw them, but neither was registered as a Spirit?

"What the hell... what the freaking hell! None of this makes any sense." Ellen growled, soon having the Nidhoggr take flight once more. "I may not know what kind of trick you're pulling here, but I assure you now I will capture [Marionette], and then I'll take [Princess] and [Angel] too!"

Nidhoggr charges its black flames, Shido and the Spirits all get in a battle stance, soon Mana and the other two Wizards get by their side as the Nidhoggr prepares its attack. Right as it was about to fire however...

"MEGIDDO!"

Suddenly from behind, the Nidhoggr was struck by a red beam of fire, and tumbled forward in the air to reveal the special core that ran its regeneration program before the giant machine healed the damage once more as usual.

"What the?" Shido suddenly said, everyone else showing the same surprise as he did.

Soon the question to what had surprised them was revealed as a ball of flames spiraled around in midair, covering whatever was inside other than from the fact it had horns and a kimono like outfit. Ryouko and Mikie gasped as they saw her, while Ellen's eyes widened a bit.

"That's Spirit No. 5, the Flame Spirit! What's [Efreet] doing here?" Ryouko gasped, surprised another Spirit had suddenly shown up.

"So now I have four spirits I'll be bringing back? Fine! Try all you want, you're only helping my job." Ellen declared smugly, unaware that everyone had seen the Nidhoggr's core and finally knew where to strike. Origami stared knowing just who the Spirit was.

'Kotori... so this is where you've been, but what happened to your voice?' Origami thought, soon seeing Kotori silently hold out Camael as it transformed back from its cannon form into its axe form. No one aware of her blue-eyed state as she rushed forward.

"Camael!"

Kotori, still cloaked by the flames, slammed into Nidhoggr and knocked the machine into the sky briefly. Nidhoggr prepared to blast its black flames at Kotori when...

"Fire the Mystletainn!" Hiroto shouted from a speaker.

Suddenly the Sagittarius uncloaks and fires a blast of mana, hitting the Nidhoggr strongly and ripping through its weapons. Ellen gasped as the jet came into view. Maria soon appeared on Shido's phone.

"Sorry we're late, but we're OK and here now!" Maria said with a smile.

Mildred smirked from within the ship as the Sagittarius formed a territory and rammed into Nidhoggr to push it away a second time.
"Where the hell are you all coming from!?" Ellen questioned irritably, turning the Nidhoggr as it regained its position.

"Come on everyone, let's do this!" Shido declared, unleashing Halvanhelev's stored power at Nidhoggr to knock it back again. Halvanhelev reverted to its form as Sandalphon shortly after this.

[Yeah, together everyone!]

Everyone nods in response, the Wizards all pull out their signature weapons instantly. Though Yoshinon suddenly darted her head around at the sound of Mio's voice.

"Who said that!?" Yoshino thought, blinking confused.

"Sandalphon!" Tohka called as she stomped the ground, forming the throne and unsheathing her own Sandalphon before taking to the sky with Shido in hand. The two swinging their Sandalphon's together to create slash wave that struck Nidhoggr's additional flare cannons, keeping them from blasting out any flames.

"Metatron!" Origami shouted, her crown glowing as the gold feathery pillars all rise out of the ground. Soon she took to the sky and used her hand to aim them towards the massive DEM weapon. "Kadour - Sword of Light!"

The pillars all break formation and fly at Nidhoggr, stabbing into it like swords. Ellen began to unleash its black flames again, but Kotori slammed Camael into its main fire cannon and jammed it with her own flames to her surprise.

"Taste a large portion of lead, you freak!" Ryouko screamed, stabbing her Cry-Cry-Cry gun into a spot in the Nidhoggr's armor, and begins cackling loudly as all her pent-up stress came out as her constant firing of the weapon.

"Watch out, here comes the pain!" Mikie declared as she formed a pair of sharp daggers, tossing them at Nidhoggr's eyes and blinding the machine in three of them. Making Ellen's range of vision almost zero.

"Damn it all, the Nidhoggr will still just regenerate-"

Suddenly Ellen hears something ripping, and her warning screens show her that the core was exposed as Mana uses Murakumo's swords to cut through the area hiding the core and rip it out. As it tried to regenerate and pull it back in...

"The core's open! Take him out now!" Mana screamed, using all her power to form a territory that locked the core from being pulled back in.

"What!?" Ellen gasped, the Nidhoggr failing to break the territory and putting the core back in place. "Damn it! No choice, time for Nidhoggr's final-"

"Go Sagittarius!" Mildred yelled, the jet flying and creating an energy tether to wrap around the machine and grab it, swinging it behind as it flew until it swung the DEM weapon high up and it began to fall. Ellen could only stare in shock as Yoshinon charged up an ice beam from Astaroth at it.

"And that's game over angry lady!" Yoshinon smirked, snapping as Astaroth fired the beam. The icy blast struck the core, and Ellen saw all the system's fail as her to the machine was about to break.

"NO!" Ellen shouted one last time before the link was shattered.
The core slowly began to crack apart, and after a few more seconds... it completely shattered apart into pieces that fell to the ground, the Nidhoggr's body soon began to shake heavily from all the stress it sustained and quickly exploded. Everyone cheered as they saw the machine finally explode, Shido, Tohka and Origami all reverting to normal while the trio of wizards dispelled their CR-Units.

"See that Yoshino, we did it." Yoshinon smiled, Yoshinon nodded with a smile. Shido soon walks over to her and she notices before making Astaroth disappear and floating to the ground. Once she stood before him...

"I'm sorry about everything, I caused you all so many problems because I thought you were trying to hurt Yoshino without considering I was wrong. Most of all... I nearly took away some of the people most important to you."

Yoshinon suddenly felt herself being pet, making her blush in response.

"W-what are you petting me for!?!" Yoshinon asked loudly, still blushing from the sudden contact. "You really are a lucky lecher aren't-"

"It's OK."

Yoshinon blinked in surprise at that.

"I think I get it, you were only trying to protect your friend, not hurting us just because you had the power to." Shido said, smiling at Yoshinon and making the Inverse Ice Spirit stare in awe. This man was so forgiving, even after all she had done... she smiled and bopped Yoshino against her forehead.

"Huh?" Shido wondered, then noticed Yoshinon and Yoshino switch places.

"You really don't hesitate to speak your mind, even if you sound like a dork doing it!" Yoshinon said before laughing a bit, making Shido blush slightly. "But still... you're a good person. Right Yoshino?"

Yoshino nods.

"He is." Yoshino replied, soon looking at Shido. "You're someone we can trust, the first people other than Yoshinon... that I can call a friend."

All of the girls suddenly squeal from Yoshino's cuteness, while Shido smiles.

"Thanks Yoshino, and now it's time I save you so your never alone again. Never have to run away again." Shido said, surprising Yoshino and Yoshinon a bit. Though right after that Shido scratched his cheek and blushed a bit.

"Though... in order for me to save you, there's something we have to do first. Though I'm not sure if you'll want to do it. You see, we have to kiss."

Yoshino blinks at Shido.

"Yeah, expected that reaction. Not to mention it requires a very strong form of trust." Shido continued, scratching his cheek more. Yoshinon keeps staring before looking at Tohka and Origami.

"Both of you really like him, don't you?" Yoshino asked, making the two blush bashfully at the question. "Does he... make you happy?"

The two both showed surprise at that question before smiling and nodding.
"I wouldn't be who I am today if I hadn't met Shido, we're like two halves of a single whole." Tohka said, smiling brightly.

"I was lost, but Shido helped me find my way. I can never thank him enough." Origami replied, blushing a bit. Yoshinon looked at Shido before smiling a bit herself. She didn't know how to explain it, but she felt hearing it from both of them that even if she didn't know, she'd have something special with Shido one day.

"Then... he makes me happy too." Yoshino said, soon surprising everyone as she kisses Shido. She moves back to see the surprised Shido. "Was that OK with you?"

"Y-yeah, it was awesome." Shido said, still blushing a bit. He eyes widened as he took off her coat and put it around Yoshino. He did so just in time as her Astral Dress dissolved away, making it all that covered her. Luckily it did so better than Tohka and Yoshino due to her smaller statue, and as if to help celebrate the moment, the ice melted away and the sky cleared to show a rainbow.

"Amazing." Mana smiled, everyone doing the same as they saw the rainbow above them. At that moment, everyone suddenly heard a groan as Kotori walked out from behind one of the nearby buildings. Rubbing her head a bit, Mana suddenly smiling as she saw her safe.

"Kotori! Thank goodness you weren't hurt, where were you?" Mana asked.

[Yeah, we were worried sick when you suddenly just disappeared out of nowhere!]

"My head was hurting so I went to rest by one of the buildings, please don't be so loud right now..." Kotori lied, though her head did hurt due to her other persona taking over. Origami stared at her and noticed her expression.

'She doesn't look like she's lying, but...' Origami wondered, soon getting confused at trying to explain it in her mind. At that moment, the Sagittarius soon landed down by the group, and Hiroto and Mildred waved at them from the door.

"Come on you guys, let's all get back to Tenguu City now!" Hiroto stated with a smile, Mildred giggling at his comment a bit. Soon everyone gets on the plane, and Yoshino looks around as they did.

"Where are we going?" Yoshino asked, and Shido smiles as he pet her head. Choosing to answer her with just a single word.

"Home."

Westcott noticed Ellen walk in with an angry face, having been her superior for the last 30 years, that was enough to tell him that the mission had failed. He was sure he was going to LOVE hearing about this.

"So, I take it we failed to capture [Marionette]?" Westcott said with a frown, after two failures as of recently he found it a chore to even get angry at it anymore.

"And lost the Nidhoggr presumably, I can't fully confirm it because my connection was cut off, but I'm pretty sure that was enough to confirm it was." Ellen said, angry that she had been beaten by a spirit not once, but twice already. "That's not even the worst of it though... Marina?"

The AI appears from a projector.
"Yes Ellen?" Marina asked, curious to the sudden call.

"Bring up this data I managed to save from the Nidhoggr's readings, you'll both want to see this." Ellen answered as she slid an information disc towards said projector. Marina nodded and tapped it, bringing the recording of Tohka and Origami in their Astral Dresses by Shido.

"[Princess] and [Angel] alongside that boy? So they're regained their powers, that's-" Westcott suddenly saw Ellen hold up her hand, confusing him. "What is it?"

"Ike... look at the Nidhoggr's readings at this exact moment, you'll see exactly what I did." Ellen answered, both Westcott and Marina took a look... and saw the readings that mentioned that they weren't registered as spirits by the machine's detection system.

"What!? They're wearing their Astral Dresses, and yet they're not labeled as Spirits?" Westcott gasped, he was seeing something that should clearly be impossible. Marina's eyes bugged out a bit.

"That's impossible! The machine must have been broken by that point, I refuse to believe the Nidhoggr's readings on this were accurate!" Marina roared, soon sending the data over to the base's supercomputer. "This will prove it's wrong for sure!"

After a bit... the supercomputer's results only came out with a huge negative to the AI's surprise, these readings were the real deal.

"No... what the hell is going on?" Marina breathed, only for her to suddenly receive an alert that [Marionette] had her readings vanish like the others. "No, now Marionette is gone too!?"

"...This boy, something about him is different, and it's dangerous to our plans." Westcott said, staring at the boy who had foiled him twice, even leaving Tenguu City to do so. It's time he finally tried to get some information about him. "Ellen, is there also a picture of this possible sister Jessica told me about?"

"I'll look through the files, I'm guessing now he's considered as important as the Spirits?" Ellen asked, only getting a node from Westcott. "Understood Ike, to be extra prepared I'll confirm the current status on [Material A] as well."

As Ellen got up to look, the sight of a bald man staring at was seen before he smirked.

"Looks like they're messing things up, and with the readings we got on Efreet, seems like it's time we take the chance to take over." The man chuckled, looking to his female partner in the room behind him. "You could use the exercise, right Minerva?"

The woman smirked a bit.

"You're really speaking my language there Edgar. I'm ready to kill someone, including something supposedly near impossible to kill." Minerva replied before giving a sinister cackle, a dagger stained with blood in her hands.

Soon the Sagittarius had returned to Tenguu City, and Ryouko gave her full report on what happened while they shared information on what happened on each of their ends when Shido had been absorbed by his rage.

"To think the entire Kanto prefecture could have been wiped off the map... we were lucky." Ryouko breathed, it was one thing to see the power and imply how bad it would be and another to know exactly how bad it could have been.
"Yes, I will admit it's good news to hear that Tohka and Origami have learned how to temporarily recall their powers." Reine replied, smiling slightly. "Now Shido won't be alone whenever he goes out to help the remaining Spirits."

"Yeah, that he will. Though I don't understand why Efreet was there." Ryouko answered, soon wondering about the Flame Spirit's sudden appearance. Reine also made a thinking face, unaware of how Efreet slipped into the area like she did.

"Guess that's a mystery we'll have to solve the next time she appears." Reine sighed, unable to think of any better results.

Meanwhile with Shido, he was sitting down on a chair as Origami brought him a moist towelette.

"I'm sorry about me and Tohka getting frozen like that, it must have been painful considering how you reacted..." Origami said, making a bit of a sad face before Shido took her hand and made her blush.

"It's OK Origami, in the end you two made it out OK. That's all I could ask for." Shido replied with a smile, making Origami give a teary eyed smile back. She wiped them before nodding in response.

"Hey guys, Yoshino's ready!" Tohka called, waving at them from the door. The two looked towards it as Yoshino walked into view, wearing a cute blue dress and a white hat. Both of them and anyone else looking all blushed from how cute she looked from it.

"Shido..." Yoshino began, soon bowing slightly before looking at him. "From now on, I'll be by your side."

"Me too, you can count on me!" Yoshinon cheered, raising a hand up in response.

"Right, same with me." Shido smiled, making Yoshino smile happily in return. Tohka, Origami, Mana and after a brief delay, Kotori all smiled alongside the two. Mio also smiled alongside them despite no one could see it.

"This warm feeling, I swear I've felt it before... but, where did I?"

Suddenly at that moment, everyone hears Kotori suddenly coughing in a violent manner and turn to see things turn worse for her as she suddenly falls back and collapses on the ground, her body trembling as she breaks into a cold sweat.

"KOTORI!"

Yoshino's arc has come to a close, and now things have gone south as Kotori's suddenly come down with something, are her spirit powers returning or is it something worse related to her strange blue eye phenomenon? Well you'll all learn soon enough because Kotori's the spirit of the fourth arc, and everyone aside from Origami who's been hiding the fact she knew as a promise will find out the truth.

Kotori's arc will be unique because Westcott will not be involved in any Spirit capturing plans this time, to anyone who may not know, Edgar and Minerva who were mentioned near the
end are the villains of Date AST Strike and will be the villains during her arc. Also, if anyone asks, once Yoshino can start using her Spirit form again, the situation will depend on if she'll Inverse by swapping bodies with Yoshinon. Usually she'll be Yoshino for Spirits, but the DEM will bring out Yoshinon, exceptions may happen though.

In regard to Tohka and Origami being able to use their Spirit forms now, a friendly reminder to you all that the strength of Shido's bonds with the Spirits effects how strong they are after being sealed. Shido still can't use the Spirit Ascension with Origami yet because his bond with her is still new, as a result her Spirit form's weaker than Tohka's because Shido's bond with her is stronger.

Though even his bond with Tohka isn't enough that Tohka can have her original level power in her Spirit form either, and that's only because they only officially became a couple after their reunion, so their relationship has changed slightly. I'd say Tohka's able to recall only about 70% of her actual strength right now, and Origami's about a 35%, where Spirit Ascension requires at least 50%. Yoshino would be about 20% right now in case anyone's curious.

Anyways, I hope you enjoyed this chapter and will enjoy the Kotori arc when it begins.

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 70%

Origami - 35%

Yoshino - 20%
Here's the Kotori arc everyone! First thing I should answer, what's the emotion of focus for this arc? Well I think most can probably figure this out since it's Kotori, it's anger. So heads up, prepare to see a lot of screaming and exclamation points for this arc, because I'm probably gonna abuse it's use to death.

Before we begin, I have something I need to say about this arc. I want to accurate show Minerva and a few other characters that'll be introduced here, and that means I've gotta try finding the rest of Date AST Strike to read despite there only being the one chapter translation. Therefore, if I don't update as often for this arc, that's the reason why I'm not.

Most of you were excited when I showed Minerva last chapter, so I only feel it's fair that I make sure I make Minerva fight just like she does and properly represent her in the story. Her personality, I can easily get that down, partially since the story will switch up a bit on her actions so I only need to know how she acts then replicate because of the scenes not originally part of Kotori's volume.

Small story short, I may take longer to update for just this arc, but it's because I want you all to see Minerva, who most of you were excited to see, done right rather than done half-baked. For this chapter, she won't be in action just yet because the chapter will focus on Kotori's power finally being reawakened and the reveal that she's a Spirit. Next chapter however? She's definitely showing up, probably in the first scene even.

OH! Right, before I forget, this chapter took me longer than usual to write because I had a hard time figure out how to properly get the events for the arc started... so this chapter may be one of my weaker ones. One thing I've learned as a writer is sometimes you'll make a scene that's a bit weak no matter what you try, and you'll have to let it happen as is to proceed. I think this was the case for Volume 11 due to how the time travel affected things, so even writers like Tachibana have to face this occasionally.

Now... let's get things started!

Chapter 10, S1: Kotori Possessed, Part 1

"New troops?" Ryouko asked, standing before a screen showing the man she knew as her superior. This wasn't just her superior either... the man she was speaking to on the screen right before her eyes was also the founder of Ratatoskr and all of its sub-branches and divisions, the AST being one of them.

This man's face was all the screen showed of him, but he was a man that should be around his 50's, but he wasn't old enough to be at to the point that he could actually be called an old man. He has both scruffy short white hair with a small ponytail tied in the back and a small beard growing, wearing a pair of glasses and a casual business suit with square rims that had a more upside trapezoidal shape to them.

A blanket was seen on his lap as he was seen sitting in a wheelchair that was being held by his secretary who was standing behind him, only her torso and arms currently seen via the screen. His
name? Elliot Baldwin Woodman. As he stared towards Ryouko, he was seen playing with some kind of brain teaser that required him to unlock a chain of three rings being held together.

"Yes, they're supplementary personal from the Special Sorcery Service. Recently due to situations on their end, the SSS' members need to be transferred throughout the regions. Three of which will be reassigned to your group in Tenguu City." Elliot answered, making Ryouko nod.

"These three are a little rough around the edges, but they should be a worthy addition to your platoon. I'm expecting you'll help them settle in with their new team. Just be careful, these three have gone through a unique form of lost and may have trust issues for a while."

"Understood, sir!" Ryouko shouted, giving a salute of approval before the screen faded off. Once she sat down, Ryouko had a... 'colorful reaction', and by colorful it meant she slumped down looking pale from withheld stress taking over. "I thought we'd have a chance to rest and relax after the incident with Yoshino, and now this!?"

She screamed and threw some old papers across her office, part of the stack somehow actually breaking the window. She panted heavily as one of the AST troops had walked in at that moment to see it. The said troop shook a bit before Ryouko noticed her and cleared her throat to straighten herself up.

"Yes, what is it?" Ryouko asked, grinning awkwardly as if to try and make it seem like she hadn't just flipped out in front of the troop... and failing badly.

"Well, I wanted to talk to you about orders from Commander Murasame?" The troop, whose real name was Katie, mentioned. Ryouko's expression began forming slight annoyance at the thought of another order coming out just after her talk with Elliot. The troop panicked and raised her hands.

"No wait, don't get angry yet! Just listen first! It's about Kotori Itsuka, and everyone worried about her and decided since most of us are stressed and need a break. So, she talked things over and decided we should all spend the weekend at Ocean Park. If you have free time, she'd like you to go."

Ryouko stared for a moment, and the moment her eyes closed and reopened, Katie swore she saw hearts form in her eyes. The Captain jumped over her desk and hugged her close.

"Thank you, very nice work! I think you just earned a double rank position!" Ryouko answered, making Katie sweat drop a bit.

'That's really all it takes?' Katie wondered.

Ellen was seen clashing against a girl holding Camael in her hands, the DEM's strongest wizard flew through the flames she created upon smashing the large red battle axe into the ground.

As Ellen swung Caledfwlch, the girl rose Camael up to block and was knocked back heavily. From afar, the distorted sight of another girl in the area was seen, completely hiding her appearance under a messy blur of color. The only thing about her that could truly be made out her was that she wasn't Phantom.

"No, run away! Don't try to fight her _!" The girl shouted, a distorted static sound blocking out the name of who she called to for some reason. "Please, let's just get away together!"

"I can't _! If we don't stop her here, she'll keep coming for us! We have to end this now... I have to protect you!" Th current Efreet called out, shouting as she jumped at Ellen and slammed her Angel onto Ellen's territory.
"Try all you want, but your efforts are futile." Ellen smirked, enjoying the sight of breaking any signs of hope for the two Spirits before her. She had shattered one, now she would destroy the Efreet's.

Efreet growled and jumped back a bit, soon raising Camael into the air.

"MEGIDDO!"

The axe soon shifted into the form of a cannon, and began gathering all of its searing hot flames into a mighty blast.

"Pick a god and pray you bitch, because this is the end for you!" Efreet spat out before she screamed and blasted out her beam of fire, an explosion happening at the spot where Ellen stood. She smirked before she suddenly noticed the sight of something flying from the flames went after her. "What is-

She never got the chance to finish, and suddenly a loud slash was heard. Efreet stood still as blood suddenly splattered across the area. Her friend screamed in horror as she suddenly fell forward. Efreet's blue eyes wide in horror as she neared the ground, the last sight she saw being her own blood against her body before she blacked out, and one last sword slash echoed in her ears.

"STOP!" Kotori screamed, suddenly launching up and falling out of the bed she was in. She suddenly panted heavily as she feels her forehead, looking around to see herself in the Ratatoskr base's medical office, taking a look at herself she breathes.

"It was just a nightmare." Kotori told herself, smiling a bit.

"...Let me out. LET ME OUT!"

Kotori's head suddenly sears in pain and she feels her eyes glow blue, Kotori screams before slamming her head against the bed, hitting it so heard she made it bleed slightly. Her eyes go back to normal as she suddenly pants heavily. Coughing a bit as she tried to calm down.

"No... what's happening to me?"

At that moment, Tamae walks in and sees Kotori awake, but before she could show any joy she was pushed into a panic as she saw Kotori's head bleeding.

"Oh, my goodness, are you alright!" Tamae screamed in a panic, Kotori looks at her.

"I-I'm fine, I just fell out of the bed and scraped my head a little." Kotori said, quickly after that, Tamae rushes to get the first aid kit and cleans and disinfects the wound before placing a bandage over it, luckily letting Kotori's hair hide it from obvious sight. "Thank you."

"Oh, no need to thank me. Though I'll admit everyone was really worried about you. You were nearly comatose for the last two weeks." Tamae replied, making Kotori suddenly gasp.

"T-two weeks?" Kotori's repeated, in shock at the revelation. What had happened to her for her to be asleep that long? "What's wrong with me?"

"Well... we're not sure, but from what Reine and Maria saw in your examinations, you were severely stressed at the time you collapsed." Tamae answered, not realizing Kotori was really referring to.

"We think you might have just been unable to take it anymore, so we decided once you woke up we'd all be going on a trip to Ocean Park. A day of fun and relaxation might be just what you need."
"O-OK... if you don't mind, I still feel a bit tired. Mind letting me just lay down here?" Kotori asked, and Tamae nods before she walked out of the room and Kotori stared at the ceiling. She began to breathe deeply, making a noticeable sound each time. "...My powers, the seal is going to break any day now. I'm not ready for this yet. I'm... I'm not."

Origami who had been nearby soon began hearing Kotori cry, and soon gripped her shirt tightly, she had to help Kotori somehow... she had to. Soon she gets a notification on her phone and looks at it.

"Oh right, I forgot about this... wait, I think I know what to do now!" Origami said as her face brightened, and then showed a worried smile. "...I hope, please let me be right about this."

Shido was staring at the scene before him with one of his eyes twitching a bit. When everyone heard about the planned trip to visit Ocean Park, the girls got so excited that they had to go out and buy swimsuits, the only problem with that?

Well... he had to see them try them on, both the girls in his harem and not in it, meaning a lot of woman were staring at him for even being in the mizugi store in the first place. He had already seen some of the AST members try theirs on, and he was already feeling overwhelmed.

"Reine, are you sure there isn't another way we could do this?" Shido asked her via the headset, groaning from the stares.

"There is one." Reine answered, making Shido get his hopes up for a moment. He regretted that in three seconds. "Dress up as a girl, then being a guy in a mizugi store isn't a problem and yet the girls will still know who you are."

"...Pass, I'm not doing that unless we somehow get a Spirit who's into girls, and I know the chance of that happening is likely never." Shido quickly answered, confident that this scenario wouldn't happen. Mio mentally hummed to herself at that reply.

'[For some reason, I get the feeling he just jinxed himself there. I wonder why?]'

Soon Shido saw the trio of Ai, Mai and Mii come out first.

"You think this looks OK?" Ai asked the others, wearing a black one piece with an open middle held by lacing, which little to hide her cleavage.

"It's definitely better than a school swimsuit at least." Mai replied, wearing a red two piece with a cross string theme.

"Why do schools even make us where those suits anyways?" Mii wondered, wearing a white two piece that connected the two pieces through a gold claps, the bottom half attaching through a single vertical stand that covered her naval slightly. Shido goes red at that.

"Wow, your heart rate's through the roof Shido. Looks like they pass!" Maria giggled, making Shido stare at the AI through her headset monitor. Maria sticks her tongue out at her playfully. Soon Hiroto and the other man of the Fraxinus crew minus Mikimoto appeared on other screens via Shido's headset.

"Hey Shido, how does this one look?" Origami asked, and Shido turned to see her.

Origami was wearing a white two piece, it was a normal two-piece among swimsuits but it fit Origami due to her shyness making her cover herself once Shido saw her. Upon seeing it, Shido began blushing instantly.
"Ooh, Origami takes the lead! The power of shyness has been truly weaponized here." Hiroto stated in response. "And it's clear we've just seen Shido hit by the 'distracted by the sexy' expression! She may just be our dark horse candidate!"

"...Is it bad?" Origami asked, making a bashful face.

"Wha?" Shido replied, soon regaining his focus. "Oh, you look amazing in that Origami."

'He likes it!' Origami thought with a blush before smiling a bit, turning around to hide her expression. 'It looks like this idea might just work, I need to believe in myself more often.'

Soon the next dressing room blind opened up, revealing Mana in a blue one piece with white polka dots and teal seams, making Shido gasp.

"Ooh! It seems Mana's struck a blow, and when you remember this is his little sister that's an impressive feat!" Kawagoe replied, making Shido wonder if he should just turn his headset off at this point.

"I see you blushing big brother, should you really be looking at your sister that way? Especially your blood sister?" Mana smirked, giggling as she got Shido to blush more from her teasing.

"Me next!" Tohka called out, opening her dressing room blind to reveal a surprise as she had a purple one piece with star designs on it and showing a bit of cleavage while she shifted her ponytail into an up do. It was simple in design. yet it highlighted Tohka's wholesome curves. It was quite arousing as Shido went red in the face, and the other two gasped.

"Looks at that destructive power! Tohka easily sends Shido's heart rate through the roof, is this her knowing Shido best or could she had just been that lucky!?!" Nakatsugawa declared, his glasses shining in anticipation.

"Uh, eh, bu..." Shido stuttered, his sister and Origami stared in shock.

"Origami, didn't Tohka just randomly pick that one out?" Mana asked, still in surprise at the sight.

"She did... Tohka, you are a worthy adversary." Origami replied so quietly, she was nearly unheard. "I surrender to her, I can't top that."

Mana gasped at response, how could Origami surrender so easily? At that moment, Kotori opens hers and... was still wearing her clothes. Surprising everyone at the sight until she got near Shido.

"...Take it off." Kotori replied with a smirk, everyone went white eyed in shock.

"WHAT!?" Everyone shouted.

Kotori soon moved Shido's hands near her skirt, and then after she caused him to flip it, she removed her jacket and revealed the small red colored two piece she had underneath that didn't hide much of her still developing body. Everyone was blushing from the surprise.

"EXPLOSIVE!" Kannazuki screamed loudly, incredibly excited. "Kotori just used the art of teasing like she dropped a nuclear weapon, she's stolen Tohka's lead! It looks like she's won!"

"I think your forgetting there's still one more girl?" Reine commented as her face appeared on the headset by Maria's, getting all the guys' attention.

"Um... Shido?" Yoshino replied softly, getting everyone to look at her dressing room blinds. "Could
Shido opens the blinds, and soon everyone went white at what they saw, Yoshino was trying to put on an icy blue swimsuit, but it was barely on to the point no one knew if it was a one or two piece.

"We might be having trouble because Yoshino doesn't wanna take me off her hand." Yoshino chuckled embarrassingly, Shido's face goes so red it steams up before he falls backwards and faints to the girls' surprise.

"And we have our winner, congrats Yoshino." Reine smirked, causing all the guys to groan as Reine held out her hand. Each of them handing her $20. "I never lose a bet when it comes to something girls know more than boys."

On the Fraxinus, Yoshino was fanning Shido while he rested on a chair.

"OK, I never wanna go through that again..." Shido groaned, starting to come too. "At least we got it over with now rather than later. I do gotta ask, why are we on the Fraxinus right now?"

"It was faster to beam you from inside the dressing rooms. Plus..." Reine began, sipping some coffee as usual. "We thought there were two things you should see."

Maria nods as Reine looked at her, and soon brings up the sight of spirit readings on Tenguu City's map.

"Spirit readings? Then... another Spirit's here?" Shido asked, and Reine nodded. "Which one is it?"

"About that..." Maria began, she types a command and the screen says {Unknown Reading} on it.

"We can't tell, see this Spirit mana is kinda different. Usually when a spirit emits mana the power is like molecules when an object is in a liquid state. It's fluid, no defined shape, yet still visible to us. That's how we have the colors to help us usually determine a Spirit on occasion. This isn't the case now. Right now, the spirit powers this spirit's emitting are just too spread out. We know it's there, but it's form is more like a gas, present but unseen."

"As a consequence, we can only confirm there's a Spirit. Which one appeared we can't tell. Since there are still another seven out there that doesn't help us without a Spacequake present." Reine finished, finishing her coffee.

"So what your saying is we won't know till we see it." Mana sighed, it seemed like trouble always kept popping up instantly after they stop the previous instance. "What's the second thing?"

"Ah, right. Before that though I need to ask you this question... Tohka, Yoshino? Have you two ever wondered how you became Spirits?" Reine asked, making the two blink as the think about it.

"...Not really. True I don't even remember how I first appeared on this world as a Spirit, but what made me one? I never really thought about it." Tohka admitted, scratching her head a bit.

"Me neither, I was always too scared to think about much." Yoshino replied.

"Well... while some spirits like yourselves don't know, Origami is one of the few who does." Reine replied, looking at Origami to continue.

"5 years ago, I was given this white gem that upon touching gave me Metatron and transformed me into a Spirit." Origami explained, getting the attention of the two.
"The one who gave me was a being hidden in mosaic, making me unable to tell if was male or female by voice or appearance, just that they looked to be very young. That being called itself... Phantom."

"Phantom?" Shido and Mana asked, while Tohka and Yoshino just stared and blinked.

"Yes, Phantom. At least that's what she tells people to call her." Reine answered, making Origami look at her surprised.

"Wait, so you've seen what she looks like before?" Origami asked, but Reine shakes her head. "Then how do you know she's a girl?"

"Simple, because we know she's a Spirit." Reine answered, soon looking at the others. "How many Spirits have you seen that are male again?"

They all suddenly blinked at that.

"...God, I feel so dumb now" Mana screamed as she face-palmed. They honestly should have connected the dots, Reine told them the First Spirit was a girl, and that she divided her powers to keep Westcott from taking it. By that logic, it would make sense that only girls could become Spirits. Reine soon cleared her throat loudly, getting everyone's attention again.

"Moving on. While we know Phantom's a Spirit, she's... different, she doesn't fit the theme of the others on the Sephirot." Reine explained, soon bringing up the picture of a being covered by mosaic, but having a figure that could be recognized as someone that looked like a young child.

"Throughout these last 30 years, she's given Sephira Crystals to many girls, entrusting them to protect them... many died under this duty. However, Phantom would always get the crystal back before the DEM could snatch it. We're not fully sure on who she really is, but she seems to be trying to protect what the First Spirit gave up her life for. So at the very least, she's on our side, even if not an ally."

"Yeah, I saw her get really upset over the fact of what happened when me and the current Efreet got our powers. She didn't intend for the results that came to happen." Origami added, remembering how Phantom told her to keep living.

"If you two ever somehow see Phantom in the future, try and see if she can give you answers to how you gained your powers. Understood?" Reine requested, Tohka and Yoshino nodded in response. "Good, now get ready to go have some fun. No need to work for today unless we hear an alarm."

"Yeah, Ocean Park here we come!" Tohka cheered, running towards the teleporters.

"Whoa! Wait up Tohka, slow down!" Shido said as he and the others chased after her. As they did, Reine looks at them and gives a bittersweet smile.

'They've grown up so much, I wish you could have gotten to see it.' Reine thought somberly, barely managing wipe a tear before it shed form her eye. 'I'll make sure Ratatoskr keeps them safe, no matter what.'

Soon inside Ocean Park, everyone was in the Water Park half of the park, and Tohka stares at everything with excitement as saw it firsthand.

"This is so neat!" Tohka cheered, looking at Shido. "I only remember when the amusement park was here! Let's go swim everyone!"
Tohka runs into the pool, quickly diving into it. Yoshino soon jumps with a life preserver holding her afloat.

"Wee!" Yoshinon shouted, soon feeling the water splash her. "It's fun to be soaked in water other than our own, can we switch places later Yoshino?"

"If you'd like to, just let me know first." Yoshino replied, making Yoshinon cheer excitedly. Mana pops out form underwater, the other AST members and Ratatoskr staff enjoying themselves in their own ways. Reine was seen laying on a pool chair with her phone out, showing a hologram of Maria in a bathing suit.

"Ah... we haven't had time to relax in forever, huh Reine?" Maria noted.

"Yes, it's nice to get the chance to relax for once. Hopefully this is what Kotori needs." Reine replied, soon noticing something with the water slide. "Oh?"

At the top of the water slide, Tohka, Shido and Kotori were sitting together at the top. The latter two all shaky.

"Uh... Tohka, I thought we were all gonna go down one at a time. Are you sure we're uh... safe?" Kotori asked, sweating a bit.

"I have no idea, so hold on tight." Tohka smiled, making Shido and Kotori pale as they go down the slide. Everyone watches as they stay on and look like they'll stay on... until part way where they fly off and land in the water!

"Oh-my-god-are-you-all-OK!?" Mana said so fast, she it came out as just one word. Soon Tohka splashes out fine, looking all happy, while Shido and Kotori soon pop out. Kotori's ribbons floating as they had fallen off and Kotori was seen hugging Shido and crying.

"Big brother... oh big brother!" Kotori cried out, sniffling a bit. She had been terrified by that last part despite the brave act she had been putting up. This surprised some of those closest to her who hadn't seen this side like Mana and Shido had. Kotori gasped once she realized this and turned away.

"Hey big brother... can we go somewhere else, alone?"

Reine notices Shido takes Kotori behind one of the bushes as the redhead puts her ribbons back in.

"...That's the first time I've seen you act like your usual self in a while, I just noticed that." Shido noted, making Kotori frown slightly. "Is here any reason for that?"

Kotori's eyes closed slightly and she stares forward.

"I've always been a crybaby, and I've wanted to be strong... so I try to seem brave in front of others." Kotori answered, making Shido stare at her with a sad look as Kotori silently sheds a few tears. "But I'm not, not like you are big brother."

"Kotori..."

Kotori soon gets up and walks back, and Shido stares a bit longer before following. After a bit, everyone decides to get some lunch when Reine looks at her phone.

"Maria, how does Kotori's stress level look?" Reine asked.

"Well, it's definitely going down, but it's not doing down fast or much either." Maria answered,
making Reine worry a bit. It was good it was decreasing, but it should decrease a lot more, they needed to do a better job in making her relax. Suddenly Kotori coughed a bit after sipping her drink.

"Hey Kotori, are you OK?" Mana asked.

"Yeah, just went down the wrong pipe is all." Kotori said, her voice a bit hoarse from her coughs. "I'm gonna go use the bathroom real quick."

Kotori got up and walked over, and soon Origami sat up from her seat as well.

"I'll go check on her."

Origami followed her and soon noticed Kotori suddenly slumping behind some drink machines, she gasped and ran over quickly as she saw Kotori sweating and panting on the ground. Helping her rest against the wall.

"Kotori... are your powers starting to come back, is Phantom's lock on them finally about to break?" Origami asked, Kotori looking at her and panting before she nodded. Origami soon takes out a syringe from her jacket. "Here, I used to use these to stop my transformation if I needed to. This might help you feel better."

Kotori closes her eyes as Origami injects it, she soon begins to ease up as she feels her body calm down.

"Feel better now?" Origami asked.

"Yeah, thank you... one more please?" Kotori asked, making Origami's eyes widened.

"I shouldn't risk it, it won't kill you but... if I do again you'll start to resist it." Origami explained, looking worried. "If you need it again it may not help you."

Kotori chuckles, making Origami blink.

"I won't be able to take another one at this rate, I don't think my problem's the same as yours." Kotori replied weakly, crying a bit to Origami's surprise.

"Sometimes when my powers awaken, I feel... I feel like someone else is taking over, like there's another soul inside of me. So please... if it lets me stay this way just for one more day."

Origami stares, nearly tearing up.

"This could be my last chance to be with my sister and my brother! Depending what happens... I won't be myself anymore after today, so no matter how things turn out, I want to be myself until this is over! So please, no matter how risky or how little it helps, let my memories of what may be my last day be happy." Kotori pants, wiping her tears.

"And if the me here now disappears... just tell them I love them, and that I only didn't tell them because I was afraid if being sealed meant that new me stayed forever."

Origami takes Kotori's hand and nods, taking one more syringe and injecting her with it.

"...I promise, but I swear to you we won't let you disappear. We will save you." Origami replied, Kotori smiled a bit before she rests for a bit. "Just rest here for a moment, OK?"

Kotori nods and lays against the wall as Origami walks back to the others.
"I get it now Kotori, you weren't hiding it because you were afraid of being more than a sister to Shido. You're afraid of disappearing and have no idea what to do." Origami thought, she breathes deeply. 'Shido saved me, when your powers return I'll make sure he'll save you.'

Kotori began resting again, trying to relax.

"...Let me out. LET ME OUT!"

Kotori holds her head and cries one last time before the syringes' effects finally settle in to dispel the voice's attempt to take over, she soon gets up and then smashes her fist into the wall.

"Why does it have to end this way!?" Kotori asked herself with anger, soon walking back towards the others. Once she did, she sat back down. "Hey guys, how about we get dressed and head over to the amusement park?"

"What about it everyone, wanna head over now?" Shido asked, finishing his food.

"Yeah, it's been a while. I wanna see what's new over there!" Tohka nodded, the others all soon gave their approval.

"Alright then, the amusement park it is." Shido replied.

After changing to go into the Amusement Park area, everyone began going on the various rides, while Shido and Kotori had both gone on the Sky Drop... and about halfway up the tower, the redhead suddenly began regretting her choice.

"Is it too late to get off? I want off." Kotori asked, soon looking at Shido who gave him small smirk. "Oh no... No! SOMEONE HELP ME!"

And then the drop came, making Kotori screamed so loudly that the whole amusement park was probably able to hear it. At the same time, Tohka, Origami, Mana and Mikie were on the roller coaster.

"This is really fast!" Tohka called out, the panicking Origami holding onto her arm as tears fly out of the latter's eye from the panic.

"Slow it down!" Mana declared, feeling a bit green. Mikie also showing a similar color, but also looking a bit white as she was half conscious at this point in the ride. Shido and Kotori soon walk from the sky drop, Kotori holding her stomach as if the drop make it swap places with her lungs.

"Why'd you make me go on that death trap!?" Kotori yelled, making Shido chuckle. He didn't have the heard to remind her that it was her that made him go on the Sky Drop at her request. "Well... I guess it was a bit fun, it's been a long time since we came here."

"Yeah, how long has it been? I can't remember" Shido asked.

"...5 years." Kotori whispered to herself, making Shido blink as she thought she heard her say something. "What? What is it?"

"Sorry, just thought you said something." Shido replied, and the two went to sit on a bench.

Soon after the group on the Roller Coaster got off, Mana threw up in a trash bin as Mikie patted her back, while Origami breathes as she and Tohka sat on another bench, Yoshino handing Origami a drink. Tohka kicking her legs back and forth excitedly.
"That was fun! We should go on again, let's do it right now!" Tohka cheered, making Origami shake her head. "Aww..."

Origami soon looks at the bench Kotori and Shido were sitting on, and soon stares before breathing and looking at Tohka and Yoshino.

"Hey you two... mind if we go talk somewhere in private?" Origami asked, making the two blink a bit.

"Uh... sure, I guess?" Tohka replied, a bit worried.

"I don't think this is good news." Yoshino said to herself, Tohka and Yoshino soon walk behind one area of the park's buildings.

"I know the real reason Kotori passed out two weeks ago, I had promised to keep it secret but after what I heard her say when she was in the bathroom..." Origami began, soon whispering the rest to the two of them. Tohka and Yoshino's eyes widen.

"Kotori's really a Spirit!?" Tohka gasped, she had only seen Origami briefly before her powers fully manifested again, so unlike Kotori she hadn't gotten to know her as a human the same way.

"No way..." Yoshino softly said, shocked in her own way.

"Wait, but why did Kotori keep it a secret? Couldn't she have just let Shido seal her like the three of us?" Tohka questioned, and that's when she noticed Origami grimace. "...Oh no, the bad news is coming, isn't it?"

"Yeah, for some reason for a while, she's said she feels something inside of her trying to take her over." Origami explained, recalling Kotori's tears while they were in the water park area only an hour earlier.

"I don't know much but... Kotori's worried that she might lose herself to whatever this is, that if she were to be sealed that she could disappear. I don't know what's the difference between her powers and mine, or why Phantom locked them away. She doesn't react to mana like me for one."

The three Spirits all look worried.

"I think today might be her last day before her powers come back, she needs us. All of us. Whatever happens... we need to make sure we can save Kotori from whatever this strange thing inside her is." Origami stated, looking at the both of them with a nearly pleading look.

"Of course, I owe Kotori so much as Shido and Mana. They helped me settle in after I regained my memories." Tohka replied with determination, Origami looks at Yoshino next.

"I'll help too, I like Kotori too." Yoshino smiled.

"Yeah, you can count on us!" Yoshino declared, raising a hand as Origami smiled at the two of them.

"Thank you, both of you." Origami replied, the three walked back out into view as they saw Shido buying everyone some ice cream. "Oh hey Shido, where's Kotori?"

"She went to the fountain to get a drink real quick. Here, pick a flavor everyone." Shido answered as he held out the ice creams he bought.

Meanwhile with Kotori, she was getting a drink, when suddenly she clutched her chest as she felt a
pulse go off inside her body. She gasped as she panicked at what she realized it was, a fire felt like it was burning.

"No... it's happening." Kotori breathed in fear, soon sliding to her knees.

"Stop keeping me in here! Let. Me. OUT!" A voice shouted throughout Kotori's mind, making her pant before her eyes went blue. At that moment, Kotori yelled as her now blue eyes had their pupils whitened, making her yell. That attracted the attention of the others.

"Kotori!?" Shido asked worried, he handed his ice cream to Tohka ran towards the fountain.

"W-wait up Shido!" Tohka declared as the others ran after him and she finished everyone's ice cream all at once, giving her a brain freeze. Once they did, they saw Kotori had disappeared, only her ribbons left where she is. Shido picked them up as his eyes shook.

"Kotori... what happened?" Shido breathed, as the Spirits all looked worried. Then as if to mock the situation with bad timing, a familiar alarm when off.

[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACIAL QUAKE IN THE CITY! THIS IS NOT A DRILL!]

"No, not a Spirit right now! Not when Kotori's missing!" Shido growled, slamming the nearby wall in anger. Origami stared at Shido, and soon grabbed his phone to her surprise. "Origami, what are you doing?"

"Maria... what Spirit are we detecting right now." Origami asked, Shido was about to interrupt but she holds her hand out and gives him a serious look. A rarity from her that shut him up. "Just listen Shido."

"It looks like Efreet to me, why?" Maria replied, curious to the sudden question.

"...Shido, we're going to get this Spirit now. Finding this Spirit is the only way we're gonna find Kotori now." Origami answered, making Shido look at her confused.

"What are you talking about?" Shido asked, right as Mana ran by the group. Origami breathed and looked at Shido with a slightly guilty look.

"Because..." Origami began, soon making the Takamiya siblings stare at her.

"Efreet and Kotori Itsuka are one and the same."

And with that... the flames of trouble have finally ignited, Kotori has just been revealed as Efreet, and this personality of her "blue eyed" mode is starting to take her over for some reason. How will this change the arc? Well, I think those who look at Kotori's dream can probably start noticing the hints on who this personality actually is.

Also, I have an announcement for all of you, due to me using Minerva for this arc, I've decided on adapting Date AST Strike into the Date A Re:Live story as a canon story that'll happen after Kurumi's arc finishes. It'll focus on Mana and the AST dealing with Minerva over something after the arc ends, and this will connect into Season 2 of the fanfic. This relates to the first scene of this chapter with Ryouko, it's the scene that begins the chain of events that will lead to the story.
Oh, and I just had to throw in that moment with Reine saying Spirits can only be girls. Partially because it was getting hard to remember I needed to refer to Phantom without a gender, and partially because it was just that funny to me ^^

I hope this arc's first chapter helped warm things up, cause the moment of peace this chapter gave is all this arc will have due to who's involved. Mana herself will finally get a big chance to shine, so see you all next chapter when we Edgar and Minerva make their next move and everyone tries to find out how to save Kotori from both them, and herself.

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 72%

Origami - 44%

Yoshino - 28%
Chapter 11

Here we are, the next part of the Kotori arc, and in this chapter the identity of "Blue-Eye" Kotori as we'll call her for right now. Admittedly some of you have already PMed me to see if you figured it out based on the previous chapter, but for those who don't? I'll explain it at the bottom area of the End Notes, though I'll warn you now it will have Vol 16 spoilers.

Finally, Minerva's about to make her move in her and Edgar's attempts to take over the DEM, and this is gonna lead to repercussions in the next arc in ways I won't reveal just yet. I've done my reading of Date AST Strike and I think I've managed to understand Minerva's fighting style enough, so... I hope I'll be presenting it correctly here.

And last but not least, time for some important chapter info... that's right, it's what you're probably thinking it is! It's Kotori's Inverse Spirit information! I guess I should tell you now for this story, each Spirit will undergo an Inversion during their arc. Though aside from Yoshino, I can't guarantee they'll make any further inversions, they might but that's a bit further ahead at the moment.

-Inverse Kotori, Code Name: [Phoenix]-

Demon King: Asmodeus - Camael's Demon King counterpart, unlike Camael which generates heat only when Kotori needed it to, Asmodeus constantly emits temperatures up to 110 degrees Fahrenheit making it burn those who make contact and possibly igniting anything that gets too close. The blade of the axe is also serrated and can smash apart the average Realizer's territory with ease.

- Alternate Form: Gungnir - The Inverse counterpart of Camael's Megiddo technique, along with the main cannon, there's now eight additional slots that allow a nine beam strike. The sub-cannons shoot out fire while the main cannon unleashes a lightning blast, the intensity making it impossible for a territory to be deployed if one attempts to deploy it while the beam is within a 5-yard radius of their current position.

- Alternate Form: Labyrs - By shifting the serrated edges of the blade, Asmodeus transforms into a scythe. At the cost of strength and less piercing ability if inaccurately aimed, the Demon King can be swung much faster with it's now lighter weight and be focused more precisely at Kotori's target.

- Alternate Form: Vajra - By merging a shift between both its cannon and axe forms, and then focusing plasma until Asmodeus creates additional plating over it, the Demon King takes the form of a large hammer. At the cost of becoming heavier and slower to swing, Asmodeus can now destroy any form of protection it strikes as long as it's unable to rebound the force back at Kotori.

- Powers: Compared to Camael, the healing abilities of Asmodeus are so powerful that as long as Kotori has mana to spare or hasn't had her body completely disintegrated, she will survive as if she were an actual phoenix. The most powerful addition of Kotori's Inverse Form is her flames can now become so hot that they can be focused into plasma and be released as
lightning, or "fire bolts" as she prefers to call them.

Risk Factors: S

Spacequake: A

Spirit's Astral Dress: A

Demon King Ranking: AA

Strength: 190

Consistency: 80

Spiritual Power: 248

Agility: 90

Intelligence: 153

Chapter 11, S1: Kotori Possessed, Part 2

Back at the Arubi Island base, Edgar suddenly gets an alert on his phone about a Spacequake reading being detected, having sabotaged the alert system so only he had access to it. He smirks as he sees Efreet's code name registered on the wave readings.

"Minerva, start heading over to Tenguu City. We've got her in our sights." Edgar chuckled, and the crazed wizard gets up in response.

"As you wish. I'll bring you her Sephira Crystal and her head." Minerva cackled before she equipped her CR-Unit, Manticore, and began using a secret passage to fly out of the base towards Tenguu City. 'And after that I'll take yours and gain everything for myself. I'll finally surpass that bitch, I'll finally surpass Artemisia!'

Minerva laughed crazily as she sped up towards her location.

"...Shido, we're going to get this Spirit now. Finding this Spirit is the only way we're gonna find Kotori now." Origami answered, making Shido look at her confused.

"What are you talking about?" Shido asked, right as Mana ran by the group. Origami breathed and looked at Shido with a slightly guilty look.

"Because..." Origami began, soon making the Takamiya siblings stare at her.

"Efreet and Kotori Itsuka are one and the same."

Shido and Mana, even Maria who had been listening, all suddenly go wide eyed at that. Shido's phone slipped from his hands and hit the ground.

"OW!" Maria cried out, feeling the impact.

"What... did you just say?" Mana breathed, hoping she heard that wrong. Origami gave a slightly saddened look as she read Mana's face.
"You heard me. Kotori is the Flame Spirit [Efreet], I know this because she told me." Origami replied, looking away with her eyes closed. Her teeth gritted after she said it. "She begged me not to tell anyone."

"Why didn't you tell us? If I had known, I could have sealed her powers and-"

Shido suddenly felt Origami grab him, an angry expression on her face.

"BECAUSE SHE'S AFRAID!" Origami screamed, making Shido look at her, scared and confused. "I... I'm sorry, but Kotori's powers have something different about them. Apparently, there's another personality in her."

"You mean like Yoshinon?" Mana asked.

"Yeah, but this one's not like me either." Yoshino explained, soon crossing her arms. "According to what Origami told us, Kotori told her this one doesn't seem very friendly. Not to mention this one doesn't have its own body."

Origami breathes, looking at Shido and Mana directly.

"The biggest reason she didn't want to tell you was because she feels this personality trying to take over, and worried if you were to seal her... what if that personality stays and she's trapped? Or worse, she disappears?" Origami finished, making Shido and Mana's eyes widen.

"See? This is why I didn't tell you, if we don't know how to make sure Kotori's persona stay when we seal her, sealing her... in a sense, we could essentially kill her by destroying what makes Kotori who she is."

"My god... Kotori, the way you were crying earlier... is this what you've been fighting for the last 5 years? Is this why you've been so different since that day?" Shido asked himself, collapsing to his knees. "Origami... she felt today might be her last, didn't she?"

Origami nods, and hugs Shido as he shakes. Tears running down his face.

"Kotori... I'm so sorry! If only I had known!" Mana cried before covering her face and subbing, leading to Yoshinon patting her right shoulder.

"Hey, don't give up. We all promised Origami we'd find a way to help her. We just need to figure out how to save her before we can seal her powers. A way has to exist." Tohka said, recalling Kotori's distance to her. How much she could have helped her if she had known from the start. She didn't want Kotori to go away, she wouldn't let her.

"...We have to."

"Right." Shido replied, sniffling as he wiped his tears. "Maria? Tell Reine about this, we have to find her before she ends up leaving Tenguu City."

"I will, good luck Shido." Maria said before her program's connection to the phone cuts off.

Meanwhile with the Fraxinus Crew, they had all returned to the said ship while the AST went to help others inside the water park area properly evacuate without hurting themselves. Reine began typing on the keyboard.

"Everyone, please hurry. We need to figure out Efreet's position." Reine ordered, typing even faster.
"Yes ma'am!" Everyone replied, and Maria soon appeared from her projection area and look at Rinne. The sleep deprived woman looked back.

"Commander, I know who [Efreet] is!" Maria exclaimed, catching the entire crew's attention.

"What? But how, we haven't even gotten visual of the Spirit yet." Reine asked.

"Because the Spirit told Origami who she was, and she just told us." Maria explained, and soon everyone's attention turned to her. "...It's Kotori!"

Everyone gasped at that, Reine in particular stared without blinking for about 8 seconds.

"...Kawagoe, uses the analysis on Kotori and Efreet's images. I want a match reading confirmed!" Reine ordered.

"On it!" Kawagoe declared, soon bringing up the images. After a bit the results confirmed a 98% match for physical readings, although gave a 100% and a 0% for her mental readings for some strange reason. "Commander, we have a 98% physical match, that's way too high for a coincidence. However, there's something wrong."

"What do you mean?" Reine inquired.

"The readings mention her mental readings are both a complete match, yet a complete mismatch at the same time. That can't be possible, can it?" Kawagoe wondered.

"Not... exactly." Maria replied, getting the crew's attention. "I'll explain as you find her location, but for now let's just saw she and Yoshino have something in common... only hers is possibly much more fatal to herself."

Kotori was soon seen stumbling across the streets of Tenguu City's shopping district, holding her head in pain as her left eye was now blue while her right was its usual red color.

She was currently in her Astral Dress, which was a white kimono with gold trims at the ends and the sleeves slightly burning, pinkish wraps and a black 'belt' wrapped around her, a pair of horns sticking out from her ribbons which had permanently gained gold flower patterns on them, and finally a translucent red-white streamer-like scarf wrapped around her arms.

"Stop it, what are you doing to me? Why are you trying to take over my body!?” Kotori screamed, trying to fight off the blue-eyed personality within her. Unfortunately, she was the one losing.

"YOU'RE body? This is MY Body, I am the true Flame Spirit! If anything, you're the thief!" The voice screamed out.

"No! This is my body, I was born in it, gained my powers with it, made memories and found family in it! It's not yours!" Kotori cried out, trying to keep her right eye from shifting into blue as well.

"Who are you even!"?

"Like I said, I am the true Flame Spirit! Now give me my body back! I've been asleep long enough, now I have to go save my friend! I have to save... well I can't recall her name but I'm saving her!"

The voice roared, and soon Kotori fell to the ground as her right eye flicked. "So stay... DOWN!"

Soon Kotori's right eye became blue as well, and it shed a tear.

'Shido, Mana, mom, dad, everyone... I'm sorry. I think this is goodbye.' Kotori thought, the tear soon
falling to the ground and splattering.

'And Shido... my only regret is that I never got to chance to tell you that I-

At that moment, Kotori screamed violently as her red spirit mana overflowed her. Soon, the blue-eyed persona swiped it away and cracked her neck as she stood up. The pupils of her eyes now somewhat slit from the takeover.

"Finally, that stupid brat let go of my body. Now it's time I find that DEM bitch and make her pay." The blue-eyed personality spoke, feeling her stored up anger finally well back into her. However, she quickly noticed her current location and gasped. "Wait... where am I? This isn't Osaka. This is... Tenguu City?"

She remembers her blacking out, and soon gasps in horror that last slash she heard.

"Oh no, I don't think I was the one who got hit. Don't worry, I'm coming to save you..." The blue-eyed persona declared, but suddenly realized she couldn't say her friend's name again. "What the hell? I can't say...'s name, I swear I know it. So why?"

She feels her head, trying to search for the answers she wanted, but no matter how much she tried to look through her mind, nothing was there. It was as if while she had the information, her mind didn't have it and therefore could not register the name to say it.

"This makes no sense, I know I remember it! So why does it feel like I forgot it at the same time!?" The blue-eyed persona screamed.

Meanwhile back on the Fraxinus, the crew was currently trying to trace her location while Maria had started her explanation.

"-there's another personality living inside of her. However, unlike Yoshinon, it's actually inside of her, and she's had to feel it taking her over ever since she became a Spirit." Maria explained, recalling what she learned from Origami. "It's made her so afraid, she never told us about her powers because she worries sealing her will erase her."

"Hmm... does she even know about how this personality was born? It might help to know why it manifested compared to Yoshinon." Reine asked.

"Well..." Maria wondered, but then scratched her head confused. "I think Kotori doesn't even know, Origami never really mentioned anything. Though unlike Yoshinon, Kotori didn't seem to make it, at least that much I'm sure of."

Everyone on the crew took a moment to think about it.

"I wonder, do you think it's possible that Kotori's powers are changing her personality?" Minowa wondered, throwing out her theory. "We never knew who the previous Efreets were, so we don't know how any of them acted."

"Not to mention the 5th Sephira represents Severity, and Kotori tends to be somewhat forceful. Yet Shido and Mana did mention she wasn't like this around 5 years ago." Mikimoto added, making Reine think a bit. "It could be her powers re simply magnifying her temper."

"Hmm... Maria, do you think any of these ideas sound right?" Reine inquired.

"...Sorry, but neither feels right to me." Maria answered honestly. "Why would Kotori feel she's
being taken over to the point she could disappear? If it was either, wouldn't she have had Shido seal
her immediately after she heard he sealed Tohka?"

"I think I have to agree with Maria here, this feels more like something that's not Kotori at all." Shiizaki replied, making Reine curl her fist near her mouth as she thought more and bit her lower lip.
"I do think we have footage from the Tenguu Fire I could look at, maybe there's something that can give us answers."

"I think we need to ask Shido and Origami a bit more, we need more specific info to be sure." Reine answered, soon seeing Kotori's location confirmed. "While we do that... Maria, deploy the Sleipnir towards Ocean Park to pick them up."

"Understood!" Maria said, soon opening a connection to Shido and the said vehicle.

Meanwhile back on the ground within Ocean Park, the residents within the water park area had been moved to safety and the AST met up with Shido's group. Shido explained everything to Captain Ryouko who nodded after hearing it.

"I understand. Since all the residents have been evacuated, we'll be spreading out to search out for Kotori and any signs of the DEM in case they try to force her out of the city." Ryouko replied, soon her and all the AST but Mana equipped their CR-Units and began flying off in various directions.

Shido soon noticed his phone ringing and saw Maria materialize out of the screen again.

"What is it Maria?" Shido asked, soon he felt his headset beep a bit. "Is that you Reine?"

"Yeah, though this is so all of us can hear you. We're trying to figure out more about Kotori's other personality and hoping you and Origami might have more info to share. Just talk with Maria, we'll handle the rest with what we hear while a transport comes to pick you up."

"OK, ask away Maria." Shido replied.

"Origami, you said you saw Kotori when she had just become a Spirit right? She's been one as long as you?" Maria asked.

"W-well, sorta. I didn't 'see her', see her... more like Phantom told me." Origami explained, scratching her head. "Either way, while it was for a bit longer, Kotori and I definitely became Spirits on the same day."

"Understood." Maria nodded, then turned towards the Takamiya siblings. "Tell me what Kotori was like before the Tenguu Fire, and how long it took before you noticed her acting differently? And not just emotionally or mentally, but physically too."

"Well... she was usually easily scared, but she always felt so sunny and warm. She cried easily but usually her spirits would easily get back up." Mana answered, trying to remember all he could.

"Even if she got hurt, she'd keep trying her best. After the Fire, she only showed her happy side in the house, she became a bit more sullen, irritable and it felt like that sunny side of her had vanished, she gave up on things more easily."

"At school, Kotori always was social and made a lot of friends. She did tell me she at least wanted to be a bit stronger at times despite me and Shido telling her she was already strong enough." Mana said, smiling at the memory before she frowned.
"But the fire changed that, and she began to keep anyone but me, Shido and her parents in her heart. I thought maybe she just was too afraid to get close after something nearly made her lose everything, but... now I wonder if she was afraid of hurting us."

Maria thought on that, the Spirit powers seemed to have had some effect on her. Was it her Sephira Crystal or trauma though? She had one last question to ask them all.

"Shido, do you think when she shows her happy side in your home it's genuine? Mana, have you felt like you had been losing Kotori bit by bit since that day?" Maria asked, before turning to Origami. "And Origami, Phantom locked your powers, define how that worked and how you know and what you think makes Kotori's lock different."

"I do, and I wish I know how she could be like that all the time." Shido replied.

"...Truthfully, I do. What I don't know is if it was her choice or not. I remember how she was after someone brought her to the rescue zone, it was days before she would let us touch her again." Mana answered.

Origami took a moment to think on how her and Kotori's powers had been locked by Phantom. The only major difference she noticed was she regained her powers briefly when spirit mana was nearby, and she had been in her Inverse Form. Kotori wasn't Inverted, and the former didn't happen with her... then it hit her.

"Well..." Origami began, noticing Maria's projection get too close to her face. "Maria, t-that's too close! You're making me nervous!"

Maria blushed as she backed up a bit, letting Origami breathe as she regained her personal space.

"I recalled seeing Kotori in the fire after it began, she was crying alone in a building. Either her powers began the fire unintentionally, or maybe it as an accident, possibly the other personality."

Origami replied.

"When my powers were locked, I was in my Inverse Form, and my lock weakened when spirit mana was nearby. While Kotori was using her powers against the Nidhogg... her voice was different, I doubt spirit mana had any factor in this. Most of all, Kotori spoke to me in the bathroom area like she had been fighting this personality forever, and regardless of how long she had been fighting..."

She looked at everyone, giving a somber look.

"...That her fight would a losing battle, and all she could do was delay it." Origami finished, looking down slightly. "My guess is Phantom locked this other personality away, and maybe warned Kotori if it got out, it would erase her personality and claim her body as its own."

"Hmm..." Maria said, slightly sweating from the last bit Origami shared. "Commander Reine, what do you think?"

"My honest thoughts? It sounds like Kotori's inherited something like a curse, perhaps it's how the previous Efreet was killed before Phantom chose Kotori as her successor." Reine answered. "Shido, if that's the case the longer we wait, the more likely we'll lose her."

"Then I'll do whatever it takes. Even if not by blood, or even by adoption, Kotori is part of my family. I won't abandon her!" Shido declared, making everyone else smile.

Right at that moment, a car drove into view and screeched to a stop within the park area, surprising everyone.
"This is the Sleipnir, our high-speed pursuit car. We'll take it to find Kotori." Maria stated, and everyone nods.

Everyone got in, and as Shido prepared to take the driver's seat... Tohka suddenly slid him into the passenger seat to his surprise, giving him a cat smirk.

"Uh oh..." Shido gulped, suddenly feeling Tohka had a plan. "This is revenge over something, isn't it?"

"Yep, for not slowing down when you carried me that one time. Let's blow this joint!" Tohka exclaimed, slamming her heel on the wheel to Maria's surprise, and soon everyone screamed loudly as the Sleipnir floored it. It took Maria a moment to realize something.

"Wait a second, how do you even know how to drive a car!?" Maria exclaimed.

Everyone's eyes turn to Tohka and briefly stop their screams, suddenly wondering the same. Tohka just shrugs her shoulders in reply.

"I dunno, I just do." Tohka said, driving surprisingly well for someone who had no license or even any practice driving. "Lucky me!"

Everyone resumes their screaming as Tohka changes gears to make the Sleipnir accelerate even faster.

Back on the Fraxinus, Shiizaki suddenly noticed something in one part of the video feeds and gasps.

"Commander Murasame, look at this!" Shiizaki called, making everyone turn to the screen as she brings it up. The sight of Kotori with blue eyes as she fired the Megiddo, and them reverting back to red. Right before the bam of fire hits something that causes the Tenguu Fire.

"Shiizaki, replay that video in a loop. Start time 15 seconds, end time 19 seconds." Reine ordered.

Shiizaki nodded and the video looped a few times, showing Kotori with blue eyes reverting to red, and Kotori's reaction the moment they were red again. Reine stared at the moment her eyes were blue.

"Blue eyes... I swear that's important somehow, but why? I can't remember." Reine answered, soon biting on one of her nails. 'Come on Reine, you have to remember. Kotori's life is at stake. Remembering may be what decides if we save her, or lose her.'

The blue-eyed persona yelled in rage as she smashed Camael into a nearby fountain, breaking it into pieces as the water around it splashes and soaks her, ignoring the water that sprayed her as she kept smashing it.

"WHY!?!" She screamed, completely furious. "Why can't I say her name, where's the memory? Not just that..."

She flashes through her mind, unable to see her at all.

"Her form."

A blurred face follows.

"Her face!"
She hears her talk, but despite knowing it was a girl's voice, she couldn't define the voice either.

"Not even the sound of her voice! I know them, so why don't they register to me!?" She screamed again, soon fully destroying the fountain as Camael burns and incinerates it, the water the only thing keeping a fire from spreading. Soon she hears a screech coming. "Hmm?"

The Sleipnir soon drives into the area and comes to a loud sudden stop, the doors open up as everyone gets out, though all but Tohka getting out in a stumble.

"OK, I'm sorry for the time with the bridal carry. Just don't do that again." Shido said, swallowing to not puke.

"Apology accepted." Tohka said, smiling brightly in victory.

"Who are you!?" The blue-eyed persona said, not recognizing Kotori's friends yet feeling she should know them. "Tell me!"

"Kotori, don't you remember who we are? It's me!" Shido called out, making the blue-eyed persona raise an eyebrow before she glared at them.

"Kotori? What the hell are you calling me that for your jerks, my name is Saya! Saya Yamada!" Saya yelled, surprising the others.

"Saya... Yamada?" Yoshino repeated.

"That's a really specific name, and look at her eyes. They're blue now." Yoshino added.

"Shido!" Reine shouted, the surprise from the shout and hearing Reine shout in general nearly made him fall over. He soon tapped the headset, and the others did the same.

"W-What is it!?" Shido said, still a bit on edge from the shout.

"I think I get it now, this other personality in Kotori..." Reine began, breathing a bit before she answered. "It's Kotori's predecessor. I don't know how, but the consciousness and soul of the previous [Efreet] survived in the Sephira Crystal after she died. It's the only way she has enough of an identity to have a first and last name."

"What!?" Everyone shouted.

"Then... the personality taking over Kotori's body is just another person?" Mana breathed, shocked at the result.

"What does that mean though? Will it consume Kotori, can we seal her without worry?" Shido asked, sweating.

"To be honest, I don't think we know for sure..." Reine answered. "However... the fact this personality came from a human, I'd like to believe it's more likely she'll survive. Though I'd suggest you don't seal her until we can force Kotori's persona back out."

"In other words, despite how much you don't wanna hurt her... you need to knock Saya unconscious!" Maria answered from Shido's phone, making Shido gasp.

"...I guess we don't have a choice." Shido mumbled. "Guys, we might be able to save her, but we gotta get Kotori back in control first!"

Everyone nods, while Saya growls.
"I don't know who you are, but I am not Kotori! Since you mention you wanna fight then I'll just have to break you to pieces!" Saya screamed, soon raising Camael as it burns. "Cut them to pieces, Camael!"

Camael strikes the ground and a wave of fire flies at the group to their surprise, Saya smirks at her victory until...

"Adonai Melek!"
"Ehyeh!"
"El!"

Saya gasps as the flames dispel and Tohka, Origami and Yoshino were in their Astral Dresses, while Mana was wearing the Murakumo. The three before her... they were all Spirits!? "What the hell? If you're Spirits like me, then why are you fighting against me!?" Saya growled. "Because that body is our friend Kotori's, and you don't have the right to steal it from her." Tohka said, holding out Sandalphon. "Now give it back."

"Wait, so that voice was..." Saya replied before growling, holding Camael out. "Stop talking nonsense, this is my body! If anything, she took it from me! I'm just reclaiming what's mine!"

"She doesn't even realize that's not her body... poor Kotori, how much is she suffering right now to not have her own flesh and blood in her control?" Origami breathed, looking worried. "D-despite that, we'll save her."

The Spirits prepared to move, but a Territory appears before them, Mana walks up. "Guys, I want you to let me fight her on my own first." Mana requested, a fiery look in her eyes. "Kotori's not just like a sister to me, she's my best friend. So... I want to do what a best friend would and help her!"

The others all look at her, and soon at each other before nodding. "Go ahead Mana, it might actually do better to avoid hurting Kotori." Tohka replied with a smile, making Mana smile back before looking back at Saya with a serious face.

"Alright little girl, we'll fight! Womano to womano!" Saya declared, making Camael's blade set aflame once more.

Mana shifts her position as Murakumo's swords equip, and she flies at Saya, soon sending the two into the air as they collide, Saya using Camael to defend against Mana's sword slashes. Saya shouts and slashes Camael at her to knock her back.

"EAT THIS!" Saya screamed as she slammed the burning axe down.

Mana deploys her territory in response, trying to defend against the fierce attacks that were striking her. Saya growled as the Murakumo's territory proved to be too sturdy for her to break.

"Now go, Blaster style!" Mana shouted, the shoulder parts of Murakumo shift to blast out energy threads to strike Saya's hands cutting them a bit as she dropped Camael.

"...Tell me, did you think this would be easy if I couldn't hold my Angel?" Saya chuckled, smirking in a manner that worried Mana.
Suddenly Saya's hands burn with a pinkish flame as they heal the wounds, soon holding out her hand, she dispels Camael before summoning it back into her hands. Everyone stared in shock at that.

"It's true that Spirits can heal naturally, it's always slowly. For me however I'm the best exception to that. You could shoot me in the head or the heart... and that still wouldn't kill me as long as I have my spirit mana!" Saya laughed as she flew at Mana again, who was barely able to block in time.

"You know, I think I should thank you. Now I'm not afraid to do some more serious damage to save Kotori!" Mana yelled before deploying her territory around Saya, trapping her. Saya tries to break it as Mana prepares her sword and blasts at once. "Now, try this!"

Mana rushed at Saya, making the Flame Spirit's eyes widen... but suddenly Mana was struck from the side and knocked towards the ground. Everyone gasped as she landed, slightly bleeding at the side as she looks at who hit her. Up in the air, Minerva made her appearance as she slowly descended.

"Oh, I'm sorry you little baby, did I make you scrape your knee?" Minerva asked mockingly before she cackled, soon giving a vicious look at Saya. "So sorry, but I'll be taking Efreet's head now!"

"Who... who are... you! You... bastard!" Mana choked out, the pain on her side burning like salt had been thrown on it.

"Ooh, the baby has a dirty mouth? Alright then. I'm Minerva Riddell of the DEM, and I'm here to take Efreet for my own gain!" Minerva stated, drawing the Manticore's main weapon and igniting it with magic.

"We won't let you!" Shido screamed in anger, the Spirits all jumped to react, however before they could. The Manticore's tail suddenly stabbed the territory around Saya, and Minerva held her hand to make more territories around the others, all locking their movements and sapping away their energy.

"Ooh, so sorry. My Manticore's quite serious about letting it capture it's pray. Enough that it can enhance its territory by stealing the power of another for its own!" Minerva declared, veins formed on her face before vanishing. "True it puts the user in pain, but I'm too used to it now to feel it!"

"No... Kotori!" Shido shouted, but none of them could move. Mio tried to empower Shido but...

[Damn it! I'm sorry Shido, but I'm getting drained too... I can't get us out of...]

Shido heard Mio go quiet, and grunted in anger at how powerless the group was rendered by this single wizard. Minerva shattered the territory around Saya and gave a psychotic smirk.

At that moment however... Saya's eyes widened as the hair color matched Ellen's so much, only recognizing it because Kotori had seen Ellen's hair via a video feed of Shido's rescue of Tohka, being one of the few things they shared a memory of.

"You..." Saya whispered, the anger welling as she remembered what Ellen did to her. "I'll kill you!"

Saya rushed at Minerva, and the Wizard has Manticore's tail fly at her, but the Flame Spirit roared as went ablaze, knocking it away.

"Oh?" Minerva gasped, a bit interested now. "It's been a while since I played with a kid. So how should I play with you, hmm... should I rape and then murder you like the last child?"

Saya gasped at that before screaming and swinging Camael, sending a small wave of fire as Minerva formed a territory to defend against it.
"No, I'll just kill you after I give you every possible form of torture imaginable." Minerva cackled, she prepared to drop her territory and attack... but Saya rushed at her faster than she had anticipated. "So fast!"

Minerva was knocked back as her territory was smashed into, but soon she backflips onto a rooftop and jumps out.

"Try this you weak little ember!" Minerva smirked, firing missiles at Saya and shooting her to the ground. She laughed as she was sure she got Efreet... but Saya soon appeared to her shock, only with a tattered Astral Dress.

"Was that it? All you did was singe Elohim Gibor, either your aim is bad or those missiles are just pathetically weak!" Saya exclaimed before launching at Minerva, however mid-flight, she suddenly stopped as her eyes flashed red.

"Come on, please! I... need to push through!" Kotori grunted, trying to take back control. Saya growls and soon pushes her back. "No!"

"If I could kill you for taking over I'd have done so already!" Saya seethed, getting Minerva's attention. Surprised by the reaction Efreet gave.

"No way, so you're actually-"

Minerva didn't get a chance to finish however when Saya rushed at her, and Minerva quickly deployed her territory again as Saya slammed Camael against it repeatedly. Minerva grunted as each time she was forced lower to the ground, Saya grinning sadistically as she did.

"Oh no, where did all your power go?" Saya mocked, still with the same grin. "You're going to beat me, right? You're going to shoot me, right? You're going to slice me, right? You're got to kill me... right?! Isn't that what you told me last time we fought self-proclaimed Strongest wizard!?"

Minerva listened again, and suddenly realized who she was fighting with a smirk. Saya soon knocked her down and held up Camael.

"Camael... MEGIDDO!"

The axe turns into a cannon that charged up and stored her flames, with an enraged scream she fires it, and Minerva's territory was blasted to pieces as she tumbled backwards a bit, her mouth bleeding slightly as she coughed out blood. Saya landed before her with Megiddo charging again.

"Sorry, but I think you'll be the one dead before you now it. Looks like your new tan simply symbolized how badly you'd be burned this time!" Saya cackled, ready to finally avenge her defeat. Minerva began to laugh however, catching Saya's attention. "What, is the defeat driving you insane?"

"Oh no, I'm just surprised by your words Saya Yamada." Minerva snickered, getting the Flame Spirit's attention. "And the fact your here, claiming that someone's stealing your body."

"So, you actually know my name? Stop joking around, if you think I'll be distracted enough you'll survive your wrong." Saya stated venomously, holding Megiddo at her face. "So how about you die."

Minerva cackles even more.

"That's my point? You think I'm Ellen Mathers, well I'm not. Even more it's so funny that you don't
even know you were murdered by her 10 years ago!" Minerva revealed, causing Saya to tense up. Megiddo's charge dispelling from the sudden shock.

"What the hell are you talking about? I'm not dead, the fact I'm standing here is proof!" Saya stated, she was alive... she was sure of it!

"Oh, I disagree, I saw a recording of the battle you and Nightmare had with her and Artemisia 10 years ago. I watched as she slit your throat, and then as you blacked out, lobbed your stupid little head off! Even your regeneration doesn't work without a head or a brain to start it up!" Minerva continued, laughing all the while.

"Take a look in the mirror, I can tell there's a voice in your head... that's the real Efreet talking! And that body belongs to her!"

"N-no... you're lying!" Saya spat out, trying to deny it. She had to be lying to her.

"If you think I am, look at your reflection and prove me wrong." Minerva smirked, slamming the final nail in.

Saya sweated, and soon turned her head to a nearby window... and soon she gasped in horror as her illusion finally banished. She saw the red haired 14 year old body of Kotori, not her brown haired 17 year old body. Suddenly her memories flash by and realizes that second slash sound... was her death.

"No... no... NO!" Saya screamed, dropping Camael as she held her head and screamed like an insane madman.

Who could blame her though? She was just told that she was dead, the fact she was somehow in someone else's body when she had become more than Human... she was just a ghost possessing someone under the thought they were the fake using her form. Shido and the others all look in horror.

"That woman... she's a monster." Tohka breathed weakly. She may have not known Saya, but to learn a truth like that and so cruelly no less? She didn't deserve that, not when she honestly didn't know she had been dead.

"And now... it's time for you to die again for good!" Minerva declared, taking out Manticore's secret weapon which was a strange looking gun stored in the tail. She aims it with both hands and aims at her abdominal area. "Tathlum!"

A shot fires at Saya, encompassing Kotori's body, and everyone gasped as they soon saw only the kimono of her Astral Dress, and a single arm, remain in the pile of rubble left.

"KOTORI!" They all screamed, Minerva laughed crazily.

"Finally, I killed a Spirit! How perfect for me! Now... to steal that Sephira Crystal." Minerva declared, walking towards the rubble... only for it to suddenly start shaking as red spirit mana gathered.

"Huh? What's going on, she's dead! Nothing more should be able to happen!"

Suddenly Saya's voice came back as an angry scream, Kotori's arm moved before clenching its fist to everyone's surprise. The red spirit power began to suddenly flash darker. Shido, Mana and the other Spirits all instantly gasped as they realized what it was.
Inside the Fraxinus, the entire crew suddenly heard the warning alarm go off.

"The alarm, what's going on down there!?” Nakatsugawa questioned.

"Maria, status update, quickly." Reine ordered, and Maria processed the data... only to gasp. "What is it Maria?”

"I don't know how, but Kotori's pulse vanished for a moment... then it came back, but now...” Maria began, soon turning to the rest of the crew.

"We have a Category E registered, Kotori has undergone her Inversion!”

Soon the red spirit power gathers as an orb around the now floating Astral Dress remnants and arm, soon becoming a dark red color.

"YOU TOOK MY LIFE FROM ME! YOU TOOK EVERYTHING, AND NOW... YOU WILL PAY!” Saya's voice echoed out, using the spirit mana as a conduit. Soon the power explodes as a dark red Spacequake was set off, Minerva went flying as she put up a territory while the others were kept safe by the territories Minerva put on them.

After it was over, the others were freed of the territories caging them, but still weak. Minerva managed to get back on her feet and stumbled back, everyone soon saw the same thing once they looked at the source of the quake. Before them stood Kotori, or rather Saya, in her Inverse form, Kotori's body now fully restored, but looking older like it had aged her slightly.

Her Astral Dress had transformed into a black kimono with crimson trims at the ends, now with a cut that exposed Kotori's cleavage fully and extra cuts to show of her legs from the sides, and the sleeves with a few diamond cuts to expose her skin heavily burning like they had dark red feathers on them. Purple wraps surrounded it, and two light orange 'belts' wrapped around her in an X shape.

The pair of horns sticking out from her ribbons, which their black and white swapped around, had shifted into a curl that led into a three-pronged horn, making it similar to the shape of a wing as most anime styles would sometimes draw them in. Finally, the translucent streamer-like scarf that wrapped around her arms back was now black and blue, and had gain a chain like shape similar to the tail feathers of a phoenix.

"This is Kotori's... Inversion!” Mana breathed out.

"So, I managed to make a Spirit Inverse?” Minerva questioned to herself, soon she begins laughing. "Eat your heart out Ellen, even you haven't succeeded in doing that! Now I'll be the first to kill an inverse Spirit!”

Minerva aims at Saya again.

"Tathlum!”

The same shot encompasses Saya again to the others' horror, however to their and then Minerva's shock, her body healed instantly from white colored flames her spirit power produced. Saya turned towards Minerva.

"If you think that'll work anymore you're wrong. I am no longer the Spirit known as Efreet.” Saya declared, holding out her hand.

"ASMODEUS!”
Suddenly a black colored axe with red trim and a serrated blade formed in hands, emitting intense heat just by its physical form merely existing. Saya stared at Minerva and gave a bloodthirsty grin that showed her teeth.

"I am the spirit known as... PHOENIX!"

That's right, the blue-eyed personality of Kotori is Saya (or Sawa) Yamada! For those who doesn't know, she's a character from Kurumi's past in Volume 16, her best friend and a previous if not the previous wielder of the Camael Crystal. In canon, she's killed by Kurumi who was unaware she had been turned into a Spirit, and that leads to the road that made her the Spirit we know her as. That ain't the case in this story though, and you'll see how that influences Kurumi's arc when we finally reach it.

Now the scene with Tohka and the Sleipnir car? First off, that was an idea one or more people gave me when they found how Shido went too fast while bridal carrying Tohka back in Chapter 5 funny, and that Tohka should get revenge for it later by going too fast for Shido in some manner. I liked it so much, I decided to do it, and this was the perfect timing for it. Second, for how Tohka even knew how to drive? She can turn her throne into a flying vehicle, so I felt it would work for her to instinctively know how in the story.

I'll confirm now that Saya will not be Kotori's inverse personality, and the next chapter will reveal why. The whole thing with her Inversion aging her body up? Well, the Spirits do seem rather gifted in the chest area and the stronger ones seem to be those who are bigger in that area, so I figured with Kotori's body almost fully destroyed before Inverting, that the stronger power would affect her regenerated body, will that be exclusive to her Inverse Form? Well... *giggles* sorry, but I'll tease you with that thought until the next chapter :3

I hope I stayed true to Minerva's fighting style in this chapter, especially since I gave her a different CR-Unit based on a beast I felt fit her well. In case anyone asks what her gun weapon "Tathlum" is based on, it's a missile the Irish God Lugh fired from a slingshot to presumably kill Balor, who was stated to have died from a sling. Balor is sometimes interpreted as a God and since the Spirits are based off a concept of God, it fit. However, as I couldn't fully determine if it was used on Balor, I represented that as Minerva failing to kill Kotori/Saya with it.

Well, I hope you enjoyed this chapter. Next time, Inverse Kotori/Saya begins her fight with Minerva, and we see just what she can really do with her Demon King. Also, while most of you might expect the next chapter to end Kotori's arc, well... if what I planned goes the way I expect, Kotori's arc will NOT be over in the next chapter in order to help properly connect Kurumi's arc to it. Also, I'm hoping to show off Phantom, and a new trick of Shido's that will be important when Kurumi's arc finally happens.

So next time, either this arc's finale, or the second to last chapter before we move onto the Kurumi arc and begin the Season 1 finale!

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 72%
Origami - 47%
Yoshino - 29%
Chapter 12

Alright everyone, we're back and it's time to... NOT finish the Kotori arc yet! That's right, there's still another chapter left to go after this one, and when you'll see it you'll be amazed. For now, this chapter is Mana's to shine in, and it'll help link up to Date A Re:Strike since Minerva's gonna get a reason to hate her as much as she despises Artemisia.

Since we finally introduced Saya as the other personality in Kotori last chapter, I'm gonna reveal something I haven't been able to until now. Kotori won't be showing any Commander mode traits in the story, and any times she has or was close showing them, that wasn't actually her. That's actually Saya indirectly influencing her while Kotori had been holding her back. For why Saya acts like that? I won't explain it because this chapter's first scene is a dream scene that will explain it, so mentioning it here would just be repeating myself.

Now to finally answer if Kotori's body getting its appearance aged up due to the regeneration is permanent or temporary? The answer is... *drumrolls* is permanently! Aside from the fact I write a DxD story and anyone who likes that series is admittedly 'kinda' like Issei... *snickers*, it's also cause due to this story being a harem. Now you might be wonder, other than it being my fanfic, how exactly is that an explanation?

Kotori's slightly better because she looks a bit older, she along with Yoshino and Natsumi despite understanding love and being teenagers (The Yoshino Experience side story has them in class with Kotori, implying they're about the same age) all look like they're kids. Since Spirits have the slowed/stopped aging problem... yeah, we don't want Shido to be labeled a cradle robber. While it'll be different for Yoshino and Natsumi, eventually they'll end up looking more like high schoolers like the others.

One last thing before we start. No one asked, but I bet some of you were wondering how Kotori/Saya was able to revive when she wasn't Inverted yet? Simple, because she was beginning to Inverse when Minerva shot her, so some of her Spirit power had already changed enough that it saved her life, basically... Minerva screwed herself by making the costly mistake of waiting too long to make the shot.

Alright, now that I've got all of that finally finished... let the chapter begin!

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Chapter 12, S1: Kotori Possessed, Part 3

Saya sighed, walking through the streets of her home neighborhood in Tenguu City by herself as she left Rindouji High. She had been experiencing this fairly recently as her best friend _, had suddenly become incredibly without explanation, or rather... _ mentioned she couldn't really explain it to her.

"I just wish I knew a bit about what was going on _, I'm starting to worry you just don't wanna hang out with me." Saya lamented, sighing as kept walking. Suddenly the sound of something metallic falling caught her ears. "Hmm?"

She turned and while brief, swear she saw something briefly fall before vanishing.

"What the... am I seeing things?" Saya wondered, soon rushing over to check out the scene.
Eventually, she entered the nearby forest, and after walking a bit she noticed a sparkling cat like robot on the ground... a Cheshire unit. She gasped at the sight, soon noticing the robot stare at her with its unsteady eye.

"Uh... why are you looking at me that way?"

The Cheshire's readings analyzed her, and due to the damage, it had received... incorrectly identified her as a Spirit. It rushed at her and turned invisible to her surprise, making her fall onto her butt.

"Uh... what the heck? Wait, I know. This is a dream! I'm having a horrible dream." Saya reasoned, laughing in a scared manner. Soon she felt a strong wind blow to her side and moved before she felt a cut on her cheek and paled. "Oh god... not a dream!"

Saya began to run, despite she couldn't even see the Cheshire unit chasing her, eventually during the chase she had her leg stabbed into and she screamed. The Cheshire began pulling her close as it came back into view. Saya began to hyperventilate as she felt her life flash before her eyes.

"HELP ME!" Saya screamed.

The Cheshire raises its claw to kill her, but it would never get the chance as a gunshot fired and a bullet suddenly pierces its eye. Saya gasped as the machine stayed still, soon moving as it fell, narrowly avoiding having it land on her.

"Wait a minute, Saya?" A familiar voice asked, making Saya's eyes widen.

Saya turned to see a familiar figure whose physical view was distorted to all but her sight, wearing an outfit she had never seen her in. Saya's eyes shook at the sight of her best friend holding the gun that saved her. Beside her was a person who looked like a child, strangely hidden by a mosaic.

"_? W-why are you here, who is that, and what's with that outfit?" Saya questioned, confused on what was happening.

"Uh... well, you see-" Saya's friend tried to explain, but Phantom held out a hand.

"(Allow me, it'll probably easier this way.)" Phantom replied, making the girl nod her head. "(Greeting young girl, I am a being known as a Spirit. My true name I don't wish to reveal, but as I am now, you may call me Phantom.)"

"Phantom... Spirit? What are you talking about?" Saya asked, freaking out over the idea she had just gone insane and this was just a figment of her mind. "Why's _ with you?"

"Because, I'm helping her protect the power of Spirits. Making sure the DEM doesn't take them for their twisted goals." The girl answered, making Saya look at her in shock. Did she just call DEM Industries evil?

"I know what you're thinking but that robot that attacked you? It's a DEM weapon, and one of many. Phantom and I have to fight them off as they come to claim the power of the Spirits. The price... I'm not a human anymore, but a Spirit, and as a result that makes one of their targets."

Saya gasped, suddenly noticing _ get closer to show her eyes.

"T-this is crazy, and yet it's all real?" Saya breathed, suddenly widened her eyes. "This is why you haven't been able to walk home with me lately, isn't it?"
_ nodded to Saya, and she looked down at the ground.

"...I can't let you do this anymore, I can't let you risk your life!" Saya shouted, surprising Phantom a bit.

"(I'm sorry, but I can't change her back and have the DEM leave her alone now. There's nothing that can be done since she-)

"Not on your own!"

Phantom stopped in her tracks, her unseen eyes blinking while _ gasped at that.

"Saya?" The girl asked.

"If you're going to be fighting, then... at least allow me to fight with you and protect you!" Saya declared, more serious than _ had ever remembered seeing her. "So please, let me fight with you!"

"...Phantom, is it possible?" The girl asked.

"(Well you decided to help me of your own choice, the question is if she's compatible to a Sephira Crystal. Let's check.)" Phantom answered, soon catching Saya's attention as she pulls out a few gems. She noticed a purple, indigo, white and red gem in the mix. Phantom walks close and holds them near, and soon notices the red one glow.

"(Camael huh? Hmm... you don't seem like the best match, but if it can bond with you then something's gotta be clicking. Maybe I just don't know what that is yet. Tell me, what's your name?)"

"Uh... Saya Yamada."

"(Saya, so you're the one that _'s told me about. I get it. It must be your courage.)" Phantom giggled, making Saya blushed. She put all the gems, except for the red one, away. Soon she held it up by Saya. "(Touch it, the gem will bond to you and make you a Spirit. I warn your though... once you do, there's no going back."

Saya stared at it, the gem that would change her life if she touched it... she only needed a moment before tapping it. Saya gasped as it went into her body and her pupils whitened. She grunted in pain before a kimono appeared on her form, and a red axe in your hand.

"It's official now Saya, you are now the Spirit known as Efreet." The girl stated.

Saya shouted as she slammed Camael across a Jabberwocky, incinerating the heavy machine's armor before _ fired multiple bullets at it and made it explode. Saya landed by her and raised her arms up.

"Hah! My first battle's a victory! How was that _, we owned that pile of scrap, maybe it should have stayed in its diapers a bit longer before trying to walk?" Saya laughed, surprising _ a bit with her choice of words. "What?"

"Nothing, it's just... I've never heard you talk that way before. It surprised me." The girl answered, and Saya sighed before crossing her arms behind her neck.

"That's because I've never been allowed to unload the shit ton of stress on my mind. Seriously, maybe it's easier for your family, but being a rich girl is just so stressful at times. I can't ever properly let it out." Saya explained, yelling a bit after she did.
"I don't have to deal with that here, it's just you me and Phantom. I can finally let loose and blow off this steam! Oh, hell yeah, I knew I made the right choice. From here on out... you, me and Phantom are doing this together!"

"...That's right, together. We'll make it to the end of this fight Saya." The girl smiled, and Saya smiled back. Soon Phantom landed by them.

"(We got another group on the way, get ready!)" Phantom shouted, and both Saya and _ got ready to fight against them.

Minerva stared in shock as Saya, who had regenerated from her attack like it was just a slap on the wrist, glared at her a sadistic smile and a dark chuckle.

"I am no longer the Spirit known as Efreet." Saya declared, holding out her hand.

"ASMODEUS!"

A black colored axe with red trim and a serrated blade formed in Saya's hands, emitting intense heat just by its physical form merely existing.

"I am the spirit known as Phoenix!" Saya yelled, making Minerva growl at her.

"A mere custom change won't do you anything! So what if you can heal, you're still the same pathetic dead soul you were mere seconds ago!" Minerva quickly cackled, Saya teleporting in front of her with a dark grin.

"Then I'll just take this body for myself, then I won't be dead anymore you stupid bastard!" Saya replied, soon holding up her hand. "FIRE BOLT!"

A blast of lightning suddenly fired out and rocketed Minerva across the area, the others who still didn't have enough strength to get back up yet were all surprised by this.

"She can use lightning now!?!" Mana gasped.

Minerva was soon flung into a building wall, growling angrily as she got free and Saya flying at her at incredible speeds. She put up her territory, and Saya simply smirked as she swung Asmodeus, setting the building ablaze as she hit her territory hard.

"You won't get the best of me! Now, try my Galahad!" Minerva called out as she summoned a chainsaw like sword and began thrusting at Saya, but she just laughed as she let the sword stab her and just regenerated each time. "Don't you dare mock me!"

Minerva jumped back and readied her sword again, making Saya laugh a bit.

"Oh, so you're allowed to mock me? Well then... how about I reap instead of mock? LABRYS!" Saya shouted, swinging Asmodeus back and then quickly forward, the serrated edges of the blade shifting and the axe bending back 90 degrees to take the shape of a scythe.

Minerva screamed as she swung the Galahad sword at Saya, but [Phoenix] simply shifting to dodge her before quickly zooming behind and aiming her scythe.

"Reap them to ashes, Asmodeus!" Saya screamed, swinging the scythe down.

Minerva swings to counter... but her sword shatters as the scythe's quick speed cuts through it.
Minerva stared in anger before shouting and attacking the Tathlum to the destroyed blade.

"Alright, let's see how you like this!" Minerva screamed as she formed a pole and formed a few territories, aiming at them like a billiards shot. "EAT THIS!"

Minerva shoots them and they fly out at Saya like billiards, Saya quickly dodged them before she noticed them turn back to make a return trip.

"Heat seekers huh? Oh the irony, but the bigger they are... the harder they hit back!" Saya declared, her blue eyes glowing dangerously as she spun Asmodeus. "Asmodeus... VAJRA!"

Asmodeus reverted to its normal axe shape before shifting between what was the process Camael used to become Megiddo. However, it stopped halfway and the axe blades reformed from the sides. Plasma poured out around the blades and then additional plating appeared as Asmodeus turned into a hammer.

"Now if you wanna play billiards, then I'll just make it a game of break the piñata!" Saya cackled, swinging back, having to deal with the shift of weight before swinging forward and smashing into the territories. Saya smirked as she broke each one to Minerva's surprise, the shards flying by and cutting into her.

"Now for the finale. Do it Asmodeus, do it now... GUNGNIR!" Saya shouted, giving a mighty yell as she infused lightning into it and the plasma breaks off, the blades retracting as Asmodeus becomes the true inverse counterpart to the Megiddo. Soon an additional eight slots open up and charge.

"If she doesn't stop this then... everything will be destroyed, and Kotori will disappear." Mana breathed, struggling to move from the lack of energy and her own wounds. "Come on... move. MOVE!"

Saya charges fire in the small slots while lightning gathered in the main cannon.

"FIRE!" Saya screamed, blasting all nine beams, all of which congregated into a giant plasma shot. Minerva saw it coming and chuckled.

"Oh please, I just need to-"

Minerva had tried to deploy her territory but saw it failed as the beams neared.

"What the hell.-" Minerva began, soon being slammed by the full force of the beam. The building she hit shattered like glass, and she fell to the ground, landing on the newly formed bed of glass with only her CR-Unit keeping it from cutting her skin.

"My territory didn't deploy, what did you do!? You cheated somehow didn't you coward!"

"Wow, a whiny floozy. I didn't cheat at all. The electrical discharge was just so strong that your territory couldn't work when you chose to deploy it after it got so close to you. So take that you stupid bimbo!" Saya smirked, and Minerva growled at her. Saya soon flew over and prepared to fire again. "Now just cease to exist and die!"

At that moment, Mana finally gained the strength to rush forward and decked Saya in the face. The Flame Spirit staggered a bit from the force, soon glaring at her as she held her swollen cheek. Unfortunately, unlike other wounds, even as [Phoenix] her healing powers didn't work on blunt strikes.

"Damn you, getting in my way again!" Saya declared, preparing to fire at her instead, only for Tohka
to slash her Demon King apart as she swung from above. Saya growled and dispelled the broken Asmodeus before reforming it in its normal form.

"So, you're gonna get in my way too? Fine then, I'll just have to destroy you all! I will not let myself be stopped by all of you!"

"Bring it on!" Tohka exclaimed, jumping at her.

The two clash before flying into the air, as they did, Saya and Tohka bounced away from each other before Origami dashed behind and aimed Metatron at her. Saya turned to see a swarm of light beams fire and hit her.

"Now! Artelif - Crown Cannon" Origami shouted, the pillars taking on a circular formation and pointing their tips in the same direction, shooting out a beam of pure shining light. Saya held up Asmodeus to shield herself from it, being pushed back a bit.

"Yoshino!" Yoshinon said, making a determined face.

"R-Right!" Yoshino nodded, soon jumping off Zadkiel and flipping in midair before bopping Yoshinon on her forehead. A blue sphere surrounding her before going dark blue and switching her to her Inverse Form. Zadkiel shifting into Astaroth in response. "Good luck Yoshinon."

"You got it, go Astaroth!" Yoshino yelled.

Astaroth roared as a powerful blast of ice spewed from its mouth and struck Saya back. The Inverse Flame Spirit grunted as she looked at all three of them, holding Asmodeus tightly while her regeneration powers healed the few wounds she had received.

"I don't have time to screw around with all of you!" Saya seethed, electricity crackling around her body.

"SANDALPHON!" Tohka shouted as she swung a powerful energy wave.

"Gather to me, Mal'akh - Heavenly Wings!" Origami declared, the pillars taking on a wing-like formation and folding the pillars behind her back and enhancing her speed as she zoomed overhead and her pillars spread apart and regather in a circle formation spinning above her, charging light beams again. "Go, Shemesh - The Sun!"

The beams fire down at Saya.

"Hraesvelgr!" Yoshino yelled, and Astaroth's armor split apart and formed the Hraesvelgr puppets as she directed them towards Saya. Soon Astaroth charged a water blast and fired it at the Flame Spirit.

"Back... OFF!" Saya screamed, swinging around. "ASMODEUS!"

Asmodeus sparks off lightning around her, Tohka barely made it away while Origami and Yoshinon both scream as it hit, the latter taking it wore due to Astaroth firing off a current of water. Tohka gasped as they both crashed onto a building top, and she zoomed towards Saya before clashing her Angel with her Demon King again.

"Come on Saya, you have to stop this! Give that body back to Kotori! There's no point in taking it from her!" Tohka screamed.

"You don't know what you're talking about!" Saya screamed back.
"Yes I do! I nearly died from the same wizard, and from someone who's a friend to me now! Shido saved me though!" Tohka replied, her face getting more determined.

"And now you're taking someone he sees as a sister from him, just like they took your friend! Do you really wanna put him through that kind of pain because it's not fair! If you take Kotori's life away, then you're being selfish! Do you really want to be the same as the one who killed you!?"

Saya's eyes flashed, and then she screams as she slams one of her hands onto Tohka, making the purple haired Spirit scream as she was burned and electrocuted simultaneously. The Inverse Flame Spirit soon swung Camael down and knocked her towards the others, unaware one of her ribbons had been shredded by her actions.

"Shut up... SHUT UP!" Saya screamed, soon readying Asmodeus again as the three weakly got back up. As she was about to swing down at them, Shido suddenly appeared holding a copy of Sandalphon.

"You'll have to go through me first!" Shido exclaimed, looking at Saya directly. "Kotori! Don't worry, we're coming to save you!"

"...I know you will, I trust you big bro!" Kotori said through Saya, shocking the latter before her control came back. Saya gritted her teeth as she readied Asmodeus again and screamed before rushing at the quartet.

Mana shouted as she flew at Minerva, slashing Murakumo's blades at the insane wizard as she formed a territory to defend against her blows. Mana screamed as she kept slashing aiming her blasts to do more damage.

"You think you can do anything to me? Hah! You're a bigger idiot then I thought then!" Minerva cackled, soon having the Manticore's tail rush out and cut her other side. Mana screamed as she fell down, Minerva grabbed Mana by her hair and smashed her face into a wall. "As if a little brat like you could take me out!"

Minerva smashed Mana's face into the again and again, and Mana nearly felt herself losing consciousness.

"I... can't fall here, I..." Mana gasped out.

"Too bad... you just did!" Minerva cackled, soon stabbing the Manticore's tail through her, Mana gasped as it did and she fell to the ground. Coughing as she felt herself bleeding from her lower abdomen's center. "Now... how many more wounds can you handle before I kill you? Let's find out."

Minerva takes a bloodied knife from the side of Manticore's tail and held it up over Mana, the young wizard beginning to slowly black out.

---

Mana watched members of the AST during their training, the time being only shortly after she, her brother, Kotori and Tohka had signed up with Ratatoskr. Mikie was in her Sphinx uniform as she swiped her hands and legs at a reinforced punching bag. Sending it back slightly as she did, the lock being the only reason it didn't go flying.

"She's amazing." Mana noted, unable to believe how much power she had.

"Hey Mana, you mind giving me a hand?" Katie asked, getting Mana's attention as she was handed
a heavy ball, and Katie laid on the ground. "Just lightly toss it at me."

"Oh, OK." Mana nodded.

She tossed it Katie, who caught it slightly as it impacted on her chest. Surprising Mana how resilient she was, the ball was so heavy and yet in a position like this she barely felt the weight drop on her. Mana sighed a bit at the sight, getting Ryouko's attention.

' Hmm... ' The AST captain took a good look at her, soon slightly widened her eyes as she noticed something. ' I think I know what to do. '

A while later as she saw some of the training equipment, she heard something as Ryouko walked behind her, holding two strike pads in her hands.

"Try kicking these, you'll see something eventually. " Ryouko asked, getting Mana's attention as her eyes widened at what Ryouko was implying.

Mana was soon seen exercising heavily on a treadmill, running faster than she ever had before and feeling her lungs on fire.

"Don't slow down, keep going. You can do it! " Ryouko cheered, making Mana look before pushing herself a bit further. After a few more minutes she stopped, and soon found herself puking in a bucket from the stress. She panted a bit, soon getting a water bottle from Ryouko.

"Here, rinse your mouth with this."

Mana takes it and does so, soon wiping her forehead. She took a look at the AST captain.

"Why did you decide to train me? " Mana wondered. " I'm not that good at sports, I'm not the smartest. All I really seem to have is a bunch of energy. Everyone else here is so..."

"Let's get you stretched out, I'll tell you more as you do. " Ryouko answered. Soon Mana sat down, feeling Ryouko stretch out her body and wincing at some points where she wasn't sure she even could stretch as Ryouko had made her.

"When I was around your age and joined the AST, I was small and powerless. It constantly frustrated me to no end. There were times I'd get so full of injuries it felt like I just wanted to throw in the towel and just sleep forever. At the time, Vice-Commander Kannazuki was the captain instead of me."

Ryouko looked at a picture of the younger AST, most of its members now higher Ratatoskr staff or wizards in the other AST branches around the world. She and Kannazuki were both in the picture alongside Reine.

"By the time I was 15 however, I noticed Kannazuki's methods of training had an effect on me. Then I realized... I was the reason I was being held back. I felt I couldn't grow, and not just the fact I waited, but didn't try that I never got that far. However, I polished on techniques and theories on what to do, how to help future member's talents grow and properly form. As well as spot them."

Mana gasped.

"Wait, are you saying... " Mana asked, wondering if she had just implied what she thought.

"The day I was 18, Kannazuki told me I would be captain upon my promotion. I've trained anyone
who chose to join the AST since. I can see something in you that's different, you seem frail on the
outside, but I can see there's a hidden steel within your spirit." Ryouko continued, helping Mana stretch out further.

"Right now, your body simply needs to learn these technique and theories I've begun training you in.
If you let that potential flourish, I know it, you'll fight by your brother's side and protect him. Be he
faces a Human, or a Spirit."

Mana's eyes shake in surprise.

"...Give me all you have, no matter how brutal the training!" Mana demanded, making Ryouko
smirk a bit.

Mana was seen going through some training like weight lifting, shadow boxing, fighting a moving
dummy while she was forced to use a specific fighting style, and even some heavy exercises. She
puked a few times during it, and even eventually blacked out.

*splash!*

Mana gasped as she felt some water on her, waking her up. She saw Ryouko holding a water bottle
in her hands.

"Come on Mana, you wanna stand by him, right?" Ryouko questioned, making Mana give a
determined face as she managed to get herself back on her feet. "That's it girl, let's keep going!"

Mana began moving left and right quickly as she began striking a punching bag hard, the members
of the AST were all watching in surprise as Ryouko keeps an eye on how many trikes while holding
a stop watch.

"Stop!" Ryouko shouted, making Mana strike her final punch as she looks at her. "It took you 19
seconds to 80 strikes, nice job. I think it's time we get you a CR-Unit. Congrats Mana, you're a
Wizard now."

Mana smiled a bit as she panted.

After a bit, Reine walks to her and hands her the Murakumo, making her stare at it.

"This is my CR-Unit?" Mana asked, looking at Reine.

"Yes, we call it the Murakumo." Reine answered, getting Mana's attention.

"Murakumo? Like the Ama-no-Murakumo-no-Tsurugi, the blade Susanoo gained from Orochi?"
Mana asked. "Why give it such a name?"

"That sword was gained from the result of Susanoo saving the remaining daughter of a family from
a monster. You too will protect the Spirits and your brother from monsters." Reine answered,
smiling as Mana stared at her. "Use it well. It has the ability to switch between blasters and swords,
but I think you can use it to its fullest."

"I will, I promise!" Mana exclaimed.

Soon Mana set up the Murakumo and soon manifested it for the first time, looking at it. Soon she
looks at the others and gets ready to begin the next step of her training.
"...No, this isn't the end!" Mana suddenly shouted before flinging her fist at Minerva's face, knocking her back. The scarred wizard gasped as Mana managed to get back up despite her injuries. Minerva growled.

"I'll kill you!" Minerva growled, rushing at Mana.

At that moment, Mana motioned her body a certain way as Murakumo's swords attached to her arms, and as she rushed past her... she suddenly made Minerva gasp. Minerva soon felt herself cut in the arm and her dagger flying to the side as she turned backed, soon seeing the silhouette of a girl with long blonde hair worn in a semi-braid, light skin and blue eyes.

That girl? She was the DEM's second most powerful Wizard, the one known as Adeptus 2, she was...

"Artemisia!" Minerva growled, ignoring the bleeding she was facing in her arm. "To think I'd see you through her, I'm really gonna kill you now! Manticore, assume battle mode!"

Manticore dug into Minerva's skin, causing veins to form as it enhanced her strength and soon unlocked a compartment holding two swords.

"Let's see how you do now against the cursed sword, Muramasa!" Minerva said, her veins pulsating even more now. She rushed at Mana who deployed her territory, and Mana gasped as it began to crack, and she felt her leg nearly collapse. "See that? You're too weak, and now you'll die for it!"

Minerva thrust her swords forward to shatter Mana's barrier, Mana was struck hard, and her eyes were shadowed as she began to fall back. Minerva cackled as she prepared for a final swing, Shido noticing this.

"MANA!"

'Big brother... you're fighting with all you have. No matter what, so will I, so I will not lose!' Mana thought, suddenly shouting as she managed to parry and counter Minerva. The insane wizard surprised by this act. "For everyone that believes in me!"

Mana screamed, and suddenly her eyes turned gold, her pupils whitening a bit as the Murakumo begins to glow as it reacts to this. Shido's eyes widen at the sight... those were the same eyes he gained after grabbing Sandalphon the first time.

"Mana... has spirit powers!?!" Shido breathed, seeing Mana's wounds slowly heal. Minerva's eyes widened in shock.

"No! I won't let you insult me like this, so prepare to die!" Minerva screamed, rushing at Mana. Mana on the other hand motioned herself before kicking off and punching her in the face, knocking the insane wizard back. "What!?"

"Time to end this, your fight is done!" Mana yelled, shouting as she rushed forward fast and then slashing at Minerva.

Minerva was pushed back as the Manticore's tail was slashed off, meanwhile behind her, Mana slid to a stop before using the same power she was emitting to instantly rush the other way and strike again. Mana began to do this repeatedly, damaging the Manticore CR-Unit further and further.

"No!" Minerva shouted as Mana neared her one last time.

With a powerful scream, Mana swung down one of Murakumo's blades... and it cut across Minerva's
left eye, making her scream in pain as now both sides of her face had her eyelids forever marked by a blade slash.

"You... you! I hope your happy, the person who gave me my first scar is my most hated person. Now I hate you as much as I hate her!" Minerva screamed, soon using a Territory like a smoke bomb, blinding Mana who coughed as she flew off. "Next time we meet, I'll murder you beyond recognition!"

Mana pants as she saw her fly off, and soon turned to the battle on the rooftop as she noticed the others all on fumes except for Shido who was having trouble to hurt Saya in the first place. Saya smirked as she neared him.

"With you out of the way, keeping this body will be-" Saya suddenly felt a pain go off in her head, holding it. "Wait, what's this?"

Saya felt her head, and panted as she held it before shaking it off.

"Forget that! It's time I finally end this, now it's time you-"

"KOTORI!"

Saya growled as she looked at Mana who slowly flew up to face her, clenching her fist until she drew blood, she glared at the wizard.

"Or should I call you Saya now? The girl you're holding onto, that's my sister. I'm making you give her back!" Mana declared, making Saya grow angrily!

[Master, let me murder her-]

"No, she's pissed me off too much. I'm doing this myself!" Saya said, dispelling her Demon King and rushing at her, knocking Mana into the ground. Before they hit, Mana stomped into it and held her back.

"Alright, if that's how you want it, then let's fight with nothing but our fists!" Mana exclaimed as she dispelled her swords and blasters, readying her fists. "You can't heal from blunt blows, right? Then prove you can claim that body with your fist instead of your words!"

"...Alright, if that's the way you want it then I'll make you eat my fist!" Saya replied.

The others all watch as they slowly descend, barely supporting each other.

"Do your best... Mana." Yoshinon replied.

"Mana..." Shido breathed, wishing her luck.

"P-Please... don't give up." Origami nervously replied, hoping Kotori would come back.

"You can do it, don't lose!" Tohka exclaimed.

Mana and Saya both rush forward, both swinging a fist at each other before feeling them smash into each other's faces, they both stagger before Saya kicks off the ground and smashed two right hooks and another left hook at her. Mana gasps and coughs out some blade before blocking her next strike and thrusting her fist directly into Saya's stomach.

'This girl... why won't she fall?' Saya mentally breathed, holding onto her stomach as she rushed forward can, this time launching a barrage of punches. Mana blocked them as they storm onto her
'Kotori... I'll never forget the kindness you gave me!' Mana thought, giving Saya an uppercut to the chin.

_The scene of a young Kotori hugging Mana after her family chose to take Shido and Mana in flashes by her, reminding Mana how she began smiling again after losing their memories._

"Let's always be friends Mana!" Kotori smiled, making Mana tear up a bit.

"No, let's be sisters." Mana replied, and Kotori smiles brighter as they make a pinkie promise. The two giggling together.

Saya's eyes widen as she sees and hears this memory after the uppercut strikes her.

"This is..." Saya whispered.

Soon more memories flash through Saya's head, all showing Shido, Mana and Kotori together in some ways through them. Most of all... the memory of the fire that she caused and made Kotori suffer over. She mentally gasped.

---

_Flashback Start_

Saya was in her school's Home Economics class, wearing the cooking uniform as she backed up to turn... only to bump into someone who dropped all of the veggies she had in her strainer.

"Oh no!" The girl panicked, beginning to pick them up. Saya saw her and began helping her.

"Huh?"

"Sorry for being a klutz there, should have turned before I backed up." Saya replied, soon noticing one of her tomatoes. "Wow, these tomatoes look great. It's so fresh and red."

"Oh, well... that's because I grew that one myself." The girl blushed, Saya looked at _ in surprise. "My family has a garden and I like tending to it when I can. Oh, forgive my manners, my name is _, what's yours?"

"I'm Saya, Saya Yamada." Saya replied.

---

_END Flashback_

'She's... fighting for her friend. No, for her sister, just like me and...' Saya thought, suddenly gasping as she realized something. If she was dead, then wouldn't that mean Ellen had... 'No, am I already too late? How long has it been? I... I...'

As Mana stopped to breathe, she and everyone else noticed Saya crying using Kotori's tears, no longer moving.

"She's... already dead!" Saya sobbed, soon feeling her head in pain. "My... my head..."

Saya looks at herself, her vision blurring.

"Of course, if I'm already dead, then the fact I've even been here. I'm just a ghost, and ghosts... eventually get put to rest." Saya cried more, soon just standing there. "You, end it. End this fight... if my friend is already dead, then I'd rather move on and join her."
"Saya..." Mana said, tearing up before closing her eyes and nodded.

With one last shout... she rushed forward and punched Saya hard, making her blue eyes widen before they turned lifeless. Dark red spirit power surrounded her before becoming red, and Saya fell as her eyes reverted to red, and Mana caught her in her arms as Kotori groaned.

"...M-Mana?" Kotori asked, looking at her and then the others as they cried happily. "I'm... I'm back. This is real, I'm... really still here!"

Soon everyone gave Kotori a group hug, crying happily as they got her back.

[I wish I had arms to actually hug you with. Shido, you better hug her twice as hard for me!]

Shido nods, and Kotori soon cries happily with her.

"You've got great people in your life... Kotori Itsuka." Saya answered, getting everyone's attention. "Don't worry, I'm not gonna try anything anymore... I'll just stay here... until the day my consciousness finally fades away."

"...Saya, why did you want to take Kotori's body as your own so much?" Shido asked.

"...Because I couldn't accept I was dead, not while my friend could still be out there." Saya answered, her voice shaky. "But if I was killed... then why would she have been spared. She asked me to run and I just got myself murdered!"

"Your friend was a Spirit too? Which one, and when did you die?" Tohka wondered.

"I think... dang it, I can't fully recognize things due to Kotori and I having different memories- Oh wait... Nightmare, yes! She was the Spirit code named Nightmare!" Saya replied, and then began to think. "My death was... the date I don't remember, but it was 10 years ago."

"Wait a second, 10?" Maria repeated, soon checking her data. "Saya... you're friend, she's still alive!"

"What!?" Saya gasped.

"The last time a Nightmare was killed was 15 years ago, but if you were killed over 10... then she's still alive. You can at least tell her goodbye before you disappear Saya!" Maria replied, and Saya's voice shook.

"No way, so...'s still here?" Saya choked out, soon sobbing heavily. "She... she escaped, she made it out. Kotori, please... for now, let me stay... just long enough I can talk to her one last time before I fade away."

Kotori who had been shedding Saya's tear for her nods.

"Thank you, now... for the time being, let me sleep." Saya quietly said, soon having her consciousness rest until the day she'd see _ again.

"I promise Saya, you will see her again." Kotori sniffled, wiping her eyes. "Shido... it's time."

"Huh?" Shido wondered, Kotori gives her a blank stare and points at her lips. "...O-Oh! Sorry, the moment threw me off!"

The other girls, including Mana out of respect, all looked away and blushed as Shido kissed Kotori. His eyes were closed so he didn't notice Kotori's red face during the process. After it was done, he quickly took out a spare shirt and pulled it over Kotori before her Astral Dress vanished and her
remaining ribbon fell into her hands.

"...My ribbon." Kotori frowned a bit, recalling how Saya's one attack on Tohka shredded the other.

"Hey, don't cry Kotori, we can always get you a-

Suddenly a crash happens nearby, surprising everyone as some kind of metal pod dropped into view. Soon it opened up and revealed itself as a robot with three snaked head sands 5 optical sensors with a single tail that had a drill for a tip. Minerva's voice cackles from a protected broadcast screen on its chest.

"Get ready, everything for you will end with this one little machine!" Minerva's voice echoed, making the whole group stare at it in anger. "Because this machine is known as..."

"Just shut up already!" Tohka shouted, slashing Sandalphon down.

A purple wave of spirit energy slashed through the machine's heads, and everyone thought that was it... until the beheaded machine's cut off craniums melted and the amputated necks regrew them alongside two new heads each, giving it 9.

"What!?" Tohka gasped, now terrified.

"You cut off a head, and two more regrew alongside it from the neck..." Maria breathed, suddenly realizing the machine's basis. The said machine's nine heads roared as they launched at the group and Minerva's cackles are heard from it.

"...That's right little AI, prepare to face the might of the Hydra!"

Saya's rage been quelled, learned her best friend is still out there, and Kotori's powers have finally been sealed. However... now the group must fight the DEM machine weapon Hydra, but how will they fight a machine that grows stronger if you destroy any of its heads? Hercules knew how to beat it as part of his many labors, but Hercules isn't here to help them this time...

Poor Saya though, her consciousness may have managed to avoid death, but it won't matter much longer. Despite how her soul still lives, without her body she can't support and eventually she'll fade away. The only thing that's going to help her find peace is to see her best friend one last time before she finally fades away and ascends for good.

And there's how Mana shined, like Shido she has spirit powers, but not in the same manner. Since she's a girl she's able to simply manifest them as strength rather than a sealing ability that lets her empower herself like her older brother. There is a downside though, she can't use them unless she's wearing the Murakumo. Good news is now she's officially as strong as her canon self, and she didn't need to reduce her lifespan.

Now there's only one chapter left in the Kotori arc, so get ready as Shido reveals a new trick, Kotori finally resolves things with herself, and we get a certain Spirit we all know and love as guest as we finally start bringing Season 1 to an end with the Kurumi arc! Get ready, if you thought Kotori's arc getting four chapters is big... the Kurumi's arc I can guarantee has such a long script, that it will be the biggest arc yet!

I hope you all enjoyed this chapter everyone. Stay tuned, and everyone stay awesome.
Also, now that the spoiler of Mana's spirit powers have been revealed, here's her data sheet! I had this one at the end notes because had I placed it at the top... well, you would have known what this chapter would have revealed.

- Mana Takamiya, Spirit Powered State -

Angel: None

- Powers: Mana doesn't gain any powers like her brother does, but as the Murakumo needs to be equipped in order for Mana to draw on her Spirit Mana, the CR-Unit's powers are enhanced to the point she can attack and defend just like a Spirit can.

Risk Factors: SS

Spacequake: None

Spirit's Astral Dress: None

Angel Rank: None

Strength: 180

Consistency: 110

Spiritual Power: 101

Agility: 210

Intelligence: 135

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 72%

Origami - 47%

Yoshino - 30%

Kotori - 61%
Here we are, the final chapter of the Kotori arc! Everyone's about to fight against the DEM weapon Hydra that Minerva's controlling, and they have to somehow figure out how to kill it when chopping off a head just gives it two more. Especially since unlike Nidhoggr, the Hydra will intentionally take attacks that will wreck its heads just to strengthen itself.

And best of all, Shido's about to reveal a new technique that Mio learns he has due to a new memory she's regained from Kotori being sealed, it'll be a while before it actually reaches Mio's head, so you won't be seeing it instantly. This technique is like his Spirit Ascension, based off something he can do in canon but in a different form. It'll make sense once you actually see it, and once you do... minds will blow! *makes explosion sound*

Since we'll be showing Shido's new ability, time for me to give you all new information about Shido's current level of power. I honestly should have done this before now. There will also be other Spirit data sheets, but I think I'll wait until "Date A Re:Live - Encore" before I share them since most are just to mention some state changes I've given each Spirit in the story.

I also realized I forgot to add Mana's data sheet last chapter, so if you wanna see them, go back and check above the end notes. Don't let the Risk Factor fool you though, especially since I think we all remember Kotori proved that alone means nothing when she was able to defeat Kurumi who was two ranks higher than she was.

-Shido Takamiya, Spirit Ascension State-

Angel: None

- Powers: Spirit Ascension - Shido can embed the Spirit Mana of one Spirit he's sealed into his body to use their power and Angel, but only if the strength of their bond has reached at least 50%. Unfortunately, Shido does not gain every Spirit power, most notably their shared ability of flight or their self-forming mana barrier, requiring him to improvise or have one of his harem aid him directly. This ability was named by Tohka who chose it due to how it was essentially using the Spirits' powers to ascend past his usual limitations.

- Powers: Sealing - If Shido can make a Spirit fall in love with him, he can kiss them to permanently seal their powers. If the Spirits need to use their powers again they can call them back, this doesn't affect Shido's Spirit Ascension since it's rank and power are already set. According to Reine, a Spirit's bond level is at least 20% if Shido meets the criteria to seal them.

Risk Factors: AAA

Spacequake: None

Spirit's Astral Dress: None

Angel Rank: Varies

Strength: 110
Chapter 13, S1: Kotori Possessed, Part 4

Kotori was seen crying as she ran through the streets of Tenguu City, her hands occasionally as she wiped her tears and didn't even check where she was running towards anymore. She had been with her big brother and her sister and had wanted to tell her brother something, but then she got cold feet and then... she ended up tripping and falling into a bowl of bread dough. No one laughed, but it was the fact her brother had seen it happy that made her run off crying.

As she kept running, she eventually ended up running into someone and the force knocked her onto her back.

"Owie!" Kotori cried, sniffling before she opened her eyes and saw who she ran into. However, that was the strange part, the one she ran into was... there, yet not there? To be exact, she was looking at a clear silhouette of a young child whose appearance seemed to be made invisible by some kind of mosaic. "Huh?"

"(Yeah, that hurt a bit.)" Phantom groaned, soon noticing her. Realizing they were out in the open, she helped Kotori up and soon dragged her into the nearest alley way.

"W-Whoa! Hey!" Kotori shouted, soon feeling Phantom let go of her arm.

"(My apologies, but I don't think people are gonna think your sane if they saw you talking to someone they don't realize is invisible.)" Phantom sweat dropped, soon wiping some tears from Kotori's eyes. "(You're crying, did I hurt you that badly from the crash?)"

Kotori sniffles a bit and wipes more of the tears she was still shedding.

"No... I'm just a weak cry baby, I embarrassed myself in front of my big brother." Kotori replied, hiccupping a bit from her crying. "I... I want to be strong! Strong enough that I can tell him something, but... I'm not! I'll never be."

"(You have a wish? What is it, what do you want him to know?)" Phantom wondered, Kotori sniffled and soon got closer to whisper it. Phantom listened and soon her eyes widened. "(W-what!? He's your brother though, isn't that-)"

"We're... not actually siblings." Kotori quickly replied, making Phantom sigh in relief.

"(Oh, so you're adoptive siblings then?)" Phantom stated, but Kotori shook her head again. "(Eh? But then how are... Ooh, I get it. You just call him big brother because he's like a brother to you. I guess that really makes sense.)"

Phantom saw her continue her sniffling, and she thought for a bit. This sweet little girl was crying and she had a way to help her. Yet... was it worth the risk? She couldn't bear the thought of sending a young girl to her death.

"Big brother Shido..." Kotori sniffled, suddenly causing Phantom's eyes to widen. Did she just say
Shido? After hearing that, she made her decision and hoped her faith would be right this time.

"(Tell me, what if I told you that I could help you become strong?)" Phantom asked, making Kotori stop crying at look at her. Soon she pulls out the three Sephira Crystals she currently had, showing a purple, red and white gem before her.

"(These are Sephira Crystals, for the past 30 years I've been keeping them safe from a dangerous person. I've asked many to protect them since the power responds to their will, desires and wishes. If you can bond to one of these crystals, your wish may come true.)"

"R-really?" Kotori sniffled, and Phantom nodded. Kotori nodded but Phantom quickly pulled the crystals away.

"(Whoa! Slow down, there is a downside you need to know.)" Phantom continued, soon getting a somber tone to her voice. "(Once you accept, I can't change you back. You won't be a normal human ever again, and there will be people who'll come after you.)"

"What?" Kotori gasped, suddenly afraid.

"(You'll be hunted for the power you were given, but... I think your brother might already be a target despite he doesn't have this same power. So maybe you'll already be a target.)" Phantom continued, putting a hand on her shoulder.

"(When I heard you say his name, I thought to myself that maybe our meeting was more than just coincidence. If your brother is targeted, then I feel it's only right I give you the power to protect him. The choice is yours, do you accept or not?)"

Kotori looked at Phantom, and then thought what she said... and soon held out her hand.

"(So, you're sure? Alright, let's see if you bond with any of the crystals.)" Phantom held them near and saw Camael react to her. "(Really? This passion of yours is strong, reminds me of your predecessor Saya Yamada, I think she'll be happy knowing you'll inherit her will. Touch the red crystal and accept the power of a Spirit.)"

Kotori touches the crystal, and her pupils widen as she feels a powerful fire ignite inside her heart.

Phantom looked around after locking away Origami's powers while carrying the unconscious girl in her arms, disguising herself as a police officer as she walked into the rescue zone for the survivors. When she did, she went near the medics.

"I found her near a fire, she was with two bodies I didn't recognize that I think were her parents. She's suffering some minor burns but get her checked for possible smoke inhalation immediately!" Phantom said while using a male voice.

"Understood!" The medic said, whistling for some aid as began checking Origami's health. Phantom looked around and noticed Shido and Mana in the rescue zone and gasped.

'(Shido, Mana! It really is them!)' Phantom thought, as much as she wanted to say what she wanted most, she couldn't and had to remember her current task. "Hey you two, are your parents anywhere? You seem alone."

"Our guardians are out of town, but our friend, our sister... she's still out in the fire! Please, she's a red-haired girl about my age named Kotori! Save her." Mana cried, gripping Phantom's leg tightly.
"Don't worry, I'll go find her. Just stay here." Phantom nodded, Mana sniffled and nodded as Phantom rushed back out. Once she did she entered an ally and resumed her mosaic cover before she went back to Kotori's location. "(Kotori!)

Kotori turned to look as Phantom appeared inside the building.

"(I found them, they're at the rescue zone.)" Phantom replied, soon rubbing her head to calm her. "(I'll get you over there now, so don't-)

Suddenly Phantom saw Kotori scream as her eyes flashed blue, and she looked to be in pain. She suddenly gasped.

'Blue eyes? The last Camael wielder had those... no way, is that Saya!?)' Phantom thought, sweating. 'This has never happened before, but if she takes over then Kotori might... no, I won't let it. It's better she doesn't have her powers for now anyways."

Phantom tapped Kotori's head, and suddenly her Astral Dress disappears as her eyes revert to what they were before the fire spread. Kotori looked at herself as Phantom shielded them and walked out of the fire.

"(Kotori, there's some other personality in you right now. I don't know how it happened but... for the sake of keeping your powers in check for now and holding that personality back I've locked your powers away.)" Phantom explained, holding her close as Kotori watches and listens. Phantom shifts into a male fire fighter to remove suspicion.

"It won't last forever, and one day your powers and that personality will return. I just hope when it does, the person I believe can save you will be there, so... be strong Kotori, don't let that personality take your life away from you. Become strong like this, because... being strong doesn't always mean to be powerful."

Kotori teared up slightly, and soon they reach the rescue center.

"Hey! A police officer told me this girl has a brother and sister here, anyone recognize her!?" Phantom called out, Shido and Mana both turned to look and began running at her. "There you two are. Here you go, there they are."

Kotori was placed on the ground, a medic handed her a blanket as she began crying, Shido and Mana both hugged her before Phantom soon walked away and taking her noise form again, soon used her powers to dispel the fire.

Kotori gasped as she regained her focus after seeing her memories flash before her eyes. Minerva cackles as the Hydra launches at the group, Yoshinon jumps ahead and motions her fingers.

"Hraesvelgrs, defend us!" Yoshinon shouted, the puppets all gathering to make a shield before most of them shattered from the Hydra's nine heads chomping down on them.

"Maria, this thing's gotta be like the beast it's based on. Search up what it can do!"

"Oh, right!" Maria said, about to link to Fraxinus' computer.

"I don't think so." Minerva smirked.

The Hydra's tail drill spins before it rattles it, right as Maria was about to get the info. She suddenly found herself disconnected as she's given a no connection signal.
"What!? Oh no, that damn machine just created a jamming field! I can't connect to Fraxinus' computers, I can't even search the internet via Shido's phone now!" Maria panicked, making everyone gasp while Minerva cackled.

"...Wait, I've read about the Hydra before! I think I know how it was beaten. I just need some time, can you guys buy me some?" Origami declared, surprising Minerva.

"All you need, let's go everyone!" Shido exclaimed, Mana and all the Spirits nodded. Kotori stared at herself, and soon tightened her fist.

"I... I'll fight too!" Kotori shouted, soon raising her hand. "Elohim Gibor!"

Kotori manages to call her Astral Dress, standing alongside the others. Shido stares before smiling and nods.

"Then allow me to return the favor. Time for a new Ascent." Shido smiled, soon breathing as he focused. "I call to the power welling deep beyond my heart, now break the dimensional bonds before me... and let the spiritual force sleeping within be seen! Now come, Camael!"

Shido's hair and eyes turned red, and he felt a strong flare burn out as he throws his hand up to grab a flame that becomes a copy of Camael. He swings it in midair before swinging its pole end to the ground.

"Let's go!" Tohka yelled, rushing ahead at the Hydra and dodging through its heads. "If we don't strike the heads, then we don't have to worry about making it grow anymore! Take this!"

Tohka slashed her sword at the Hydra's tail, but one of the heads simply moves in the way and gets cut to her surprise. Soon the Hydra's total head count grew to 11.

"OK, maybe we should avoid attacks that can actually amputate the heads!" Tohka panicked, dodging as the heads all swarm at her. "Worst time to have a sword!"

Tohka held out a finger and charged a few mana shots, striking the heads but avoiding cutting anymore off.

"Yoshinon!" Tohka called out.

"You got it, freeze that meany snake Astaroth!" Yoshino ordered, making Astaroth blast out a stream of ice. The Hydra curl their heads again, freezing all but one, the one that didn't then shattered the rest and soon the Hydra had a total of 31 heads.

"Hah! Try any attack, even if you don't, I can make the Hydra amputate itself!" Minerva cackled, the heads all fly out at the group and everyone dodges. Shido growls and soon slashes at the heads that tried to attack him.

"Don't care about if it grows any more heads! If we don't try something it'll cream us before we can beat it!" Shido shouted, the others looked and soon all agreed and got ready.

'Come on, think Origami! Think!' Origami thought as she floated high and had Metatron just blast at the heads, hoping they could cut off more heads faster than they grew back or at least that a head couldn't keep growing more until fully restored.

'Wait... I think I remember! The one who fought a Hydra in Greek myth was Hercules, the way that he beat it was... yeah, something that stopped the heads from re-growing. What was it though?'
Tohka rushed forward and spun, dodging all of Origami's light beams while cutting off many of the heads. Minerva cackled at their futile efforts.

"Try all you want! There'll be so many heads after your done that there'll be no way to attack anything but the heads after you're all finished!" Minerva cackled, the heads that were present all began to spew out poison mist at the group.

"MEGIDDO!" Kotori shouted, blasting out the beam of fire. The fire hits the poison and explodes afterwards, the Hydra is hit hard by it.

"MEGIDDO!" Shido screamed, blasting out another fire beam and striking the remaining poison and makes another explosion. Minerva scowls as while the Hydra survived, it's head regeneration was slowed down by the result.

"Origami, please tell us you've figured it out!" Mana called out, soon getting constricted by a few heads. "GET OFF ME!"

Mana screams as she used her blasters to loosen cut off neck of the constricting head, slashing at the others that grew out with her swords as they launched at her. Yoshinon aims Astaroth and blasts out an ice beam to let her escape.

"Thanks for the save!" Tohka smiled, making Yoshinon chuckle happily.

"Time for some chopped serpent!" Kotori yelled, spinning and cutting through some of the heads. The heads that grew back did so much slower than usual making Origami gasp as she noticed it.

"Kotori, you genius!" Origami shouted, getting the others' and even Minerva's attention. "In Greek myth, the hero Heracles defeated the Hydra by burn the stumps of the cut off heads to they couldn't regenerate it. Another depiction had one head immortal, the most important head. So...

Minerva's eyes widened, hoping Origami didn't say what she expected to next.

"The way to beat this Hydra is to cut off the main head and then burn the stump directly at its core center! That head is the one with a crest on it!" Origami declared, making Minerva's eyes widen. She found the beast's weakness.

"...So what? You already created too many heads for you to beat! It's over!" Minerva exclaimed, the Hydra's now 250+ heads all stretched out and showed themselves to the group. The main head was so while hidden in the mess that none of group saw it.

"Where the hell is it? I can't see the main head!" Kotori exclaimed, panicking a bit.

"We don't need to see it, we just need to cut our way through!" Shido shouted loudly, rushing forward. He began slashing and cutting every head in his way as he tried to reach the main head. Even more heads grew as he did.

"Come on guys, we gotta try it! Follow Shido's lead!" Mana ordered, everyone soon rushed at the heads and began attacking.

Tohka created slash waves from afar, with Origami swerving around a few as she moved and motioned Metatron's pillars to fire at the heads. Kotori rushed forward and shot through the heads like burning spears while Yoshinon had the remaining Hraesvelgrs all hit it with kamikaze attacks.

"Yeah! Give it hell guys, we're taking this thing down!" Mana screamed excitedly, as she went to slice another head, one suddenly chomped its mouth on her and constricting her, making her scream
as the others saw.

"MANA!" Tohka cried out, soon getting caught herself.

"Oh no, Tohk-Ah!"

Origami was caught next before the other heads swarmed and captured Yoshinon and Kotori, the former reverting back from her Inverse Form.

"Yoshino, I'm sorry..." Yoshinon said before passing out, her puppet body limping forward.

"Everyone!" Shido shouted, he screamed as he cut through even faster, soon finding the main head. "There it is, I can do this! I can save- Guah!"

Soon multiple heads wrapped around Shido and constricted him.

[Oh no, Shido!]

Minerva cackled again as each head and the necks around Shido bit down or constricted even stronger, making them all shout in pain.

"It's over you stupid boy, this is what you get for pretending to be the hero! While I squeeze the life out of you, I'll make you see each of your girlfriends and your sisters die by being chomped in two and every second of them being chewed up!" Minerva declared before laughing madly. "And it's all your fault!"

"I'm... sorry everyone, I wasn't... strong enough!" Shido choked out, feeling his lungs would pop any second.

"You're wrong!" Origami shouted, making Shido and Minerva look at her. "Don't scold Shido like you know anything about him. If you think this is all he has you're wrong!"

"How the hell are you even talking right now?" Minerva growled annoyed, making the Hydra bite down on her more. She screamed slightly but kept a strong face despite she was starting to cry.

"B-because... I know!" Origami choked out, gasping a bit. "Shido's fighting to save us and this world, even though he's... been hurt in the worst way possible. Even if he learns a horrid truth or... that what he fought for isn't here anymore. He doesn't take it out on the world, he believes... he can make a difference!"

"Origami!" Shido choked out.

"Shido! Don't fight for me, or for us! Right now... fight for the sake of your own wish! Because... because..." Origami choked, almost out of air. "...Because the man I fell in love with won't lose to such an enemy!"

"Origami... you still believe, even now. Thank you!" Shido choked out, soon making a determined face. Suddenly he feels something within him well up. "Wait, this is..."

[Shido! I felt it too, your bond with Origami... it finally hit 50%!]

"Then... let's try her power with my Spirit Ascension-"

[No! Don't Shido, I finally got it, new memories from you sealing Kotori's! Don't dispel Kotori's power from your body, keep it then summon Origami's spirit powers! Have them...}
"What? Overlay a Spirit Ascension... on top of another Spirit Ascension!?” Origami wheezed out, about to pass out. "Can... it really... work?"

"Yeah Shido, go for it!” Tohka shouted before coughing, starting to lose some air too. "Go for it, do a... yeah, let's call it a Double Spirit Ascension! Kick this tin can's sorry ass!"

"Origami, Tohka... everyone...” Shido choked out, soon making a determined face. "I will save you... I promise! So, here it goes!"

Minerva feels the hydra shake as Shido's aura begins to shake strongly.

"What the hell!?” Minerva exclaimed loudly, and soon Shido began to shout in response. His eyes shrinking as his stare became focused.

"This is for you everyone!” Shido shouted, gritting his teeth as he concentrated. "I call to a second power sleeping deep within my darkness, now break the dimensional limits before me... and form a new power beyond the horizon!"

Shido’s aura began to heat the necks that held him.

"METATRON, CAMAEL... UNITE!"

Suddenly a red and white sphere of spirit mana forms around him and burst apart, the force shattering the nearby heads, and freeing the others as they tumbled out and soon all turned to see Shido. He was still with red hair, but now the bottom part was white while his eyes were both Kotori's red and Origami's blue.

"That's the Double Spirit Ascension? It's... Beautiful!” Tohka breathed.

[Yes, it worked! You're even stronger now Shido! Now show this Hydra it's no better in scaled flesh or stained metal!]

Shido nodded.

"I feel like I'm burning up inside right now, but I will stop this evil machine!” Shido declared, turning to the main head.

"No... I won't let you, this changes nothing!” Minerva screamed with rage, smashing her hands against her side of the screen and cracking it slightly. "KILL HIM NOW HYDRA!"

The Hydra has all of its heads except the main one rush at Shido.

"Come to me, Camael! Metatron!” Shido ordered, Metatron's crown and pillars appear before Camael forms in his hands. He screams as he rushes forward, cutting through all the heads he could with newfound speed while the pillars shot every head nearby, nearing, or about to attack him.

"You're all alone Minerva, but this is the power we achieved together! Something a person like you who looks down and uses everyone lake disposable trash would never understand as long as you lived!”

Shido slams Camael down, and soon all but the main head was left. Shido rushed forward and cut into it, as the other heads rushed to attack Shido... Tohka and the others begin attacking them again.
"Go Shido!" Tohka exclaimed, and Shido did as he readied for the final blow.

"Angel... FUSION!" Shido screamed loudly, yelling at the top of his throat. Metatron's pillars all floated down and even the crown shifted its spot. "Now... combine with the Megiddo!"

Camael shifted into its Megiddo form, and soon the pillars attached to the sides and locked themselves in while the crown attached to the main part of the cannon. The others suddenly felt that as their cue to leave.

"Here it comes!" Maria stated from Mana's phone as they all flew off the Hydra's body.

"CORONA... BLASTER!" Shido shouted.

Shido smashed Metatron-Megiddo into the stump area of the main head, and soon bright white flames began to form and push the other heads away and halt the main head's regeneration as the pillars of Metatron do this as well.

"What? No, no! You can't do this to me!" Minerva screamed, drool flying out of her mouth from her range.

"Fire!" Shido yelled, unleashing the white flames into the nape of the Hydra's main neck, and everyone stared as suddenly the entire machine heated up and began a bright orange-yellow color as it finally began to overload.

"NOOOOO!" Minerva screamed before the Hydra exploded, and the explosion had another two stack on it from the force of Metatron and Camael's combined power, causing everyone to see the unique marvel before them. Shido was seen on the machine's remains, he panted before he collapsed to his knees as the Double Spirit Ascension was undone, and he panted heavily.

[Shido, are you alright!? That didn't do any damage to your body, did it?]

"No, I'm... just exhausted." Shido panted, catching his breath. "Holding two Spirit powers strained me a bit, but not physically. I just burned off a lot more energy than I had expected. I'm wiped now."

[Oh, thank goodness, overlaying two powers gave you more strength but used more power as compensation. Best we don't use it again unless we honestly need it.]

"Yeah... good idea." Shido panted, smiling a bit. Soon the others all ran to him. "Everyone... we did it."

Soon Tohka tackle hugged him before the others all joined and hugged him normally.

"Shido, that was amazing! You always pull through for us! I love you!" Tohka exclaimed, soon kissing Shido on the cheek to his pleasant surprise. Maria smiles at this and soon sees her connection re-established, so she takes the chance to connect.

"This is Maria, we've saved Kotori and stopped the attacking wizard." Maria answered, soon smiling widely. "And also... Shido just unlocked a new level of potential."

Back on Arubi Island, while still unaware of Minerva's hidden agenda to betray him for her own gain, Edgar yelled and smashed the table he was near, knocking everything on the floor and shattering a few breakables in the process.

"Damn it! Damn it all, success was within our grasp and it all failed do to a stupid brat!" Edgar
growled, soon lifting his fist off the table and walking off. "I'll just have to think of something else to take over. I still have Westcott in the dark after all."

"Do you really?"

Edgar turned as he saw Westcott look at him with his usual smirk, making him sweat in fear.

"D-Director Westcott, I didn't see you there!" Edgar sweated, now feeling a sense of dread fill him as he stared in the man's lifeless eyes. "Uh... I can explain, it's just that-

"Oh, don't bother, I've known you would try this for longer than you realize. Truth is I let it happen on purpose." Westcott chuckled, making Edgar panic as he stepped backwards and fell onto his butt.

"Thanks to you, I managed to get some good data I can use for [Material A]. Not to mention I got to see a weapon that nearly pushed them to the brink, now I just need to improve on that concept. Not to mention I have to consider [Efreet]'s presence now."

"I... I'm sorry! I beg of you, I'll do anything, I'll even tell you all the secret projects me and Minerva had. You can have everything!" Edgar stuttered, on his knees begging for his life. "Trust me, you won't regret it!

"Oh, I won't." Westcott smirked, and Edgar smiled thinking he was safe. "After all, Marina was kind enough to show me it already."

Edgar's eyes widened as he looked up at him in fear, the AI walking by in her android body, showing the disc drive that held all the data inside. His one bargaining card, which he didn't even know would have still failed, was already in Westcott's hands.

"Stole everything and more, did I do good father?" Marina asked, getting a pet on the head.

"You did. I still find it ironic I cared for you when I made you, yet you truly ended up being the daughter I could be proud of." Westcott cackled, Marina joining it as Edgar tried to back away, only for him to be stabbed in the back by Jessica.

"I'm so glad I've gotten another chance to do some torture again, the old job is never able to leave me." Jessica giggled darkly, licking the blood off her sword as Edgar stares in horror. "Now, how about a few more before we end this."

The halls were filled with Edgar's screams as Jessica cackled, striking the DEM traitor more and more until he was left on the ground, un-moving as he was littered with injuries. The ex-torturer gives her sword to Westcott.

"I've had my fun, you can end it now." Jessica smirked, walking off while Edgar stared as Westcott walked closer and Marina watched with a menacing and terrifying smirk. The fact only an extreme sadist would make.

"Now, time to say goodnight. Just don't expect to wake up." Westcott said, raising the sword high as it suddenly became dark colored.

Edgar screamed as it came down, and an explosion went off. The part of the hall shattered open before a Realizer restored it as Westcott looking at the smoking crater that used to have Edgar's body before said crater was repaired as well.

"Now that was brutal father, I kinda wish he survived the first strike just so we could have seen his agony longer!" Marina cackled, holding a hand to her face in a similar manner to Westcott did on
occasion. "Oh, and you should know Artemisia is finally back, and Ellen got the data we needed."

"Oh? Alright then, let's take a look, shall we? I think I have a worthy mission for Artemisia as well." Westcott chuckled, Marina grabbing his arm and giggling as they walked into a room where Ellen awaited them. "Ellen, have you discovered who these two are?"

"Yes Ike, their names are Shido and Mana Takamiya, blood siblings with no identified parents. They live under guardians in Tenguu City who we can't get any information on. However..." Ellen explained, showing younger pictures of them matching something in the DEM databases. "It seems that they were once imprisoned by us."

"Takamiya?" Westcott blinked, and soon he began laughing, getting the attention of Ellen and Marina. "This is simply amazing! How incredibly funny, to think that boy who's been such a pain to us so far is a Takamiya! I didn't think it was possible, but apparently, I was wrong."

Ellen' eyes widened slightly, the surname Takamiya finally ringing a bell to her. Marina blinked. "OK, what was I not born yet to know?" Marina inquired.

"Oh, please forgive us Marina, it's just incredibly funny. To think that woman still had family out there." Westcott chuckled, laughing a bit. "Let's just say this relates to how our dream began, how we managed to contact the Spirits for the first time." "Ooh, I still don't get it, but I'm all tingly now." Marina chuckled.

"Uh... I'm sorry, is this a bad moment?" The trio turns to the other door to see a girl with long blonde hair that she wore in a semi-braid, light skin and blue eyes, walked into the room wearing a suit similar to Ellen and Jessica's. This woman was the fabled Artemisia B. Ashcroft, DEM's Adeptus 2, a position she gained for her unique territory even though she had killed only a single spirit, and even then, it was somewhat questionable due to the Spirit in question's abilities.

"Ah, not at all Artemisia. I just got a little carried away." Westcott answered, fixing his collar after his laughing fit messed it up a bit. "Artemisia, I apologize since you just got back, but I need you to head out on another mission.

"...Understood, what is it?" Artemisia questioned, sounding somewhat solemn. Westcott smirked at that tone. "I need you to go to Tenguu City, it seems your old rival will be appearing again soon. She's after someone... peculiar, and that's reason enough to be alert." Westcott replied, making Artemisia sigh. "I'll depart at once sir." Artemisia replied before saluting and heading off, Westcott smirking more as she did.

Soon everyone was back at home, Kotori looked at herself in the mirror, staring at her new older figure. Sighing a bit as she holds her only surviving ribbon... a birthday gift she had received from Shido, now only half of what it once was. "It's been 5 years, I'm not older looking, have my powers back fully, have a somber second personality who'll disappear against her choice and... now I only have half of what made me try to become stronger." Kotori cried, remembering what she told Phantom.
"I want to confess how I feel to my brother." Kotori's voice echoed.

Kotori looks down and heads outside, as she did, she noticed the others walking by as they came from some grocery shopping, right before that however... a truck drives by and suddenly a bunch of mud flings at her, covering her with it. Kotori gasped as the others finally noticed her.

'Oh no! This is terrible, it's just like back then!' Kotori thought, mentally beginning to break down and nearing being brought to tears. As that happened, Shido walked closer and used some paper towels they just bought to wipe the mud on her face, surprising her.

"You got a little messy there, didn't you?" Shido said, making Kotori stare at him surprised. He was... he didn't even care she was all muddied right now? The sun began to set around then, coloring the sky orange as the wind blows and moves her hair around in it.

"Oh yeah, Kotori? You were really brave today. Not just today, but for all these years. You faced all of that on your own, and now I feel like I see your sunny has come back. You're shining just like you used to all those years ago."

Kotori's eyes shine as she hears that.

'I was... brave?' Kotori mentally asked herself, soon gasping. 'Being strong doesn't always mean to be powerful, Phantom... this is what you meant! I never gave up, I didn't give in to the fight even to the end.'

Kotori's fist tightens.

'I was afraid, but I still kept going. I get it now, what I needed to be strong was... courage! To be brave enough to stand up even when I'm scared.' Kotori thought, and soon she takes her remaining ribbon and wrapped it around her right wrist. "...Big bro?"

"Hmm? What is it?" Shido asked, Kotori breathes and decides there was no going back now.

"I want you to stop calling me your little sister." Kotori stated, surprising everyone. Especially Shido.

"What? B-but why?" Shido asked confused.

"Because Shido..." Kotori replied, closing her eyes as she feels Saya's soul put her hand on her shoulder, encouraging her to finally say. "I want to be more than that. For the last 5 years, even before the Tenguu Fire. I remember when you rushed through the snow just to get me home from school. So, that's why I just want you to know..."

Kotori opens her eyes and smiles, the sunset's light radiating off her as the wind blew her hair again.

"...That I love you!"

Shido stared at the in shock, his eyes widening and his mouth opened up. Tohka, Origami and Yoshino all stare with similar surprise. Mana gasped silently and then suddenly smiles with tears, finally realizing what had Kotori change, and now... what would bring back the Kotori she remembered.

"Kotori..." Shido breathed, Kotori's eyes teared up as she kept smiling.

"I said it, so... I don't have any regrets left." Kotori said, preparing to walk back in the house, only to suddenly feel Shido hug her. "...Shido."
Kotori sheds more tears, still smiling as she realized what Shido had said without speaking a word to her. The others all smile at the sight as well.

"And that makes Kotori harem girl number 4, congrats!" Yoshinon replied, giving the best thumbs up she could with her fingerless hands. "So, when are they gonna-

Yoshino covered Yoshinon's mouth.

"Don't ruin the moment, OK?" Yoshino smiled. Everyone just stood there for a while, letting the scene happen. From the rooftop of their house, Phantom watches and smiles.

"(And another wish came true.)" Phantom smiled, wiping her unseen tears.

"(Tohka Yatogami, who wished to find the missing piece of her heart. Origami Tobiichi, who wished to protect everything she held dear to her. Yoshino Mizui, who wished to dispel her loneliness. And as of today, Kotori Itsuka, who wished to gain the courage to confess her feelings. Keep on moving forward Shido, there are still more Spirits out there waiting for you to save, and you'll save them... just like you'll save her.)"

The sight of a girl with long pink hair wearing an empress dress flashed through her mind, her bright smile being the most prominent thing Phantom recalled.

"(And I have my own part in fulfilling that, until that day comes and we can finally meet. So until then... wait for me, Shido, Mana.)" Phantom softly told herself, soon flying into the air before vanishing from view.

Back at Ratatoskr, Reine was standing by a landing bay while Kannazuki moved some lights to help signal where a helicopter would land. Once it got into position, Kannazuki moved back as the hopper landed and soon stopped. It's propeller blades stopped moving as the door opens.

"So, who are these three exactly?" Kannazuki inquired.

"Truthfully, I don't know, Westcott didn't even tell me. I get the feeling these three were sent here for a specific reason though." Reine answered, soon seeing them come off.

The first to come was a 17-year old girl in a wheelchair, being pushed by one of the other two, who had her eyes closed due to being blind and her ginger colored hair in twin braids. Her name was Cecile O'Brien, she lost the use of her legs at some point and was a Spacequake victim that resulted in her current blindness, despite this she could regain both while using a CR-Unit and was a powerful wizard for this incredible territory control.

The second to come out, and the one pushing Cecile's wheelchair, was a 19-year old black haired girl with a tired yet tough look and sport in black hair in a bob cut. Her name was Leonora Sears, and she was a master of manipulation of long range weapons such as guns, snipers, cannons and missile launchers. While she tried looking tough, she was actually a real cry baby.

The third and final to come out of the helicopter was also the youngest of the three, a 15-year old petite girl around Mikie's height with long whitish blonde hair and a punker style outfit. Her name was Ashley Sinclair, and she excelled in melee attacks that favors hand-to-hand combat and laser blades. She was a bit of a loner and kinda cocky at times, but she did have a soft spot and just didn't wanna ruin her image.

"Hello there all of you, I'm Commander Reine Murasame. The leader of Tenguu City's branch of Ratatoskr." Reine introduced, soon the three all turned face her. She noticed their serious looks. "Is
there something I can help you with?"

"Woodman told us something, you know some info on our friend." Ashley stated.

"I see, who is your friend by chance? I don't know you well know to guess."

"...Her name's Artemisia." Leonora answered.

Later at night, in Aichi Prefecture, a lone girl stood on top of a rooftop building. She looked quite elegant and had long, currently tied in long twin tails and red eyes, with her bangs covering her left eye... and said eyes had whitened pupils, meaning she was a Spirit.

Her Astral Dress was made out of orange and black frills, giving her the appearance of an elegant Gothic Lolita with uneven twin tails. On her head, she wore a big crimson net bow to hold her hair. She also had a red and black collar on her neck, and black boots on her feet. Soon she notices something near her.

"Ah, I was worried you ran into some trouble." The girl said, and soon dark shadows swarmed into own shadow, merging into it as she in took the information and mana they collected. "Hmm... well that's not going to be nearly enough for today's quota."

As the shades kept going in, Kurumi suddenly heard something from one and turned to it.

"You, stop for a moment. I heard something interesting from you." The girl said, kneeling down to it so she could hear the details in full. As she listened, she suddenly smirked and then giggled. The giggle soon became a bit disturbing with her tone of voice and Phantom, who suddenly appeared behind her stopped and gave an unseen disturbed look, Kurumi turned to notice her.

"Oh, hello Phantom. Glad you made it." The girl answered.

"(Kurumi, I thought the deal about scheduled meetings was so I didn't run into you when you were doing that?)" Phantom sighed, sweat dropping a bit. Kurumi giggled. "(Yeah, yeah. I'm a bit late so I deserved it. I see your shadows just gave you some news, something good?)"

"Oh yes, it was just wonderful. She found someone unlike anything I've ever seen before. Who knew someone like that existed?" Kurumi answered, soon getting Phantom a bit uneasy on who that someone was. She was lucky Kurumi couldn't see her face.

"I've been running and hiding so long to achieve the power I need for my goal while running from that Adeptus 2 wizard, and now I have a clear shot to achieve my goal in one swoop. A boy with the power of four Spirits within him."

Phantom flinched at that.

'(Oh no, red flag raised!)' Phantom sweated, carefully thinking on how she should reply next without making Kurumi realize she knew who she was talking about. "(What? Are you saying more Spirits were killed again? That can't be, when a Spirit dies I know so I can take back the Crystal before the DEM does.)"

"Oh no, those Spirits are still alive. That's what's most wonderful about it. If I can take all that power... I can finally do it." Kurumi smirked, making Phantom worry.

"(...I doubt you'll tell me, but what is this goal you keep mentioning? Why do you need so much power when right now you're the strongest of the active Spirits?)" Phantom questioned, and with a
worry she'd be getting an answer she didn't want to hear.

"Oh? Well we've been partners for the last decade, I guess it's fair I tell you." Kurumi said, holding up a pair of guns. They were her Angel, Zafkiel.

"In order to use Zafkiel's final attack. Yud Bet. Once I have the power, I'll go back 30 years ago... and kill either Isaac Westcott, or the First Spirit. I'll change history for the better with my own two hands. I will never... ever give up."

Phantom's eyes widened.

'(Kurumi... what happened to you!?)' Phantom mentally gasped, taking a few steps back. '(If I don't do something now, everything in this world will be put at risk. Should I risk it now? Should I... should I take the gamble and hope Shido?)'

Phantom quietly sighed.

'(...I have to take it, because Kurumi's words ring like a bell of death. One I can't let ring twice.)' Phantom mentally sighed, soon walking a bit closer. '(So, does that mean you know where this special someone is?)'

"Unfortunately no, the saddest part. Where to look first?" Kurumi wondered.

"(I've recently seen strong Spirit activity in Tenguu City, perhaps it's not a coincidence?)" Phantom wondered aloud, getting Kurumi's attention. She turned at Phantom with a smile.

"Thank you for your thoughts Phantom, I think I know where to check first. So tell me..." Kurumi smirked.

"Know any good high schools?"

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Yep! From now on, Shido can now use the power of Two spirits during his Spirit Ascension technique! It's a bit more taxing, but he'll need it for what's about to come next. With this, the Kotori arc is officially over! Get ready because the longest arc of this season, and possibly overall depending on how things go in Season 2's arcs and beyond, is coming next! The great... Kurumi arc!

Also, congrats Kotori, you finally achieved what you've been waiting years to do. With this, Kotori's been upgraded from little sister to harem member. Not to mention we've finally met the three new AST members, and to those who don't know? They're all from Date AST Strike, namely they're Artemisia's friends. Where Kotori's arc introduced Minerva, Kurumi's arc will introduce Artemisia more and help prepare things for when I begin Date A Re:Strike.

I think you'll already begin to notice that Artemisia's role has shifted as she's taking Mana's spot as the DEM's original Adeptus 2, only with Mana's life span reduction replaced with her canon brain washing. Date AST Re:Strike is going to be the resolution to her arc in the story, rather than her just waking up in the Miku arc. Especially since that arc has a very big twist to it.

I do think I briefly brought this up during Tohka's arc, but as you can see compared to canon, Westcott actually views Marina as his child. Unlike the canon Marina, this one is a clone of him personality wise, and that's exactly why they have that father-daughter bond. Westcott
created something that went better than he expected, he never thought he'd make something as vile as him, and that's why he acknowledges this story's Marina. For that same reason, this Marina will stay a villain.

Best part of this chapter? Finally got to show Westcott actually being Westcott for once as he prepares a big plan, and he takes Edgar's life to give the bald betrayer his canon fate. What's this plan? Well... I'll tell you this much, this chapter has clues, they're subtle so you'll have to really think hard to piece together what he's intending.

Either way... get ready everyone, because Kurumi's about to make her move and Phantom's had to put her faith in Shido being able to seal her. So see you next time when the Kurumi arc finally begins!

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Now time to reveal the change to Shido's stats when he undergoes two Spirit Ascensions, so here's a second stat sheet for him.

**-Shido Takamiya, Double Spirit Ascension State-**

**Angel:** None

- **New Powers:** Shido has the same benefits and drawbacks as previously, but now there's an added drawback in that while not fatal or dangerous, the stress and strain of using two Spirits' powers together causes Shido to become tired and exhausted much faster. Like the original form of this technique, Tohka named this one because she didn't like the "Overlay Spirit Ascension" name that Mio and Origami nearly gave it when they described it.

- **Angel Fusion Attack:** By linking the two Angels together, Shido can combine them into a super powerful attack. The downside is that in doing so, both Angels will be unable to use their elemental powers for a 5-minute period to recharge. Shido can however swap to different Spirit powers while the recharge period is in process, but this isn't recommended since it can deplete his energy much faster, especially if he uses another Angel combination before the 5-minute period of the previous combo attack.

**Risk Factors:** S

**Spacequake:** None

**Spirit's Astral Dress:** None

**Angel Rank:** Varies on the stronger of the two Angels

**Strength:** 130

**Consistency:** 190

**Spiritual Power:** 235

**Agility:** 121

**Intelligence:** 180
-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 72%

Origami - 51%

Yoshino - 30%

Kotori - 64%
Chapter 14

Here we are everyone, the long awaited Kurumi arc! Naming this arc was the hardest, I had to finding a fitting word that also wasn't completely obvious to the theme but still had the right definition to define it since unlike the others, Kurumi's arc has something... special about it. Now this arc? Just a reminder, but it's going to be HUGE! How huge is it? Well, usually when I plan the scripts for each arc, I only get about 5 paragraphs, but for this arc... I managed to write a total of 13!

And that 13 paragraph total was for the prototype script to help make the layout, things like Artemisia, the other members of the SSS, even Kotori already being sealed (Kotori's arc was originally planned for Season 2 until I threw Minerva in) and Saya's presence weren't in the prototype. This arc may very well hit the double digits in the total number of parts.

I forgot to mention this last chapter, but Yoshino's last name of Mizusagi? Ratatoskr gave it to her, and it's a combination of Mizu and Usagi, the pronunciation of the kanji for Water and Rabbit. So Yoshino's last name literally means "water rabbit". Natsumi will also get a last name when she shows up, but I still need to decide on what it is. Also, I'll warn you now that Mizusagi may just end up as a place holder and could be replaced at any time.

Now, what's the emotional theme of this arc? So far, we've had Tohka's arc represent happiness, Origami's represent sadness, Yoshino's represent fear and Kotori's represented anger. This time, I'll give you the answer to this emotion with a question, "How does a Spirit enter their Inverse Form?", that's right, the emotion is... DESPAIR! How will despair fit? I won't say, except it will in multiple forms... and everyone will face it at least once :3

Also, since there are some differences with the Spirits as of this fanfic, and I kept forgetting to show them before now, I'll be bringing up the data sheets for Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori, Inverse Tohka and Inverse Origami during this arc.

Let's start with our main heroine herself, and once you finish reading it... then let the Kurumi arc begin!

EDIT: Yoshino's last name was decided to be changed, it's now Mizui instead of Mizusagi.

-Tohka Yatogami, Code Name: [Princess]-

Angel: Sandalphon, the "Throne of Annihilation" - Sandalphon is a powerful two-handed sword that Tohka is strong enough to wield with only one, namely her dominant left hand, that appears from a golden throne. Sandalphon's power comes in the form of pure mana and powerful enough some of the strongest defenses in the world. Shido comments that if Tohka can focus her willpower and emotions, Sandalphon has the potential to do even more damage than if she swung Nahemah.

- Alternate Form: Halvanhel ev, the "Sword of the End" - By shattering her throne into pieces, the shards can combine with Sandalphon to transform the sword into a massive single-edged zanbatō-like sword. While the sword's larger size decreases the speed at which Tohka
can swing it, it gives it the power to equal a Demon King's base form. Tohka mentions she must be careful not to use too much power from Halvanhelev at once, or the mana inside of it will overload and cause an explosion.

- Alternate Form: Chrysaor - Not an actual form of Sandalphon itself, but Sandalphon can be used in conjunction with it. By kicking her throne, Tohka can shift it into a flying vehicle form and drive it using her willpower. This allows Tohka to use her powers without any limitations from flying normally, if Sandalphon is sheathed in the scabbard area, Tohka can spin the throne to make a slash wave or rush forward for a piercing attack. For some reason, this alternate form allowed Tohka to learn how to drive without training or practice.

- Powers: Tohka's elemental affinity as a Spirit is pure Mana, though she has constantly shown to possess slight earth based abilities, however unlike other Spirits with multiple elements, she can't actually manipulate earth and is limited to seismic waves and summoning her throne from the ground. She can utilize energy blasts with her hands or fingertips, as well as create shock waves with a mere arm swipe. She also has supernatural strength and speed even when not using her powers, the ability to sense if she's in danger, and a sense of smell even more potent than a dog's.

Risk Factors: AAA

Spacequake: B

Spirit's Astral Dress: AAA

Angel Rank: AAA

Strength: 230

Consistency: 178

Spiritual Power: 201

Agility: 168

Intelligence: 100

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Chapter 14, S1: Kurumi Fallacy, Part 1

"So, know any good high schools?" Kurumi asked, making Phantom stare at her for a moment before she purposely fell backwards to be dramatic about her question.

"(Excuse me!?)" Phantom asked, completely dumbfounded by her question. "(Why are you trying to go to school after what you just told me? That sounds contradictory and like you're not even being serious!"

"Oh dear, I guess I forgot you don't hear what my shadows tell me." Kurumi giggled, making Phantom give her a blank stare on her unseen face. "The one I'm looking for is a high school student. Since you tend to hang around that city, you should know where any odd ends are happening."

"(Oh... and you didn't say that in the first place because?)" Phantom groaned, sighing as she slid her hand across her face.
"(Never mind, I guess if there's one school you should focus on its Raizen High. One time when a Spirit showed up, I saw one of the teachers enter some secret entrance. The school must have links to the Ratatoskr organization. They do want to aid the Spirits unlike those vile terrorists in the DEM.)"

"Raizen High, I see. Have a reference I can borrow in that disguise repertoire of yours?" Kurumi asked.

"(I keep telling you it isn't a disguise, it's just focused mana as a... oh what's the point you'll ignore me.)" Phantom sighed, soon shifting her mosaic to appear as a Kurumi in a Raizen High's Summer Uniform, her voice included. "This should do, and I even suggested how you should wear your hair."

"Aw, you're such a sweet child." Kurumi giggled, soon shifting her Astral Dress to match appearance Phantom had changed into. "Now, time to find this boy."

Kurumi giggled as she twirled and faded into a shadow through the wall, once she was out of sight and out of hearing distance...

"Shido, you're nowhere near ready for this, but I don't have a choice now." Phantom stated to herself, her Kurumi disguise showing sweat trickling down her face as she shakes in fear.

"Kurumi intends to kill you, if I had waited any longer... you'd have no chance to survive. You have to pull a miracle, so prove you can turn 10% into 100%! I have face in you, just like-"

Suddenly Phantom throws her arm back as she catches a sword that had thrust itself at her. She looks to see it was a black sword with white designs.

"Ah, Masamune is it?" Phantom answered, soon pushing her hand out and tossing her attacking back to reveal Artemisia in a red and white CR-Unit, known by the name of Shiva. "It's been a while, hasn't it Artemisia Bell Ashcroft?"

Artemisia readied herself.

"Don't try to fool me [Nightmare], I'm not sure why you aren't at Tenguu City like Westcott stated you were, but I will deal with you here." Artemisia declared before rushing forward and thrusting her blade out rapidly, but Phantom dodged too quick for her blade to even near.

"Oh, I'm sorry. It seems I've kept this form up too long and distracted you." Phantom stated before dropping it and revealing her mosaic form to the wizard's surprise. "(Sorry, but you already missed Kurumi. No one here but little old me.)"

"The Phantom..." Artemisia breathed, soon charging mana into Masamune. "I guess I'll just need to deal with you first."

Artemisia rushes forward at a speed she expected not even Phantom could react fast enough to avoid, but to her surprise the veiled Spirit jumped into the air and fly up.

"(Sorry sweetie, but I've gotta go take care of business. Hopefully I'll see you again soon.)" Phantom giggled before she disappeared, Artemisia sighed as her CR-Unit showed on its wrist reader that Phantom had been marked as "Lost".

"...Well I was after Nightmare for this mission, I can't be sidetracked just because I saw the Phantom." Artemisia sighed, soon taking off again into the sky as she continued her path to Tenguu City.
In a simulated battlefield that made up part of the Ratatoskr base's training arena, most of the AST were on the ground defeated. Only Mana, Mikie and Katie were seen standing against the new trio of wizards that had joined the AST shortly after Kotori's powers had been sealed.

The most amazing sight was seeing Cecile who side from having her hair unbraided was actually on her feet with her eyes open due to her CR-Unit and her territory temporarily giving her both back to her. Mana shifts Murakumo's swords to her hands and readies them, getting Cecile's attention.

"So, you still want more then? I can respect that. Leo, Ashley, let's finish this up, shall we?" Cecile asked, getting a nod from the both of them. "Alright then, I'll take the prodigy wizard on."

Mana rushed at Cecile who soon vanishes, the normally blind wizard smirks and holds her hand behind her.

"Alright, activating Territory Jamming." Cecile stated simply. Mana suddenly crashed into a thick mana distortion that blocked her attack while weakening her territory field.

The signature ability of her CR-Unit [Longma] was its power to use mana create anti-territory fields by distorting the area, using Cecile's powerful territory manipulation to attack weapons built onto the CR-Unit itself. Mana was pushed back as Cecile motion the suit's wings to fly at and strike Mana.

"I won't let you, try this!" Mana exclaimed, jumping into the air and aiming her blasters at Cecile. "Blaster Mode!"

Mana fires at her, the energy strings fly off at Cecile, but to Mana's shock, the normally blind wizard managed to move fast enough to dodge them all and then appear before her, holding her hand up to catch her in another Anti-Territory field. Cecile grabs her by the throat and then slams her onto the ground. Leaving Mana there defeated.

"So powerful..." Mana breathed. Mikie shook at the sight before preparing at Ashley rushed around her, giving an intense look. She deployed the Sphinx's claw weapons and prepared to pounce Ashley and surprise her, but gasped as Ashley instead rushed at her directly.

"Sorry, but getting up close? I relish fighting like that!" Ashley smirked as part of her CR-Unit, the Asura, shifted to her hands as she masterly struck certain spots of her body with martial arts blows. Flinging Mikie across the ground a bit, luckily the normally scattered high school girl got back on her soon after.

"OK, let's try this then. 'Illusive' equip!" Mikie called out, deploying her CR-Unit's ability to make her invisible.

Ashley raised her eye brow at this, looking around as Mikie attempted to sneak up on her and use her CR-Unit's claws to strike the punker wizard. Ashley's ears notice a crunching sound on the battle and smirks.

"I'll give you an A for the effort kid, unfortunately..." Ashley began, reaching back and revealing two doubled bladed energy swords she held via the middle while the back of her wiring suit revealed more 'blades' coming out of it. Slashing them at the ground to creating dust and let Ashley notice Mikie's silhouette as she covered herself to avoid being blinded.

"For someone with a stealth based CR-Unit, you have some really loud feet giving you away. Too bad for you."

Ashley rushed forward and slashed against Mikie's invisible form, and soon Mikie falls over and returns visible, her eyes spiraling as she was defeated like Mana had been. Ashley smirks as she
tosses her swords which fly back into her suit's storage spot.

Meanwhile with Katie, the now nervous wizard brought up her blasters and focused on the scope lens of her CR-Unit, Unicorn, as her right eye saw the reticle appear on it and fired at Leonora who moved quickly and dodged them easily.

"Ah, oh no!" Katie panicked, trying to adjust her aim and swap to a different blaster as Leonora got up close. "She's got me!"

Leonora neared her face, only to jump back a few yards to Katie's surprise. At that moment though, Leonora snapped her fingers, and her CR-Unit, Horus, opened up its "wings" and the blaster circles.

"I believe the term is... 'psyche", correct?" Leonora replied, soon firing laser blasts at Katie. The young wizard screamed as the blasters hit and she was tossed up high in midair before falling and feeling a bit dazed from the landing.

"[Battle over! Cecile O'Brien, Leonora Sears, and Ashley Sinclair are the winners.]

Ryouko and Reine watched from the sides, the AST Captain surprised at the new recruits handling every member of the AST and winning, something even Mana's prodigy level skills as a wizard had failed to do since she had joined them.

"Incredible, how did the three of them beat everyone by themselves? The only that's even still conscious in any form at this point is Mana." Ryouko asked, still unable to believe what she witnessed. "These aren't your ordinary Wizards, aren't they?"

Reine nodded.

"You're correct Ryouko, these three and two others were originally members of the group that was the precursor to what would eventually build the ground for what would become the AST. I believe they were called Special Sorcery Service, or the 'SSS' for short." Reine answered, making Ryouko gasp.

"Are you serious? These three are part of that group?" Ryouko asked incredulously, and Reine nodded.

It wasn't too big of a surprise that Ryouko had been amazed by the revelation, the wizards of that group were legends along the Ratatoskr Wizards. At least... four of them were this, the fifth member of the group was considered a grim reminder of their enemy organization. Mana, who was slowly getting back on her feet, heard the two talking.

"Hey Reine, if you don't mind me asking, what was this group like?" Mana asked, dispelling her CR-Unit as some of Ratatoskr's staff helped the other girls get back on their feet.

"Not at all Mana, they are in all sense your upperclassman." Reine answered, soon grabbing a chair and a coffee as she sat down.

"To best explain this, let's start how the group first came into light. Originally when the AST was first formed in Ratatoskr, back around the time Ryouko was about your age, it was just a small group of people who could use CR-Units and it was a small group. However, at one point, the DEM... nearly destroyed our entire organization, the Fraxinus crew included."

Mana gasped at that.

"Back then, the Fraxinus you've come to know wasn't even created, it was the successor to a now
scrapped ship. The original Fraxinus wasn't anything like the current one. We kept our job monitoring the Spirits and trying to find ways to help them. The one time, and this was long before Maria had been created, we got close to helping the current [Witch] or Spirit No. 7 and right when we thought we'd be able to save her... the Arbitel attacked us.

-Flashback Start-

Through the night sky, the Arbitel's main weapon was seen glowing before it suddenly fired at a blue and white ship that was the original Fraxinus, everyone inside the ship suddenly felt themselves get shaken by the impact.

"What just happened!?!" Kannazuki called out, in response to the attack, Mikimoto typed on his screen to check the damages.

"Territory's been reduced by 20%!" Mikimoto replied, and Nakatsugawa checked the ship's damages. They didn't look good either... part of the side was smoking badly.

"No damage to the interior, by the right haul is shot!"

Reine made a more serious face and bit one of her nails, they were being attacked.

"I'm picking up more heat waves, another attack is coming!" Minowa shouted, making Reine remove the binding that held her ponytail as she dropped her stoic expression.

"Shiizaki, what information do we have on the enemy ship?" Reine ordered.

Shiizaki began typing and soon a visual of the Arbitel came into view, making Reine glare at the ship slightly as it was clear who it belonged to.

"Information confirmed commander. This is the DEM's flagship, Arbitel. It's threat ranking is labeled at a AAA-Class according to the ship's analysis." Shiizaki revealed, making Reine sigh and turn to Kannazuki.

"Kannazuki, drop all autopilot for the ship's weapon systems. I grant you full authority in their usage." Reine stated, making Kannazuki nod as he put on a pair of headphones.

"I'm good at taking pain, now let's show them how I give it." Kannazuki smirked, tapping the headphone's sides. "Kawagoe, drop Invisible and focus everything on the protect territory!"

"Roger Vice-Commander!" Kawagoe replied loudly.

The Fraxinus' cloak dropped as it came into view of the Arbitel... only for an entire warning reading to cover the ship, and unlike most the entire ship flashed red showing this was a very serious warning sign.

"Something's not right here, how's the ship in this much danger already?" Shiizaki paled, soon noticing something. "Wait... something's invaded the ship's controls! It seems like it's some virus!"

"Oh, I believe that might be me?"

Everyone looked as they suddenly saw all their screens get replaced with a face showing Marina on them as she gave a cruel smirk and laugh.

"Who are you?" Reine asked, visibly sweating.
"Ah, that's right. I was born only fairly recently so none of you have actually met me yet. My name is Marina Arusu, and I'm an AI created by my wonderful father Isaac Westcott to further enhance the Arbitel. However, shooting you down felt too boring so..." Marina began, giving a dark smile.

"I went a step further to torture you, my father doesn't like the quick and easy path and neither do I. I'll make you see what it's like to futilely fight back as your ship stays in my control and gets blasted until you all die! Enjoy it while you're all still living."

Soon the Arbitel fires multiple rapid fire shots, the Fraxinus was hit and had no way to defend itself, a majority of the ship began smoking as various parts of the haul began smoking and catching on fire.

"We can't regain control of the ship, not even to deploy protect territory! We're defenseless!" Minowa called out, making Reine grit her teeth. Marina simply laughed as she watched their pitiful struggle.

"...Kannazuki, activate the emergency program!" Reine ordered, making him gasp before nodding.

A secret hand print pad for both of them opens and they put their hands on it. Marina yawned within the virtual realm of the Fraxinus' systems, turning the white colored environment black as she took it over, she suddenly noticed some white mass appear nearby and fly towards her.

"Really? An anti-virus defense? Sorry, but I'm an AI. A virus killer ain't gonna stop me." Marina mocked before throwing out her arms.

Her outfit suddenly morphed and opened up across the middle and the sleeves. The bottom area becoming like cables as her legs gained an intentional buggy look to them while the top section of her opened outfit had her threads unravel. This was the 'Astral Dress' that belonged to Marina, and soon she attacked the program.

"Let's see how you like it as I infect you and then delete you!" Marina cackled, her eyes glowing a scary shade of gold.

Meanwhile outside the virtual world, the Arbitel prepared another blast as its crew prepared for another attack, James at the ready for an authorization to any requested weapons they needed.

"Sir, permission to charge the main canons with Ashcroft Alpha devices 1 through 5?" A crew member asked.

"Permission granted, we'll destroy that ship's functions with one blow and let it crash! Then we'll capture [Witch] and end her as well!" James agreed, looking confident in himself and Marina's plan. 'We've already won this battle.'

The Fraxinus crew kept checking readings as they began seeing systems in the ship spark.

"Commander, if we get hit again then even if the ship holds we won't be able to do anything. We'll be dead!" Mikimoto said as he turns to Reine, the silver haired woman trying to do her best to keep as calm an appearance as she could.

"...We have to have faith that program will save us, please work." Reine whispered to herself, grasping the wing on her necklace tightly. "I can't die here, otherwise all of your sacrifices and his will be in vain."

Marina kept laughing as she attacked the program in the virtual realm of the Fraxinus, seeing it start to glitch op as she kept attacking its data.
"That's it, time for you to finally die!" Marina smirked before throwing her cables back as they charged electricity, and then launching them forward to stab through the white mass of a program... however said mass suddenly extended to grab them to her shock. "What the?"

The white mass' glitches soon cause its shape to altar, and the program begins shifting into a more humanoid form, but one that didn't have any definite features and seemed more like a mannequin made of white data.

"Don't... hurt... friends. Leave... alone!" The program spoke in a female voice, surprising Marina.

"Impossible, my attacks caused you to copy my data and evolve!?!" Marina shouted, her eyes shaking in disbelief before the white program attacked her, making her own body glitch. "No, damn you... damn you stupid program!"

The white program screamed as Marina suddenly saw most of the virtual realm's color change from the black she painted it from invading back to the original white, signifying her losing control of the ship's systems.

"This can't be!" Marina screamed, trying to push the black back, but only briefly stopping it before just slowing down the white program's efforts. Back inside the ship itself, Shiizaki saw the Fraxinus' systems starting to recover.

"Commander! I think it worked, we're regaining some of the ship's systems!" Shiizaki declared happily, making Reine sigh relieved.

"Shiizaki, we have no choice to retreat. This ship won't make it otherwise so... Kannazuki, deploy all the Yggdrafolium realizers! We're gonna kamikaze our way into escaping." Reine ordered, and Kannazuki nods.

"Sorry girl, you did us well but it's time for your last stand." Kannazuki breathed before making a serious face, slamming a hand on the headphone's left side. "Yggdrafolium, parallel driving force activate! BAND UP!"

The Fraxinus' rear side shakily deployed all of the realizers used as its energy source and sent them all flying towards the Arbitel's location, attracting the attention of a crew member right as he gets readings about Marina's condition.

"Captain! Marina's suddenly lost grasp on the enemy ship, and it seems they're retaliating with some unknown weapon!" The analyst responded, getting James' surprise and attention.

"What? What happened, what's going on here!?" James wondered angrily, soon they felt the Yggdrafoliums phase through their territory as they were too late in deploying it and soon feel their ship attacked like they hit a mine field. "We've been hit, status update!"

"It seems that something's pelting the ship, damage is minimal but it's disrupting the systems without Marina's support!" The crew member replied, typing fast as the data reached them. "Wait, it looks like they're realizers being used as bombs."

This got the entire crew's attention, and at that moment Marina suddenly reappeared in her original form via the ship's projector area, her body glitching out.

"...Call a retreat now, those bastards got away but we completed the mission at least. That ship will never be able to fly again after today." Marina panted, angry and glaring at its retreating form. "I hate to call it as such, but it was still a victory."
"Holy..." Mana softly replied, to think that the ship she saw Tohka fight in her Inverse Form and barely overcame her had managed to accomplish such a devastating blow to Ratatoskr. "And that was just what your group faced?"

"It was." Reine replied, sipping the last of her coffee and sighing. "Ratatoskr's base at the time was destroyed and we lost a lot of good people, the damage left us too inactive for a while that many spirits we could have saved met their deaths by the DEM's top three Adeptus wizards. Westcott called us greenhorns back then... and we really were."

Ryouko put a hand on Reine's shoulder as she shook a bit, Mana giving a sad look.

"How many lives has that corrupt organization taken just for the sake of power? How was 6 billion not enough, what's going to satisfy that... that inhuman bastard! No, even implying he was or has any relation to a human is too good for him! Mana thought, her fist trembling.

"After that crushing blow, we knew we couldn't stay like this. So we learned from our mistakes. The one who helped us do that, well..." Reine continued, holding up her phone and showing Maria form as she waved at Mana. "It was Maria here, see we lost a lot... but Marina's invasion of our ship gave us an ember to make us burn brighter."

"That program in Reine's story? Well... you're looking at her." Maria giggled, making Mana's eyes widen in shock.

"Yep, when Marina attacked me, she corrupted my programming, but she had been too careless and I was able to take the data she in herself, the Arbitel, anything that ship had at the time, and used it to evolve. The DEM doesn't even know that their info was taken after all these years."

"Using this, we helped complete Maria's new body by removing her irregularities. Then made a new Fraxinus, the Fraxinus Ex-Celsior you see today, using the Arbitel's technology and schematics but in our image and made multiple bases to trick the DEM into which one was the main branch." Reine continued.

"Without DEM even seeing us grow, they kept underestimating us and rather than expose it, we let the illusion stay until the day come we'd show the organization we did fall from defeat but surpassed them without them even knowing it. The biggest step was the creation of Asgard Electronics as our research and engineering division, and forming the SSS."

"So that's how this group formed?" Mana asked.

"That's right, the SSS was our attempt at finding a strategy to train our wizards. It worked well and the five wizards that joined showed the new potential of the custom CR-Units and our training techniques. That eventually led to us making the AST an entire division with hundreds of wizards stationed across the world." Ryouko explained.

"Ah, I get it. You started small but made yourselves even bigger." Mana nodded, she was honestly impressed how Ratatoskr responded to their heavy loss the more she heard about it. Then she noticed something, they said the SSS had five wizards, but only three had joined Ratatoskr's Tenguu City branch.

"Wait, where are the other two at right now?"

Suddenly Reine and Ryouko go silent, and Reine sighed as she got a new cup of coffee before
"...They left us, and not in the sense of being retired." Reine replied monotonously, making Mana suddenly sweat. "One of them went missing and we've yet to find her since, the other became part of the DEM."

Reine chugged another gulp of her coffee, soon breathing with her eyes still closed.

"You've already met the DEM traitor, her name is Minerva Riddell."

"WHAT!?" Mana screamed, surprised at the revelation. "Y-you're joking right, that insane bitch is an ex-Ratatoskr member? That can't be, how can anyone like her have been our ally once!?"

"...It's a sad truth, but it's not a lie." Reine answered, her fist clenching. "The missing member of the team, Artemisia b. Ashcroft, when she joined quickly became the best of the five wizards. Before that, Minerva sought to be on top, but Artemisia was always better. Minerva hated that and tried to kill the others, that's how she got that scar."

Mana recalled the scar she had over her right eye before she gave it a match, in fact she even recalled Minerva shouting the same after she landed a blow to the insane wizard's arm with a rage filled voice.

"Jealousy, it's a dangerous emotion. That's why Minerva left. To her it was her way or the highway, and she became one of the worst examples of what those we trust can become if we aren't careful." Ryouko added, giving a somber look.

"Artemisia went missing sometime after that, the only reason we even know she's still alive is because her CR-Unit and its weapon have their DNA lock. All we could confirm is Minerva had some involvement." Reine sighed, getting up and walking past Mana, putting a hand on her shoulder.

"Mana, in the coming days you may have to stand higher on your feet than you ever had. Be the hero instead of your big brother. I just hope you'll be ready for it when the time finally comes. Right now, this world seems peaceful to the public... but that could reveal itself as an illusion if we don't hurry. I intend to make sure that this illusion turns into reality somehow."

Mana blinked as Reine continued walking by, getting a weird feeling from what Reine have just told her. As she did she suddenly noticed that the teddy bear Reine always had was on the floor, having fallen out of her pocket.

"Hey Reine, you dropped your-" Mana began to say, picking it up. Yet the moment she did...

-Flashback Start-

In some strange glowing realm, Mana held out her hands as she given a teddy bear that looked just like Reine's but without the damages it currently had.

"Wow! You made this for me, really?" Mana asked.

The one who gave it to her was revealed to be a man with blue hair and brown eyes like her big brother, he even had her beauty mark, but by his other eye unlike her own. He also had shaggy, spiky hair and a more muscular body tone.

"That's right, mommy helped me make it. Do you like it?" The man asked.
"Of course, I love you daddy!" Mana smiled, jumping up to hug him. Her father smiled and hugged her back, twirling her in the air as he laughed happily with her.

-End Flashback-

Mana's eyes shook as she began to pant, getting Reine and Ryouko's attention.

"Is there a problem Mana?" Ryouko asked worriedly, suddenly Mana's eyes widened before she suddenly collapsed onto the ground. Making the two gasp. "Mana! Mana wake up, what's wrong? Please say something, Mana!"

Mana breathed weakly on the ground, her face suddenly flushed with a fever. Reine checked her head and quickly moved it away from how hot it was.

"This is bad, I think she's got a really high fever. Get her medical attention immediately!" Reine ordered, making Ryouko nod as she ran off with Mana in her arms, Reine picked up her teddy bear and her mouth quivered as tears slipped down her face.

"...Why couldn't I have just kept this thing locked in my room? Why did I let her have a way to touch it? Mana, please be OK."

Back at the Itsuka household, Tohka was carrying some laundry over to the wash when she heard the phone ring. She answered it as she saw it showing the Ratatoskr base's number.

"Hello, this is Tohka speaking." Tohka answered, soon listening before she suddenly heard Mikie's panicked voice and gasped right as Shido walked by. "What!? Mana got really sick and had to be rushed to the hospital?"

Suddenly Tohka felt Shido squeeze her face near hers to get close to the phone, making her blush as he got close enough to reply.

"What happened to her, please tell me she's OK!" Shido screamed, going into his worried big brother mode.

"It's just a really high fever, and the doctors already said they've stopped it from increasing any higher. Still... to suddenly collapse and get a 103-Degree fever made us worry. We've got some people in Ratatoskr making sure she gets proper treatment." Ryouko explained, making Shido relax slightly.

"Sorry this ended up coming up like it did, but it was strange to me too. She simply bent down to pick up something Commander Reine had dropped and then suddenly she was sick. I hope she didn't overexert herself during training, better yet it's not a side effect from her spirit powers awakening."

"...OK, just make sure you call my cellphone immediately if anything changes." Shido answered before hanging up. Once he did, he walked over to the other wall and slumped down before sitting and covering his face with his hands and shaking to Tohka's concern.

"...Please Mana, please be OK. You're all I have left of my biological family physically or memory wise, I can't lose you too. Don't die, please don't die."

"Shido..." Tohka said softly as she teared up a bit, soon kneeling by and hugging him as he cried and then shed her own tears. "It'll be OK, she's going to be fine. She'll be OK."
During that same time, Kotori was seen laying on the couch was she had a ghost of herself floating out of her mouth. Origami and Yoshino stared at the sight before Yoshinon decided to ask a question.

"Any reason your partially dying?" Yoshinon bluntly asked to the two Spirits' surprise, Kotori's ghost is swallowed back into her mouth as she tiredly turned to look at the two.

"Because I look older, and Mana is smart enough to do so anyways. Reine suggested we get bumped up to Raizen High. I've been cramming what's probably years' worth information for the last 4 hours!" Kotori exclaimed tiredly, sliding off the couch in the process. "I'm dying here... save yourselves."

"...Eh, she's fine." Yoshinon giggled, making Kotori get up and stare at the puppet.

"You and Yoshino don't even go to school, how can you claim anything like that!?" Kotori cried, sliding onto the table fully. "I finally look my age and look where it gets me."

Origami rubbed Kotori's head, making the Flame Spirit feel slightly better.

"W-well you'll at least be in our class, so..." Origami replied, trying to make Kotori more comfortable. "You can always ask me or Shido for help."

"Thank you Origami, I'm glad you're actually here for me!" Kotori cried happily, soon noticing Yoshinon looking up at the ceiling as if deep in thought. "What's wrong with you?"

"Huh? Oh nothing, I've just been thinking of something that hasn't felt right to me since the other day." Yoshinon answered, crossing her arms as she looked back at the ground.

"Ever since we've been sealed, I haven't thought much about Shido being able to or how he can use our powers. I always just it was a weird coincidence. Especially since he, Mana and Tohka had all been prisoners to the DEM. Seemed like a happy accident he learned how to do that. Yet now... Mana suddenly has spirit powers? Sorry, but that isn't a coincidence. Especially if Shido's ability is considered a spirit power itself."

"Huh... you know, I never really looked into it that way. Yet since you mention it now that does feel strange." Kotori noted, scratching her cheek. "Do you have any thoughts Yoshino, Origami?"

"Ah! U-uh, well..." Origami began, soon sweating nervously before bowing. "I've never thought I should worry over that kind of thing! I'm sorry!"

"I don't think it has to do with the DEM at all, it's always felt... like Shido was no different than us to me. I kinda felt... that Mana was too even though she seemed more normal." Yoshino admitted, making Yoshinon nod.

"Yeah, something feels wrong. I think there's more to this than we realize." Yoshinon agreed, and Kotori suddenly stared before Saya's consciousness flowed through her.

"Kotori, I have to agree. I've been checking your memories and I noticed Phantom seemed to have an odd reaction to learning you knew Shido. Not to mention Mio's presence... something isn't adding up." Saya replied.

All the spirits made thinking faces, and then Yoshino's stomach growled. She blushed in embarrassment.

"I... haven't had a snack yet." Yoshino blushed more, and Kotori giggled a bit.
"Alright, let's go get something to eat then."

Yoshino smiled as the others headed into the kitchen, and soon noticed Tohka and Shido walking back, and Kotori noticed the tear stains by their eyes.

"Hey, what happened you two?" Kotori asked.

"We... just got told Mana was taken to the hospital, she's got a dangerously high fever." Tohka answered, making the others gasp. "She's stable, but she might not be home for a few days. We think it's her powers or stress, maybe even both, that did it."

"Poor Mana, I hope she'll be OK." Yoshino said softly, Yoshinon grabbing her hand for support. Origami only stared as she understood Shido's feelings all too well.

'Hmm... something doesn't feel right here' Yoshinon thought. "I know! Let's make her a get well soon meal while we prepare a snack, that always makes Yoshino feel better."

"Yeah, that'll cheer Mana into recovering in no time!" Tohka cheered, Shido looked before nodding a bit. His smile slightly returned.

"Alright, let's make her some get well muffins then." Shido replied.

Kurumi soon twirled into view on a large building within the center of Tenguu City, giggling as she finally arrived in what she was hoping was the promised land that the boy she had learned about lived. She looked around and noticed that there were many schools, making it hard to know where to look. The only one familiar to her was her old school of Rindouji High back in her days as a human.

"So here we are, Tenguu City. To think I'd be back home after all these years. I guess it's true what they say, a story usually ends back where it began." Kurumi told herself, soon frowning at the various schools. "Unfortunately, it seems that I don't know where I'm supposed to go."

"(Sorry, I guess I forgot to mention that part.)"

Kurumi suddenly turned as Phantom dropped into view, rolling the arm she caught Artemisia's weapon with to make it un-stiff.

"(Raizen High is that school over there. Notice the white horizontal building on the mountain side with a blue roof, the field on the right and a brown clock tower in its center?)" Phantom asked, pointing towards it. Kurumi looks and soon sees the very school.

"Ah, I see it now. Thank you Phantom. I'm surprised you came here all the way to tell me that, so thoughtful to do that." Kurumi giggled.

"(Actually... that was secondary, I have my own business here. Be careful out there.)" Phantom replied before walking and vanishing from view, and Kurumi soon took a closer look at Raizen High.

"Alright, let's things started. Time to enroll and scout around." Kurumi stated as her shadow extended out and she soon slid into the wall and vanished.

At Tenguu General Hospital, a room in special wing reserved for Ratatoskr had Mana resting inside with her face flushed red. She soon opened her eyes, her head so heavy she could barely focus or think. She saw Ryouko and Reine looking at her and smiling as she woke up.
"Thank goodness, you finally woke up." Ryouko said, sighing in relief.

"W-what happened to me? I can't remember." Mana asked.

"You suddenly got really hot and were burning up, we took you to the hospital and had you checked out. At first you seemed to have a fever, but that was wrong, your body just heated up too much and rose your temperature to 103 degrees." Reine answered, petting her head.

"Don't worry, the heating up stopped so you'll make it through. Though you'll need to rest for today and the next three days. I've already told Tamae about it so your absence will be excused. Just rest and recover for now."

Mana nodded weakly.

"OK, I will. I can barely think right now anyways. Including what I remembered before I passed out." Mana replied, soon relaxing into bed. Soon hearing Shido and the others come in. "Big brother?"

"Hey Mana, how are you feeling?" Shido asked, making his sister chuckle.

"Lousy, but Reine says I'll live. Though three and a half days in here's gonna suck." Mana replied, making the others relieved. She soon saw Shido give her some muffins. "Aw, a get well gift. Thanks guys."

[I kinda wish I could have physically helped, I only gave moral support.]

"It's OK Mio, I'll count that in making them." Mana smiled, making her unseen face blush through Shido's aura. "If you'll excuse me, I'm gonna get some sleep now."

"Alright guys, let's have her get some rest now." Ryouko ordered, clapping as the others nod and leave. Mana falls asleep with a happy face, but before she does... Reine leaves the teddy bear by the table with a note in its hands saying, 'I'm here to keep your company.'

"...Get better soon." Reine said, kissing Mana's forehead before walking out. Mana feels it in her sleep before smiling more.

The next day, everyone was headed to school as Origami and Shido walked into class. As they did, they saw Kotori and Ashley already seated.

"Hey Kotori." Shido greeted as he took his seat behind her, Kotori blushing a bit.

"O-Oh, hey Shido. Guess as of today we're class mates, huh?" Kotori replied nervously, soon blushing as Shido pet her head to calm her down. "Sorry, I'm just nervous about suddenly jumping up a few grades."

"Hey, let Origami told you. We're here to help you out with anything." Shido replied, making Kotori blush and smile.

Some of the nearby guys all stare at him with jealousy, thinking he was stealing another hot chick like he did with Origami. At that moment the bell rang, and everyone got to their seats as the bell rang and Tamae walked in.

"Good morning class, I think you've noticed today we have some new faces. We have three students who skipped from middle school to high school that have joined our class. One of them however is
unable to attend due to illness, so for the two who have..." Tamae began, looking at Ashley. "Ashley, would you like to introduce yourself first?"

Ashley shrugged and sat up.

"Ashley Sinclair, that's it." Ashley said before she sat back down, making everyone sweat drop. She was kinda wearing her school uniform as punk like as possible without violating it after all so that attitude didn't help dispel the thought.

"Uh... OK then? Kotori, please introduce yourself to the class." Tamae continued, making Kotori gulp and stand.

"Uh... my name's Kotori Itsuka, I was formerly a 2nd Year in Middle School. I can get nervous a bit easily so... please be gentle with me for a while!" Kotori introduced, bowing a bit. Some of the guys all blushed at how cute she looked from her introduction... or from staring at her chest to Shido's irritation.

"Alright, with that now it's time to-"

Suddenly a knock was heard on the class as someone cleared their throat.

"Oh! I'm terribly sorry, I almost forget!" Tamae panicked, soon clearing her throat a bit. "Are you ready for a surprise everyone? Along with the three new students who advanced from middle school, a transfer student is joining out class today."

Everyone showed surprise at that, transfer students were usually interesting, especially to high school students who wanted to possibly get an exotic boyfriend or girlfriend.

"OK, come on in."

Soon from the door, Kurumi Tokisaki walks into the room, as soon as all the boys saw her they went nuts. Kurumi wrote her name up on the board and then turned to the class. Surprisingly, her whitened pupils were absent for some reason, so Shido and the others didn't notice what she really was.

"Hello everyone, my name is Kurumi Tokisaki."

There you have it, the first part of Kurumi Fallacy has begun, this chapter was a bit different from most since the plot in this case focused not as much on the Spirit of the arc, but to other events this arc is connecting to. We learned how Maria was born, connecting to the eventual Ars Install arc, had Artemisia show up in action and saw the other SSS members show their skills to connect with the Date AST Re:Strike that'll happen after this season ends.

As you'll likely notice, Mana is current out of action for the next 3 days in story, that's the day Kurumi makes her big move in canon, so Mana will not be able to help the others until then. That memory she recalled was the biggest reason I've temporarily written her out, with what the flashback showed, I think you all know why I can't let Mana properly think of that memory or let Shido know about it just yet.

Also, it has to do with how back in Yoshino's arc, I made it clear Reine knows a bit more about Shido and Mana than she's letting on. I'll confirm this at least, Reine is NOT their mother unlike my Kurumi Fearful short story. This arc is going to bring the revelations to this,
Phantom's real identity, and most of all... you're all finally going to learn who Mio really is!

This is why the arc might feel slow with its progression, there's so much I need to have you see for it to all make sense, the reveals this chapter gave are just one piece of the puzzle that the arc's final few chapters will culminate into. Not to mention these are just the reveals for Season 1, I have another whole stack of revelations reserved for Season 2 I'll be teasing.

I'll also finally be putting Tamae into a bigger spotlight, out of Ratatoskr's new additions, I haven't been able to put her in the spotlight as much. Though since Kurumi's arc take places at Raizen High, I don't need to worry about that since her teacher job makes her perfect, in fact she'll basically be mission control in Reine's place since Reine will be focused on Artemisia by request of the SSS members.

Overall, I hope you enjoyed this chapter and will enjoy the rest of the Kurumi arc. So stay awesome everyone! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 75%

Origami - 54%

Yoshino - 36%

Kotori - 67%
Chapter 15

Hoo wee! Man, writing the last chapter got me so excited, I was once again more in the mood to make another chapter for this story before doing the next chapter of A Dragon's Heavenly Bonds. Ignoring that though, Kurumi's finally made it to Raizen High, but she has yet to drop the bomb I'm about to have her detonate in the first scene of this chapter.

Something I'm going to clarify now, recall how Saya had trouble remembering Kurumi due to Kotori's memories not having any information on her? While meeting Kotori will give her the ability to recognize that info, Saya is going to be sleeping for a while and won't view Kotori's more recent memories, so Saya won't reveal to everyone that Kurumi is the friend she's looking for.

Not to mention Ratatoskr will have trouble telling the others that she's the same Nightmare that Saya knows, as while Maria confirmed that when Saya revealed her friend's code name... nothing says someone can falsify info to confuse everyone, or for a simple piece of information creating a misunderstanding that hide the truth. I'm making sure no one is able to figure out who Kurumi is until we get far enough into this arc.

Essentially for right now, regardless of directly or indirectly... Kurumi's weaved everyone into her shadowy web of lies, into her... "Fallacy". *chuckles* Oh yeah, I just title dropped you all :3

Now here's the next data sheet before we begin, enjoy ^^

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- Inverse Tohka, Code Name: [Sovereign]-

Demon King: Nahemah, the "Tyrant Ruler" - Sandalphon's Demon King counterpart, unlike most Demon Kings, Nahemah isn't that different from its Angel counterpart other than looking nothing like it and having a lot more mana inside to cause more devastating energy flashes. Nahemah's throne is silver in color unlike Sandalphon's golden throne. Shido has commented that Nahemah is inferior in power if Tohka can properly focus her will and emotions.

- Alternate Form: Paverschlev, the "Sword of Demise" - The Inverse counterpart of Sandalphon's Halvanhelev technique, and like Nahemah compared to Sandalphon, Paverschlev is a much more enhanced Halvanhelev with a completely different design. The power it has puts Halvanhelev in shame in comparison, being strong enough to gouge an entire section of a city. Unlike Halvanhelev however, Paverschlev is a one-shot attack, and will revert to Nahemah as it basically converts Halvanhelev's possible overload into a single concentrated strike.

- Alternate Form: Durandal - The Inverse counterpart of Chrysaor, by willing her throne to shift into a flying vehicle form, Inverse Tohka can drive it using her willpower. Similar to how Sandalphon being sheathed allows Chrysaor to use its slash waves and a piercing attack, Durandal can also use Inverse Tohka's energy blasts and the piercing attack is almost guaranteed to shatter any defense against it.
Powers: Despite what her Astral Dress might imply, Inverse Tohka's powers are all higher with the inclusion of her defense, enough that she can stop a sword with her bare hand and not be cut by it. Her amount of mana is now so incredibly high that her previous abilities become explosive and have more uses, such as her energy blasts can now fire multiple shots in waves instead of only rapid fire. Tohka however admits that's all her Inverse Form can actually do, and that she doesn't gain any additional abilities unlike other Inverse Spirits.

Risk Factors: SS

Spacequake: A

Spirit's Astral Dress: AAA

Demon King Rank: AAA

Strength: 248

Consistency: 204

Spiritual Power: 222

Agility: 175

Intelligence: 100

Chapter 15, S1: Kurumi Fallacy, Part 2

"Hello everyone, my name is Kurumi Tokisaki." Kurumi introduced herself, giving a smile that gave off a princess like aura. The kind you'd only see from an actual princess, or a rich girl who was kind and sweet.

All the boys went gaga at that moment and hollered at the beauty before them, but Kotori looked closer and blinked at the girl before her.

'This is really weird, do I know this girl?' Kotori thought, trying to squint her eyes and hold a hand over them to focus. 'I don't know why, but I feel like I've seen her before. Where did we meet though?'

"Just so you know... I'm actually a Spirit." Kurumi replied.

This made Shido, who had been supporting his chin with his hand, slip and nearly fall forward as he gasped at what she just said. Ai, Mai and Mii, Hiroto and Ashley, Origami and Kotori, even Tamae all showed gasps of surprise upon hearing this since they didn't see her with whitened pupils. The other students were just confused by this.

"Oh, um... I see. Let's move on, thank you for that unique introduction Kurumi." Tamae responded, barely keeping a poker face to what she heard. 'Why would a Spirit expose herself to the public out loud?'

"Before I sit, could I ask someone for a quick favor?" Kurumi requested.

"Oh, sure. Is there something you need?" Tamae inquired.
"Since I'm new, I'm afraid I don't know my way around the school just yet. Would anyone be so kind to escort me around after class? I'm very sorry to trouble you." Kurumi asked, making some of the guys start blushing.

"Yeah! I'll do it!" Hiroto shouted, sneaking his phone to get a picture to send to Maria due to her claim. Kurumi looked at him, noticing he wasn't the student her shadows had told her about.

"Not you, but thanks." Kurumi rejected in a kind manner, making Hiroto groan in disappointment and sat down, a purple depression aura floating over his head. Kurumi soon moved her eyes around until she noticed Shido, and her smile slightly widens as she walks over towards him.

"Would you be interested in helping me? Shido Takamiya right?" Kurumi asked, making all the students but Hiroto look at her.

"Uh... sure, OK." Shido replied, making Kurumi smile before she took her seat. Ashley quickly shot a glare at the girl who just called herself a Spirit, wondering what her game really was.

At the Ratatoskr base, Maria was using her android body for once to read a book as she suddenly got a message from Hiroto.

"A message, what is it?" Maria wondered as she opened it. "...A girl claiming to be a Spirit appeared in his class at Raizen High!? What the, how... wait, what am I doing! I should tell everyone about this!"

Maria puts her book down and rushes into the command room, nearly making a few people drop things or crashing into them as she did. She finally found Ryouko in the analyst room alongside a male Ratatoskr member and Mildred, all who noticed her slid in and nearly trip as she stopped.

"Is something wrong Maria? You don't usually run in a panic like that." Ryouko asked.

"I got a message from Hiroto, a new girl transferred into Tamae's classroom... and she stated she was a Spirit to the whole class!" Maria shouted, Ryouko went wide eyed while Mildred, who had drinking a latte, suddenly coughed and choked on it.

"I know, I don't know how either. We've had no spirit wavelengths detected as of recently or even a Spacequake, not to mention that her eyes were normal so no one even realized it until she revealed it. I need you to check it now."

"Load it up Maria, we'll analyze the photo for confirmation." The male Ratatoskr member, named Mathew, said while nodding. Maria walked to the console and plugged her finger into a spot to transfer the picture of Kurumi over.

Matthew began typing on the console and soon found the picture of Nightmare to have some matches to Kurumi Tokisaki. After a comparison analysis was completed...

"We have a 90%, that means this is the real deal here." Matthew replied, showing the results. Ryouko took a look to see.

"So she's Spirit No. 3, Nightmare. She's one of the three most elusive right now if I remember right. We don't even know what her powers are." Ryouko stated, putting a finger to her chin before her eyes widened. "Hey, wait a second, the other personality in Kotori, that Saya girl. She said that her friend was Nightmare, didn't she?"
"Yeah, that means this is her! I bet she must have sensed Saya's presence while she had Kotori's body and came over-" Maria began, but Mildred stood up.

"That isn't Saya's friend, I hate to say it but we were wrong about when the last Nightmare died." Mildred suddenly stated, getting everyone's attention as they saw her walk up to the screen.

"What do you mean?" Maria asked confused.

"I asked Kotori to let me talk to Saya in case we had any clues to a Spirit's actions and not their appearance in case we heard news about her." Mildred replied, soon making a somber face.

"She said she was one of the kindest and sweetest girls you'd ever meet. She even compared her to Tohka... Nightmare isn't this spirit based in old info I took from the DEM before I abandoned the organization."

Ryouko suddenly sweated.

"I worry I'll regret asking, but what kind of information is this?" Ryouko wondered.

"This Nightmare isn't your typical Spirit, to start with... she's much deadlier than all the others." Mildred said, her glasses shining to hide her eyes as she breathed, preparing to reveal the ugly truth.

"According to DEM's watches of her from my time there, she's killed 10,000 unarmed civilians by non-Spacequake means."

Everyone in the room suddenly gave reactions of surprise and horror, a Spirit... who killed defenseless humans on purpose?

"Are you kidding me!?" Ryouko asked, her eyes shaking in horror as this revelation.

"I'm not, this Nightmare's true to her code name. Probably the only Spirit who acts just like the way she's described to most of the DEM. Probably why most of us don't question their motives." Mildred said, her eyes half closed.

"If that's the case, why did she come to Tenguu City? Why did she enter Raizen High?" Maria panicked, her android body's servos nearly overheating. 'Please, oh my god please... let Mildred's claim be wrong!'

"We should warn them about this, if they're in danger-" Matthew began, but Ryouko held a hand up.

"Captain?"

"We can't jump the gun here. We don't know why she's here, and we have to consider this info as only possible until we get something to verify it." Ryouko answered, sweating a bit. "If we're careless, then we could end up sending them walking to their doom. For now, we need to just confirm she's a Spirit to them, nothing more."

Mildred thought about it for a bit, and then sighed.

"She's right, how is Shido supposed to act if he knows he's a possibly target for murder by the beings he wants to help? All the Spirits so far haven't tried to kill just because, knowing that he's in danger, or found an exception..." Mildred said, trailing off.

Maria look worried but soon nodded.

"I'll send Shido only the information we need him to know at the moment. It's the best we can do right now." Maria sighed, hating the fact she had to lie. 'Shido, I hope you can do this... because
Soon after class ended, Shido was waiting by the window in the room alone. Soon seeing Maria's screen pop up through his headset.

"It's been confirmed on our end Shido, that girl isn't lying. She's definitely a Spirit. Unfortunately..." Maria trailed off, knowing the lie was about to come.

"...That's all we can confirm. We're not sure which Spirit she is, when Hiroto sent the photo we got from him, there was some distortion that interfered with the analysis and we could only confirm spirit mana. I'm afraid you'll be in the dark about her powers."

"So it's not that different from when I saved Tohka, isn't it?" Shido asked.

"Yeah, guess you could say that- oh, we gotta stop talking for now. She's coming and you don't wannabe suspicious. I'll focus on aiding you via your responses if needed." Maria replied, and Shido nodded.

[Guess it's time to start your date then, good luck Shido.]

Shido stared at the window more until he heard someone walk in, and turned to see Kurumi was the one who had come by.

"Sorry for the wait Shido, are you ready to show me a good time?" Kurumi asked.

"Yeah, anywhere you wanna check out first?" Shido responded, the two walking out of the room together. Once they had, the others came out of their hiding spots in the room and Maria contacts their headsets.

"Origami, Kotori, I need you to be right by Shido's side but hide yourselves so Kurumi doesn't notice you." Maria replied, the two nodded and both left the room to follow.

"Ashley, stay nearby from a distance just in case, I'll need you to subdue Kurumi if she tries anything funny. Hiroto, Ai, Mai and Mii? Follow and listen in, if you think something will happen that requires no one see Shido and Kurumi, just walk in like it's a coincidence."

Everyone else nods, Ashley sighing a bit, and headed off to where Maria told them to go. Tamae blinks a bit before Maria begins telling her what to do.

"Oh, and Tamae? Listen close... there's some information we can only share with you. You need to promise to only share it with the others if certain conditions are exposed or it may affect the mission." Maria explained.

"Uh... OK? What is it?"

"You see, the truth is..." Maria began, and Tamae's eyes soon widened a bit.

Soon a familiar red and white CR-Unit lands in the city, and a certain blonde haired girl dispels it to replace it with a one-piece dress with sandals to help blend in. She puts a sun hat on her head and breathes.

"Well, looks like I'm here. Now the question is where is Nightmare?" Artemisia wondered to herself.

As she walked off, Phantom's mosaic form appeared form the shadows of the nearest alley and
Maria was watching Shido's progress through his headset as he and Kurumi walked through the halls, Kotori and Origami managing to keep the deadly Spirit from noticing them at all.

"So, which romantic getaway should we head to first?" Kurumi asked, making Shido wonder. Maria seeing this sends him a response: {It's not sunset for a nice rooftop view, so take her to the school Cafeteria}

"How about the cafeteria and student store?" Shido replied.

"OK." Kurumi smiled.

The two headed in that direction, and soon Kotori and Origami looked at each other.

"What do you think about her so far?" Kotori asked her fellow Spirit.

"W-well... I dunno, but it seems like she's a boat flowing on the river Shido's making, just going with him and not choosing what path to take herself." Origami answered, making Kotori look at her confused.

"S-sorry, I make metaphors when I'm nervous! What I mean is it seems like Kurumi's acting like she's his shadow rather than an individual."

Kotori wondered on that, and noticed Kurumi didn't seem to care what Shido asked her, she just agreed to it by default... almost like she's baiting him. Kotori sweated a bit at that thought.

"Come on, let's follow!" Kotori quickly stated, and Origami shakily nodded as they continued following them. Knowing where they were going, Origami picked open a janitor locker and hide the two of them inside it, and just right before Shido and Kurumi arrived on the scene, Shido pointing at the menu.

"A lot of people like the yakisoba bread, it's a cafeteria classic." Shido stated, with Kurumi staring at him and not what he was doing.

"Though if you want my personal recommendation, I'd go with the strawberry bread. It has a bit more flavor and feels more like a lunch snake, plus it's lighter on your stomach if you need to go to gym class later."

"How interesting." Kurumi replied, soon making Shido blink.

"Are you even listening-"

Shido saw Kurumi staring at him, right up in his face. He jumped back a bit in surprise.

"Uh... are you alright?" Shido asked.

"Sorry, just zoned out for a bit. It's hard to focus with such a handsome man in front of me." Kurumi giggled, causing Shido to sweat drop a bit and making Kotori and Origami's eyes widen as they watched from inside the locker. Maria's eyes bug out a bit as she slowly motions them to see the readings for Shido.

'This girl is flipping the tables on us!' Maria thought, her one eye twitching.

Soon Shido felt Kurumi giggle as she neared the stairs close to the cafeteria and the locker the girls
were hiding in, Maria quickly pressed more options to come up.

1. Honest Response - What did you mean about being a Spirit?
2. Situational Response - So what school did you go to before this one?
3. Funny Response - Kurumi, can you show me your panties?

[...I'm unconscious right now right, that last one isn't really asking about her panties, is it?] Mio whispered to Shido.

"Where'd that last one come from?" Maria questioned, a bit confused how she came to it. Hiroto's face appeared on a screen below.

"I recommend Option 3." Hiroto stated, shocking Maria and Shido a bit.

"What!? What's that?" Maria asked, blushing a bit.

"You just showed us why, she seems to be calm now and that's working in her favor. Perhaps getting her fluster will give Shido the opening we need?" Hiroto replied, making Maria blink.

'Wow, that's actually a good idea.' Maria thought, guess they couldn't be only cautious and expect results. "Shido, try number 3 and see if it does anything. Oh, and Kotori, Origami? Apologies in advanced for what you'll hear Shido say."

Shido sweats a bit, while his two harem girls both tilt their heads confused.

"Hey Kurumi, could you show me what kind of panties your wearing?" Shido asked, and both Kotori and Origami blushed really red at that. Kurumi's reaction however was... unique.

"Panties, like right now?" Kurumi wondered. "Sure, I don't mind. As long as it's you."

Shido and everyone connected to the headset, as well as everyone watching from Ratatoskr, all give a united "EEEEH!?" in reply to that response.

'[Wait, wait, wait, wait... what!? She'll show you them?]

"This is uncharted territory, she's... she's kinky as Hell!" Hiroto declared, his eyes bouncing around like ping-pong balls. At that moment, Kurumi walked up a few stares and slowly began pulling up her skirt to tease Shido.

"Kotori, Origami! Quick! Get out of the locker and abort the mission! Stop the flashing!" Maria ordered, blushing madly. "Ai, Mai, Mii! Hurry over in case Kurumi twists the situation or knows they're Spirits!"

"Right!" Kotori claimed, trying to open the locker... only to find it was locked. "Ah! We're locked in!"

Kurumi smirked as she noticed her adjustment of the lock had worked, though Shido didn't notice due to her still shifting her skirt up and showing the bottom tip of her panties until...

"OK, stop! I'm not ready for this!" Shido exclaimed, turning as he breathed heavily. Kurumi giggled as she let go of her skirt.

"You're so cute when you're shy. So was that Ratatoskr who asked you to question me that, or do you just like panties?" Kurumi replied, making Shido's eyes widen. "That's right. You don't have to play dumb with me sweetie, besides... I already know you've met a few Spirits. I bet some of them
are even attending this school?"

Shido and Maria both flinch at that.

'[There's something wrong about this girl, but I can't tell what! I'm very afraid now!]'

"H-how do you know so much about me?" Shido asked, now feeling a bit worried.

"That's my little secret. There's only one thing I can tell you about myself. Ever since I first found out about you..." Kurumi replied, smiling a bit. Then out of nowhere she suddenly blushed and put her hands to her cheek. "I've been crazy in love and hoping you'd notice me!"

"WHAT!? She already loves him, but how?" Maria exclaimed, her jaw dropping open. Her shock was so great she was ignoring the emotional readings to confirm if she was telling Shido the truth or not... needless to say, she'd regret that later.

"You still listening?" Kurumi asked, grabbing his hand. "Now that I have your attention Shido, I need you to do a favor for me. That is, if you think you can handle it. So what do you say?"

Kotori panics and tries again to break the door open with her fists. Origami looks at the door and soon sighs, getting Kotori's attention before she slams her hand on the locker door to her shock, soon causing them to both spill out to Shido and Kurumi's surprise, Origami landing on top of Kotori with a swell bump on her head.

"Origami, you are the bravest genius I'll ever know." Kotori said, looking at Origami who was fazed and giving a weak thumb's up. "Kurumi Tokisaki, you should know it's against the rules for students to hold hands!"

"Oh, I'm not holding his hand. I think you notice I have pale skin? You see, I have a case of anemia, holding onto his arm keeps me from getting hurt if I fall from it." Kurumi smirked, making Origami and Kotori both flinch at that. However, Kotori falls to her knees right after.

"Oh no... my anemia just started acted up." Kotori suddenly said, making Kurumi blink. Shido sweat dropped a bit. Origami looked at the two and sweated a bit.

"Uh... oh no, I think my anemone's kicking in too!" Origami said, swaying back and forth like the sea creature. Soon Kotori and Kurumi sweat dropped alongside Shido at that, knowing she goofed. "Look, I'm suddenly swaying back and forth to attract fish with my cuteness."

Shido face palmed.

"Origami, they said their 'anemia', not sea anemone." Shido sighed, making Origami blush in embarrassment. At that point, the talkative trio slid into view.

"Whoa, looks like those three are fighting over Shido." Ai acted out, and luckily Kurumi didn't know they were Ratatoskr agents like Shido was.

"This is intense, you think he's already trying to hook up with the transfer student?" Mai acted out as well, trying to look shocked.

"It hasn't haven't been a day yet, that's so lame!" Mii acted out, making herself look disgusted. "Though if it's Kurumi doing it then that's just weird."

'Almost had him, I guess I'll need to give up for today.' Kurumi thought, sighing a bit. "Thanks for showing me around Shido, but I need to get home now. So I'll see you tomorrow."
"That being said, next time I want to do it with you alone." Kurumi whispered, almost in a chilling manner. Soon everyone saw her walk off, and when they did... everyone dropped to the ground and sighed.

"I need to thank you all for showing up when you did, I don't know what would have happened otherwise." Shido breathed, feeling exhausted out of nowhere.

"No problem, just doing our jobs." Mii answered.

"That was so scary, it was like talking to an alien life form." Kotori said, shaking as her nervousness finally flooded to her external expressions. Origami kept rubbing her head in pain after her head butt trick. "You need ice for that?"

"Yeah, that would be good." Origami winced.

"She must be one of the elusive trio." Ashley claimed, everyone turned to her as she walked into view. "Out of the Spirits, Ratatoskr and even the DEM barely know anything about them. We're facing a Spirit that knows us, but we're clueless about... we need more aid. We need your other Spirit friends."

"But how? Neither can attend school here, and one of them isn't high school age even." Ai asked, everyone thinks on that.

"Dang it, if only there was some event that let them in the school without being students." Ashley grunted, kicking a nearby wrapper in response. That gave Origami an idea.

"Hey guys, how much influence does Ratatoskr have over the school?" Origami inquired.

"They can help set up some events and such, and got the secret entrances put in. Why do you ask?" Mai asked.

"Well..." Origami began.

Kurumi was seen humming happily as she began skipping to the place she set up as her residence while she was in Tenguu City.

"Shido, tasty Shido-" Kurumi sang, only to gasp as she caught herself. "Easy girl, don't get excited just yet. You'll need a little more patience than that. I'll be sure to save the best for last."

As she was walking, she didn't notice the sight of someone and she bumped into him. She looked to see the ruffian like man look at her and grunt angrily, two others walking behind him with their hands in their pockets.

"Oh my gosh, I'm sorry. I guess I didn't see you there." Kurumi apologized. However, the three guys looked at her, and the leader who the girl had bumped into gave her a dirty look that clearly said he was a bad guy.

"Yeah, what was that for bitch?" The leader spoke, him and his lackeys surrounding her. "You've gotta do a lot more than say sorry if you wanna go free."

"Damn, this one looks like she's seen some action before." The second guy added, lusting over her appearance.
"Give us your name before we get down. Don't worry, we don't bite that hard." The third guy chuckled, pretty much confirming they wanted her body.

In most cases where a girl ran into a group of guys like these, she'd either get scared, try to run or if gutsy give them a nice kick where the sun doesn't shine. For Kurumi however? She played by different rules, rules where she wasn't the helpless one.

"Fellas, hold on a second. After all there's only one of me. I'm sorry about the bump but..." Kurumi said, smirking as she put near her mouth. "Maybe I can make it up to you with a different kind of bumping?"

The three guys suddenly get excited looks at that.

"Hot damn, this one's actually willing. We hit the jackpot!" The second guy exclaimed.

"Then I guess we'll make sure to treat your pretty face real nice, even we have standards for someone who has your kinda guts." The third guy said, his face not even bothering to hide his excitement as some drool begins to leak out the side.

"We're taking turns, I get to go first." The leader chuckled.

"Come now, there's plenty to go around. Follow me and see for yourself how I like to have fun..." Kurumi replied, soon walking into the nearby alley, causing them to not see her smirk suddenly get vicious. "...If you dare."

The three guys all chuckle as they follow, expecting to have the time of their lives with this girl. However right before they all tried to grab her, suddenly the sight of eerie white hands stretched out from her shadow as it expands, grabbing them and restraining them.

"W-what the hell?" The leader of the guys shouted.

Kurumi turns around to look at them, she moved her right hand over her one visible eye, and at that moment it suddenly began glowing brightly.

"Oh, I'm sorry. I guess I should explain this a bit more. You see when I like to have fun, I don't like go into the darker area of gray morality..." Kurumi began, her school uniform suddenly began to glow. "Elohim!"

Kurumi's school uniform changes back into her Astral Dress, and soon the two guns that made her Angel, a musket and a flintlock pistol, each formed in one of her hands.

"I like to go pitch black!" Kurumi said, her face distorting into a smiling face of anger. Something dark appeared behind her causing all three if the guys she had restrained to stare at what they felt was the Grim Reaper itself.

"HELP!" The three screamed at the top of their lungs.

Unfortunately for them... their screams failed to matter. At that moment, the sight of a bus driving nearby with a can of some beverage with red colored liquid that was rolling across the street was crushed under its wheels as an eerie sound covered the alley.

Soon the bus passed and the alley could be seen again, to anyone nearby at the time, they would have expected the truck had acted as an anime's a gory discretion shot... but inside the alley, not a drop of blood was seen, the only thing in the alley now was Kurumi and her extended shadow before it reverted to normal.
"Thanks for the snack boys, it was delicious. It's always so generous for scum of the Earth like yourselves to let me take your lives and make this world a cleaner, better place." Kurumi giggled, licking her lips right after to savor the taste. She holds up Zafkiel to her face. "Zafkiel, how many does that make now?"

[Those three make 19,857 you have devoured Master.]

"Ah, so I've nearly hit the 20,000 mark." Kurumi noted, smirking a bit. At that moment, she suddenly heard something and turned to see it as she recognized a familiar energy wave.

"So... I arrived too late again, didn't I?" Artemisia stated, seeing only Kurumi in the alley way.

"Ah, hello there Adeptus 2. You just missed all the fun unfortunately." Kurumi giggled, making Artemisia stare at her before equipping her CR-Unit. Kurumi smirked as she drew the Masamune.

"Well just know I'm not making this quick and easy just because you clean up after you eat... Nightmare." Artemisia said, holding out the sword towards Kurumi.

Kurumi prepared Zafkiel, but Artemisia uses her free hand to summon her territory, and unlike normal ones it suddenly broke apart into the hexagons that made it their way towards Kurumi and cut into her. She was knocked onto her back, and felt herself bleeding before getting back up as if she was used to the pain.

"I guess it's your lack of agonizing screams that makes this the only reason I'm not traumatized by how often I've done this." Artemisia somberly replied, thrusting Masamune forward and blasting a concentrated beam of mana to knock Kurumi down again... this time she didn't get back up as she struggled to even more.

Artemisia walked over to her, soon seeing Kurumi turn her head to look at her with a smile.

"You really are good, you got me again. Yet you're not anyone closer to getting rid of me for good." Kurumi giggled weakly, a bit of blood trickling out of her mouth.

"...Talk brave all you want, not even a Spirit can live forever. I think the deceased wielders of your evil powers are proof of that." Artemisia sadly declared, closing her eyes as she swings Masamune down.

*SLASH!*

At the bus stop, the very bus that had driven by the scene of Kurumi's little 'feast' had come to a stop. Shido, Origami and Kotori all got off the bus and began walking home to make dinner.

"Burgers, tonight I'm in the mood for some burgers." Kotori smiled excitedly.

"Ooh! That sounds good, let's go with that!" Origami agreed, a white bandage wrapped around her forehead due to her... head buster moment earlier.

Suddenly they see a sun hat fly at them and Shido catches it.

"Did somebody lose this?"

"Oh thank you!" A girl's voice called out, the trio looked to see Artemisia run their way. "I was afraid the wind would blow that away, thank you kind sir."

"Oh, no trouble at all." Shido replied, handing Artemisia's hat back to her.
While normally a DEM member would recognize the three, due to her long absence, they were lucky as she wasn't told about Shido, Origami's face had been veiled while she was Inverted and Kotori's body had recently gotten it physical age up from the weird conditions of her inversion.

"Oh, I better get going. Thanks again." Artemisia smiled, waving as she walked off.

"She seems nice, doesn't she? I don't think I've seen her before. A tourist maybe?" Kotori wondered.

"Who knows, we should get dinner ready before Tohka starts eating the house itself though." Shido replied, making the three giggle at the joke of Tohka's appetite. Once they got home, they saw Tohka chewing on one of the pillows.

"No Tohka, don't eat that!" Shido panicked, handing the backs to the others. Shido had learned the hard way recently that Tohka could eat inorganic substances when making a small joke, she told him she could eat frying pans.

"But I'm hungry!" Tohka said, however it was muffled by her pillow biting so it only came out as gibberish.

"We're about to make dinner, just be a bit patient." Shido said, sweating a lot. Yoshino and Yoshinon, who were watching a TV show, both turned at this and the rabbit puppet laughed.

"Ooh, having trouble Shido? It's no wonder Tohka's your main girl in the harem, she drives you wild like God's forbidden fruit! Sweet with the right amount of tangy!" Yoshinon joked, giggling like crazy as she did. Yoshino tilted her head confused.

"Wow, that's what it tastes like? I want some forbidden fruit!" Tohka said, her eyes sparkling. Shido facepalms.

"Yoshinon, stop putting ideas into Tohka's head!" Shido stated, the puppet giggles and slowly slides down the choice, making a 'you never saw me' motion with her arms. "...Oh yeah. Yoshino, Tohka, we need to talk to you about something."

The two looked as Shido began cooking dinner, Origami and Kotori sat down on the couch.

"At school, there's gonna be an event where people who aren't students can come examine the campus during school hours. It's so parents and some potential students can see Raizen High and decide if they wanna attend the next semester or once they graduate middle school level." Origami explained, getting the two to blink a bit.

"What that means is despite neither of you actually attend school, for this Saturday and Monday after our day off, both of you can be at school to see us in class." Kotori continued. "So, you two wanna come?"

Tohka's eyes sparkled at that.

"I can be with Shido at school for a day? Yay!" Tohka cheered, jumping into the air, and making Yoshino bounce a bit.

"It... it sounds fun." Yoshino smiled shyly, but Yoshinon crossed her arms.

"Alright what are you all hiding?" Yoshinon bluntly asked, making Shido, Origami and Kotori flinch a bit. "Aha! I knew it, you don't suddenly make an event like this out of nowhere. What's really going on that you suddenly need two more Spirits to be with you at school?"
"Thank you, I try my best." Yoshinon giggled, tilting her head and clapping her arms to the side for emphasis.

[Well the truth is a Spirit came to our school and enrolled, but... we don't have any information on her. That worries us, especially since she seems to be getting close to Shido. Worse is she knows about Ratatoskr.]

"Shido could be in danger?" Tohka gasped, worried about her boyfriend's life.

[I think he already is, we just don't know what danger he's in. For that reason alone, it's better we have all four of us there, especially since Mana's not allowed out of the hospital for the next few days.]

"Then... we'll be there for you Shido, it's a promise." Yoshino replied, Tohka nodded heavily as well. Shido smiled right as the timer dinged.

"Alright, hamburgers are ready everyone!" Shido called out, Kotori cheered as Tohka rushed over to the table while drooling. As Origami walked over, she suddenly got a message from Maria and gasped. "Hey Origami, your food's getting called. You coming?"

"Oh! Right, sorry about that!" Origami replied, hurrying to the table.

As night washed over the city, Reine was seen walking through a certain area until she ended up by shrine where Tohka had first run into Shido. The moment she did, she tapped a bell, and a certain mosaic formed into view.

"(This is a surprise, how'd you know I was here.)" Phantom inquired, quite surprised how easily Reine had found her current location. "(So, what does the commander of Ratatoskr's Tenguu branch want to talk with me about.)"

"...Tell me the truth, what happened to my brother?" Reine asked, making Phantom tilt her head.

"(Brother, I don't know who you're talking?)" Phantom honestly answered, she was about to leave, when Reine suddenly grabbed her, Phantom tried to vanish away but found she couldn't. That's when she saw something on her hands that was interfering with her spirit mana.

"Stop lying, I said tell me!" Reine screamed, scaring Phantom a bit. "I know you know the truth so tell me already!"

"(I-I don't know who you're talking about, I'm not lying! Honest!)" Phantom replied, starting to tear a bit from being scared.

"You do know! I know it, with how long you've been here, with all you know, you have to know! So tell me!" Reine reasoned, tightening her grip on Phantom's hand. "Tell me why my brother disappeared all those years! There's no way you don't know my brother if you know Shido and Mana so well! There's no way..."

Reine shook, tears flowing down her eyes.

"...There's no way you don't know anything about their father!"

"(I don't know! I swear I don't, I don't even know who you're talking about! I only know what mama
told me to do! Stop bullying me!" Phantom cried loudly, knocking Reine into a nearby tree. She looked up briefly to see true form before the mosaic often hiding it returned.

"(Leave... leave poor Phantom alone! Phantom's not doing anything bad! Phantom's only doing what was asked of her, she can't even see Shido or Mana! Please... leave me alone!"

Phantom soon blinked away, and Reine reached out in vain... she soon slams the ground. Tears began to fall to the dirt as she whimpered loudly, covering her eyes with her left hand.

"Will these answers allude me forever, are their none to be found? Why... why can't I know what happened to you more than 30 years ago?" Reine cried, holding her wedding ring in her hand. "Why can't I know what cost you and him your lives because of my stupidity!"

The next day, Tohka and Yoshino both stared at Raizen High as they stopped at the school gate with Shido and the others, soon both smiling brightly.

"This place looks amazing! You really go to school here all the time, is it fun!?" Tohka asked, her pupils somehow having turned into stars. Shido giggled at the enthusiasm she was showing about getting to spend the day with him at school.

"Yep, that it is. Now let's hurry before we're late for class." Shido replied. Tohka and Yoshino nodded, following Shido, Origami and Kotori into class. A few other non-students were seen in the halls as everything for the event was set up. When they entered class, Shido was stared at as the guys noticed Tohka by him.

"Oh, you must be friends of Shido. Hi there! I'm Tohka Yatogami, and I'm Shido's girlfriend." Tohka innocently introduced herself, unaware that Shido went pale at everyone who glared at him.

"YOU BASTARD!" They all shouted, preparing to attack him when...

"Please don't hurt big brother, he didn't do anything bad." Yoshino pleaded, hitting them with the ultimate weapon of cute girls... the puppy dog eyes! They all blushed and stopped in place. Shido's jaw dropped at the sight.

"Oh, of course. We won't hurt him." One boy replied.

"We'd never do anything to make you cry, we're sorry for that." Another boy apologized, petting her head. Yoshino and Yoshinon turned around, both giving Shido a thumb's up.

"Yoshino... you are scary in the cutest way possible." Origami stated, in pure shock.

Soon everyone took their seats, while Yoshino and Tohka stood by the corner, Tamae walked in and Tohka waved hi to her. Tamae giggled a bit before began taking roll call, after a bit she reached the last name starting with 'S'.

"Saki Shimata?" Tamae called out.

"Here!"

"Hajime Suzuki?" Tamae called again.

"Here."

"Kurumi Tokisaki?" Tamae called out, but after a bit heard nothing. "Tokisaki, are you here? Tokisaki?"
"Wait, she isn't here?" Shido looked and noticed Kurumi wasn't at her seat, surprising him since it was only the second day. "That's weird..."

"About that... we probably shouldn't expect her to come back from today." Origami replied, getting Shido's attention. However at that moment...

"Sorry I'm late."

Everyone turned to see Kurumi at the door, Tamae included.

"Kurumi, why are you so late?" Tamae asked.

"Sorry about that Ms. Okamine, I was a little nauseous on the way here so I stopped to get something for my stomach." Kurumi replied, making Tamae gasp a bit.

"Oh, oh my. Are you feeling well enough for class today?" Tamae asked, and Kurumi nodded as she sat down.

"Guess she made it, any longer and she'd have been marked absent." Shido replied, soon he heard a sliding sound as Origami stoop up slightly to lean, shocked at the sight she just witnessed. 'What the, why does Origami look so scared?'

Tamae began gathering the lesson plan, and noticed Origami send her a message. She looked at it while still organizing her plan papers.

"{Meet me at the physics preparation room during lunch, I need you to see something. Afterwards call Shido and the others in with you... this is really important.}"

Tamae felt a drop of sweat form as she got a bad feeling.

Tamae was soon in the physics preparation room, and soon enough she heard Origami enter the room.

"Origami, what is it you need me to see?" Tamae asked, a bit nervous about how to use the device she normally had Reine use. Unfortunately, she hadn't been coming to the school since Mana had suddenly fallen ill. "If you need this to show me it, I don't think I'm good at using it."

"Don't worry, I'll take care of that." Origami replied, soon taking a seat and typing. Despite having never seen her use the similar console at Ratatoskr's base, Origami quickly surprised Tamae as she showed full knowledge on its use.

"Did Reine teach you how to use this?" Tamae asked, completely flabbergasted. Origami shook her head.

"U-uh... well, I'm the super genius remember?" Origami stuttered, blushing a bit. After a bit, she brought up a video feed from one of the Ratatoskr observation devices. Showing the moment the alley Kurumi had been it was cleaned of her presence. "Video feed, rewind one minutes."

Soon the moment Artemisia showed up played.

"Maria sent me a message yesterday that Kurumi's spirit readings vanished... for good. I'd take a good look at this." Origami explained, and the two watched. After that minute... Tamae suddenly gasped.

"No way, but she's..." Tamae breathed.
"See what I mean? Get Shido and the others here, they need to see it too." Origami reasoned, and Tamae nodded as she went to get them. After about another 3 minutes, the others except Ashley who had went off... somewhere, had been brought in and saw the same clip. Shido nearly puked, while Kotori's eyes shook at the sight of Kurumi's Angel.

"What is this!?” Shido demanded.

"A recording from yesterday, when Kurumi was killed by a DEM wizard. It seems that girl we met... she's the Adeptus 2 we've only heard about before now." Origami explained, shaking a bit herself. Soon she saw Kotori's reaction. "Kotori?"

"...I know her, now I get why I recognized Kurumi. She was there, 5 years ago." Kotori stuttered, making Origami gasp a bit.

"Wait, you saw this Spirit during the fire 5 years ago? It wasn't just us?" Origami exclaimed in shock, but Kotori shook her head as she gave a fearful look.

"Not during the fire, before it... in fact she's how I caused it. She attacked me for no reason, she was insane... and pretty much stated she wanted me dead with a shot to my head." Kotori explained, everyone shocked as Kotori struggled to breathe properly from the stress of the memory.

"I don't get it, she's dead but not and... nice yet mean?" Tohka said, feeling confused. Tamae realizing the situation decided Maria's condition with her was fulfilled.

"Origami, rewind that video about three minutes back, there's something you all need to know. Something Maria didn't tell me to tell you until evidence appeared." Tamae suddenly stated, surprising Origami. "Just do it, trust me."

Origami nodded and did so, and soon enough they saw a video of the men being restrained before static suddenly briefly shot across the screen... but afterwards, the sight of a large shadow filling the alley and the three men gone was seen.

"Yoshinon, where did they go?" Yoshino asked shakily, now scared. Yoshinon didn't reply as she knew Yoshino couldn't take the truth.

"She... she just..." Shido said, his eyes shaking.

"Everyone, truth is Maria and the others discovered which Spirit she was from the start. She's Spirit No. 3, the one we call... [Nightmare], a spirit who controls shadows.” Tamae answered, getting everyone's attention.

[But wait that mean she's S-]

"No, it isn't... I hate to say it but she really is dead." Tamae said sadly, making everyone gasp. "How her friend was described isn't this girl at all. She is the [Worst Spirit], a spirit who according to Mildred at the time she got the data, killed 10,000 unarmed civilians by non-Spacequake means."

"My god!" Kotori exclaimed, nearly puking at that revelation.

"A Spirit... who takes lives of her own free choice? Not even in the form of self-defense?" Origami stuttered, her voice whimpering a bit.

[On that day, we learned a horrible truth... there was a Spirit that was had every intent to take lives freely. Before then, we had only believed we were chasing a Spirit who unpredictable and maybe a yandere for Shido at best. Not anymore, from this point onward... We knew we were facing a
predator, and our school was the cage holding its prey... that was us. No, the prey that was me."

Shido's fist tightens as his fear fills his eyes.

[And the worst part of it? I still had to save her, but how do I save someone like this? Someone who's out to end my life? This date right here... may be the most difficult one of my entire life, and possibly the end of it.]

Meanwhile Kurumi was eating lunch back in the classroom, she suddenly smirked and give a dark stare as her eye glowed.

The horrible truth has been revealed, the murderous backstory behind Kurumi's actions, and worse is due to information Mildred had on hand... no one realizes that Kurumi actually is the best friend of Saya they're looking for and not a successor nightmare they missed the inheritance from between the decade she's been a Spirit. Better hope Saya wakes up soon to reveal this or they're in trouble!

And now we learn the stunning truth behind about what Kannazuki told Reine she should admit back in Yoshino's arc, you saw the Takamiya's father in a flashback last chapter, but as you can see here... the reason why Reine knew them without being their mother is because Shido and Mana's father was actually her older brother! Yes, I said was, in case you missed that detail... Reine mentioned he's deceased, what killed him had also killed her husband and she was the one who indirectly caused it with her choices.

Phantom crying, that really hit me in the feels, the reason I've always had her mentioned to be about the size of a young child is because she is literally only a kid. Not just physically, but also mentally despite how long she's been passing the Sephira crystals to host, she can act mature and confident but that can break in an instant if she wants to or pushed too far. I wonder why she suddenly switched to third person like that though? :3

Now the truth about Kurumi has reached Shido's group, so... how will they deal with the most dangerous Spirit of all? Also, where the heck did Ashley run off to during all this? Find out next time, where we start getting a closer look at the SSS as they suddenly get wind of an old friend's appearance in Tenguu City... but get a not so happy reunion.

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 75%

Origami - 56%

Yoshino - 38%

Kotori - 67%
Chapter 16

At this rate, I'm just gonna say that I usually get things done faster based on how much I want to do something, and I've been wanting to get to this arc since I started the story and I'm just too much in the mood to write some chapters for this story right now! To anyone who reads A Dragon's Heavenly Bonds, my apologies for making you wait. I'll make sure to at least add a new chapter to it before I make part 4 of this arc.

Get ready for a change of focus here everyone, because most of this chapter is based on exactly what I said in the end notes of last chapter. Ashley didn't join the group to learn about Kurumi's true self and is heading out with the SSS to meet a certain individual who's in town. Guess it would be pretty accurate to say Ashley was aware something happened to Kurumi, but focused more on who did the deed.

Not to say that we won't get some clues about Kurumi in this chapter, in fact there's one as soon as the first scene. So, let's bring out the next data sheet with Origami and then get this chapter started!

-Origami Tobiichi, Code Name: [Angel]-

Demon King: Metatron, the "Angel of Extinction" - Metatron is a horizontal edged crown that works as a control point for the true body of the Angel, a group of golden feather like pillars that charge and fire beams of light on Origami's command by using the crown to command and guide their actions and movements. Metatron doesn't change forms by altering its appearance, but shifting the position of the pillars into one of five formations to adapt to a given situation.

- Alternate Form: Shemesh, The Sun - This formation is considered Origami's rapid fire or surprise strike formation. By having the floating pillars spin around her, she can gather light particles in which she can then release as a rain of energy blasts.

- Alternate Form: Mal'akh, Heavenly Wings - This formation is considered Origami's speed formation or wing formation. By shifting the pillars to take on a wing-like formation and then folding them behind her back, Origami is able to fly and achieve greater speeds than usual, but at the cost of having to attack without the pillars until she detaches them.

- Alternate Form: Kadour, Sword of Light - This formation is considered Origami's combat formation or lack of formation. By breaking their positions, Origami can make the pillars each attack its target or different targets individually, making it look as if each pillar has a will of its own. According to Origami, this formation is the most difficult one for her to use since she has to focus on each pillar differently.

- Alternate Form: Artelif, Crown Cannon - This formation is considered Origami's beam formation or sniper formation. By making all of the pillars take on a circular formation around her and then pointing their tips in the same direction, Origami can shoot out a beam of pure shining light by making the pillars fire simultaneously and amplifying their power.
- Alternate Form: Zohar, Holy Gate - This formation is considered Origami's shield formation or guarding formation. By making the pillars surround her and move in front of her after linking their tips on both ends or just a single end, Origami can use their gleaming light to create a barrier that can block incoming attacks. The level of defense, and if the guard is more of a shield or a barrier, depends on how their ends are touching.

- Powers: Origami's elemental affinity as a Spirit is Light, she can gather photon particles from the air and convert them into her spirit mana for her attacks, as a consequence she is weaker at night where the amount of photons are few and therefore she has less to gather unless in a well-lit area. When about to be attacked, Origami will automatically be teleported a few meters away by Metatron, but can't do this continuously and its implied Metatron has to predict the attack to avoid it, as would an attack with a large enough radius to strike her teleportation distance.

Risk Factors:
AAA
Spacequake: AA
Spirit's Astral Dress: AA
Angel Rank: AAA
Strength: 158
Consistency: 152
Spiritual Power: 219
Agility: 206
Intelligence: 243

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Chapter 16, S1: Kurumi Fallacy, Part 3

Origami walked back into class, and soon walked up to Kurumi's desk, getting the Shadow Spirit's attention.

"...Kurumi, I need meet me by the door to the roof, and I need you to meet me there now. I have something I need to talk to you about in private." Origami requested, soon walking towards that location and confusing the other students in the room.

"How interesting Origami, alright then." Kurumi said to herself before getting up and following, soon she saw Origami waiting for her at the rooftop's door and she turned to see Kurumi come into view. "Hello Origami, you wanted to see me about something?"

"You were supposed to have died yesterday, so how are you still alive Nightmare?" Origami replied, squeezing her hands into a fist so her trembling hands looked more like a shake of anger and not let Origami see how terrified she was.

"I was?" Kurumi asked, giving a smile that chilled Origami to the bone by how unnatural and creepy it felt. "Oh yeah, I remember now. I think you were on the bus that was riding by right as Artemisia murdered me if I recall. Isn't that right... Angel?"
Origami's eyes widened and she jumped back a bit as Origami spoke her Spirit code name, that mean... Kurumi knew about her and most likely Kotori. Worst case scenario she knew who Tohka and Yoshino were too.

"E-

"E-

Origami never even got the chance to try summoning her Astral Dress as Kurumi's shadow extended and white hands suddenly extended out to grab her, soon pinning her to the wall. Kurumi smirked as she saw her trapped and helpless, her spirit strength completely useless against the restraints on her.

"Don't bother Angel, not even your strength is enough to break those bonds. I'd calm yourself down before you get hurt." Kurumi stated, getting closer with the same chilling smile on her face. Origami's eyes shook a bit as she got closer. "To answer your question though? It's simple... I. Can't. Die."

One of the ghastly white hands reaches to Origami's throat, and she stared at Kurumi.

"Go ahead, try and kill me! If you do Shido will notice my power vanish from him and know it was you! You'll expose just what you really are!" Origami choked out, however Kurumi giggles in response to that.

"Oh, I'm not gonna kill you, truth is if I did that would go against exactly what I plan. Take a look." Kurumi answered, soon shifting her hair a bit to reveal the left eye she kept hiding all this time... and it was revealed to not be red at all. It was gold, and it looked just like an old-fashioned clock face using Roman Numerals for each hour.

"You have a clock for a left eye?" Origami gasped, she had never seen a Spirit with such an eye before. She wasn't sure why... but her instincts told her that clock wasn't right. What was wrong about it however, that's what she didn't understand.

"Beautiful isn't it? It isn't just a lovely decoration either, it's exactly why I'm here." Kurumi replied, soon getting closer as Origami saw her eye glow, finally revealing her whitened pupil she had somehow been hiding all this time.

"Remember what I told Shido the other day while you were listening? Well guess what Angel... that wasn't a lie, it's just how I said it that I doubt you fully understand. We both crave him, you crave him out of love, but for me? But my craving goes much deeper, and let me assure you, the only reason I don't kill you right now is because you can't do a thing, and I unfortunately need all of you and those other Spirits alive."

Origami gulped in fear.

"You... you really are a yandere, aren't you?" Origami breathed.

"A yandere? Oh I'm sorry, I think I've implied things poorly, I do love him... but not a romantic love. I love him for what he has. For his power, the power of four Spirits welled up inside his body."

Kurumi smirked, making Origami's eyes widen.

"Oh yes, it's absolutely delight. Just being near all if makes me feel amazing. Most of all... it looks very delicious. So that's why I'm going to take it all for myself, I'll take all that spirit mana welling inside him the way I can. You've seen me kill already haven't you, can you figure out how I do it?"

"Oh my god..." Origami stuttered, realizing just what Kurumi wanted to do to Shido. "Y-you're gonna, you'll... you'll"
"That's right Origami, I'm going to eat him!" Kurumi declared, soon taking a few steps back before her red eye glows brighter and she starts laughing in a crazed manner. A shadow covers the top half of Origami's face as she shows pure fear at the spirit before her.

'This is no Spirit, she's... she's a living nightmare!' Origami thought, still staring at Kurumi before her laughter finally fades.

"Oh, but don't think that means I'll be leaving you on your own. I simply need to eat Shido first. One I do... you and the other four are next, and then I'll finally accomplish the goal I've set out for all this time." Kurumi said, rubbing her hands across Origami's legs, making her try to shift away in vain.

"Go ahead and try to resist me all you want, it's a lot more fun than surrendering to me. So go ahead, show me what you, Shido and all your friends can do... I'll be waiting. Though first, I think I should give them a warning through you."

Origami glared at her.

"Talk big, but I already know... I already know how Kotori beat you 5 years ago!" Origami exclaimed, making Kurumi's eyes widen before her face took an angry look.

"Excuse me? Are you implying that I'm weak?" Kurumi asked bitterly, and Origami keeps staring at you.

"5 years ago, the Tenguu Fire was started at the result of Kotori beating you when attacked her! She had just gotten her powers, and you lost to her!" Origami shouted, suddenly Kurumi's eyes widen and they shook as she suddenly recalled the memory.

-Flashback Start-

"Camael... MEGIDDO!"

Kotori raised up Camael, shocking Kurumi as her Yud Aleph's connection was cancelled out before it could finish. Camael taking the form of a cannon, scaring the girl before her.

"That's..." Kurumi breathed, suddenly full of fear.

"Turn them all to ashes..."

Suddenly in Kotori's place, the sight of a similar dressed girl, one who looked to be about 17-years old with brown hair and the same blue eyes. Her blue eyes were met more slit in comparison to Kotori's, and she had a vicious smile, the kind you'd see on someone or something that was hungry for blood.

"Saya?" Kurumi breathed, almost as if seeing a Demon stare at her. Suddenly Saya's image was replaced with a being covered in fire, looking like some kind of burning monster, and that monster suddenly got closer and closer to her. "Stop... stop it."

Kurumi was suddenly seen running away from some kind of flaming monster, it rushed by trying to attack her, only to miss as Phantom rammed into it and knocked it aside. The invisible spirit brushed off the burns she sustained and panted, looking at Kurumi.

"(Come on, we gotta kill this Spirit before it breeches into your world!)" Phantom called out, and Kurumi nodded as she readied Zafkiel to fire at the monster. The burning spirit gives a distorted cry
Phantom rushed forward again and rammed the burning Spirit from the front, knocking it back and off guard before it tumbled across the ground and. Kurumi rushed forward at that moment and jumped into the sky before aiming her Angel at it.

"ZAFKIEL!" Kurumi shouted, firing the tow guns and striking the spirit in its vital points, it stood motionless for a moment... and soon fell over as the flames laid on the ground. Kurumi panted before panting.

"(Alright! Nice job Kurumi, we killed another one and now Humanity has nothing to worry about for today. I'll clean up, you head home now.)"

"R-Roger that Phantom." Kurumi breathed, soon getting up a bit. She felt a bit dizzy but just ignored it as a temporary spell that would vanish in a few minutes as she made her way back home.

"What... is... this!" Kurumi gasped, the sight before her looking like a bad dream.

In her attempt to leave the Spirit Dimension and then return home, Kurumi's dizzy spell had caused her to end up going a full 180 and took her back right to where she killed the spirit alongside Phantom. However, what she saw there had horrified her. Phantom was still present, a red gem of sorts in her hands, but... where the burning spirit had been before lied the dead body of a brown haired girl wearing a kimono.

"(Damn, should have known that you might end up coming back here. It was a mistake to make you leave in a hurry.)" Phantom grunted, looking annoyed at the situation before her as Kurumi looked at the body.

"Why... why is Saya here? Why is she..." Kurumi breathed, soon laughing weakly as if she heard a joke. "Come on Saya, you're just sleeping, right? You're just resting, you'll be OK. You... you really aren't dead, I know it-"

"(Stop that gibberish, you're just being annoying now!)" Phantom spat out, making Kurumi suddenly freeze up. "(Since your thick skull won't accept it, I'll have to crush reality into you. The girl is dead, deceased, killed, murdered! And the one who did it... it was you Kurumi.)"

Kurumi's eyes shrunk at that.

"N-No... I would never, she's my best friend. She's.-" Kurumi stuttered.

"(The same burning spirit I had you kill.) Phantom declared, making Kurumi suddenly go still as those words echoed through her.

"(In fact, truth is every one of those monsters we kill is a human I gave these fancy little gems like I'm holding right here. I'm having your kind refine these things so they can be fully used by the First Spirit when I take them back so she can get her revenge on that madman Westcott, but the toxicity in them drives them berserk and mutates them, just like her. Most of all, I don't even care how many it takes. Face the facts, because I made you one too!)"

Kurumi soon falls onto her butt.

"No... no! NO!" Kurumi screamed, tears flooding into her eyes before she made an angry face and summoned Zafkiel. "How dare you use me and Saya! You're gonna pay for everything you've done to Humanity!"
Kurumi rushed at Phantom, and soon the invisible spirit's mosaic flared and in moments, Kurumi felt her entire body struck and cut, leaving her with multiple slash wounds as she fell to the ground, weak and bleeding.

"B-but how...?" Kurumi mumbled.

"(You think I'd really use my full strength while keeping an illusion like this one up. Wrong you little brat, I've never even bothered. Now... I need to keep you behaved, maybe those DEM brats will do. First off, I need to make sure you never remember any of this.)" Phantom stated while grabbing her face. "(So I'm erasing all your memories.)"

Kurumi tried to get away, but her whole body was limp and unable to move as Phantom tightened her grip, she screamed as her fingers dulled into her face, and in moments... she screamed louder as she felt her mind crack... and then shatter as her memory was completely destroyed.

Kurumi outran another platoon of DEM soldiers as she vanished through a shadow, finally getting them off her tail.

"...I finally got away, thank goodness." Kurumi panted, rubbing her head. "Why are they chasing me though? Better yet, who am I? Why can't I remember, do I even have memories to remember?"

[...Yud, use it.]

"Huh? Who said..." Kurumi looks at her Angel. "You can... speak?"

[Use Yud, use your Tenth Bullet on yourself.]

Kurumi links and soon looks at her Angel, soon aiming one of the guns at her head.

"...Y-Yud!"

She fires at herself, and suddenly the shattered pieces of her memories piece themselves back together, causing Kurumi to gasp as she recalled everything. Suddenly her face contorts into one of anger.

"It was her, it was always her! She took it all from me! My happiness, my innocence, my best friend!" Kurumi screamed, crying as she slammed her book into the wall, kicking it fiercely.

"...Wait a minute, I remembered something. She mentioned it was all for this First Spirit and her revenge. That's it. I'll gather power to use Yud Bet, go to the past, and take one of their lives to undo all the suffering Phantom gave me. I will ruin her dream with my own two hands!"

"No... don't... don't do this! Please!" Kurumi breathed, her voice shaking.

Kurumi saw a flash between Kotori, Saya, and the monster form she killed Saya in as Kotori's charge finally completed.

"...do it Camael!" 'Kotori' shouted before she fired at the girl, hitting her heard and sending her flying forward. At that moment, Kotori's eyes reverted to normal.

-End Flashback-

"No, you... you... you!" Kurumi panicked, starting to breathe heavily and hold in her face.
Feeling the hands' grip slip slightly, Origami slips out her hands and fires a blast of light. Kurumi noticing this jumps out of the way as the blast smashed into the wall behind her. Origami fell to the ground, coughing as she held her neck, trying to breath again.

"This... this isn't over!" Kurumi panted, soon sinking through the wall and disappearing.

Once she disappeared, Origami pants and holds herself as she cries, finally letting the terror she felt flood out as she could stop being strong for the moment. That was probably the scariest thing she had ever experienced, not even her parents' death had felt as traumatizing as this.

"I honestly thought I was gonna die, thank god. Thank god I'm still alive." Origami cried, soon crying out all her tears before breathing slowly and calming herself. "Shido, I think I found her weakness... the question is will it be enough, or even better... have I just made us walk into a trap?"

Ashley headed to her locker and swapped out her school shoes for her usual ones, soon grabbing her bag and her usual clothes. After checking the area, she knocked on a nearby trash can to open a secret passage to the Ratatoskr base, soon landing back inside her original outfit as Leonora and Cecile notice her arrive.

"Ashley, what are you doing here? Aren't you supposed to be in class right now?" Cecile asked, making Ashley grunt a bit.

"Du, I'm skipping. Besides that, I think you'll wanna see this." Ashley replied, tossing a USB over to Leonora. "Broke into a private observation unit. Apparently, something interesting happened around after-school hours the other day. How about we sneak a peek?"

Leonora sighs and scratches her head.

"You can be a troublesome munchkin at times, but guess we'll take a look." Leonora replied, making Ashley glare at her for a moment before calming down after Cecile pet her. Leonora puts the USB into a terminal and shows the same video about Kurumi the others had seen.

"That's the Spirit at your school right now, isn't it?" Cecile replied as she partially activated her CR-Unit so she could see it. Soon they saw the consumption of the three men after the static screen.

"...For some reason, I don't think that was just a coincidence."

"Yeah, someone didn't want us watching and I'm thinking that girl's the likely culprit." Ashley stated boredom, until she suddenly noticed someone. "Wait, hold up!"

Leonora and Cecile noticed it too, prompting the former to pause it.

"It can't be, can it?" Leonora wondered, shifting the screen position until they could view the face of the girl... a familiar blonde haired girl they knew.

"Artemisia!?!" The three stated in unison.

"She's... she's in Tenguu City, since when?" Ashley shouted as she slammed her hands on the console, her eyes shaking and her arms before running out. "I'm gonna find her, I'm not losing this chance!"

"Wait, Ashley!" Leonora called out, preparing to follow when...

"Um, Leonora, don't forget about me?" Cecile asked, making the black haired wizard look to see Cecile struggling to follow due to how fast she could push her wheelchair.
"Oh, sorry!" Leonora panicked as she ran behind the wheelchair and grabbed it, helping Cecile as they went after Ashley. Right as they did, Reine finally came back to the base after the incident the day before and soon noticed the video feed.

"Hmm?"

Reine wondered what was going on before playing it, recognizing Artemisia's face and then seeing what happened next. Making her shock a bit in worry the moment she replayed it fully and noticed the static, almost like she recognized the source."

"This is... Oh god, what have we walked into?" Reine sweated, soon getting her phone to send Mildred and Ryouko an emergency message.

Ashley ran around the city, tapping some buttons on her phone as she got herself access to the emergency observation device.

"Alright, one two..." Ashley muttered, aiming it around until she noticed a girl in a one-piece dress and sandals, soon moving the device to see Artemisia's face was on her. "I've found you!"

Leonora and Cecile finally caught up and noticed Ashley run off a certain way.

"Did she find something?" Cecile wondered, looking at Leonora.

"I think she did, come on. Just hold tight." Leonora reasoned, Cecile nodded and did so as Leonora pushed her wheelchair faster.

Ashley soon ran near an open field clearing within the city's forest. Artemisia was there with a bird perched on her fingers, only for her to see it fly away as she suddenly heard Ashley run into view and scare it off. Artemisia blinks at that.

"Artemisia, it's..." Ashley breathed, soon having tears begin to form in her eyes. "It really is you, where have you been all this time!"

Leonora and Cecile soon catch up and see the same.

"Artemisia, I don't believe it." Leonora gasped.

"You're... you really were alive, we always knew." Cecile cried, even though she couldn't actually see her right now. Artemisia blinked at their replies.

"I'm sorry, but who are you three?" Artemisia asked, suddenly surprising the trio as her strange reply.

"W-what the hell are you talking about! You know us, we're your friends! Don't act like we're strangers!" Ashley shouted, her force contorting with anger as some of her tears shed out. "You were the reason we even kept going and became great wizards!"

Artemisia felt a tingle in her head, but ignored it.

"Seriously, what are you talking about?" Artemisia questioned, honestly confused by what they were talking about. Leonora suddenly began crying at that.

"You can't have forgotten! Don't you remember the encouragement you gave Ashley when she thought nothing matter? How often you comforted me when my tough act fell? How you kept Cecile from giving up and teaching her to use her CR-Unit and territory despite her conditions!? Was our time in the SSS that little to you that you forgot it like it never mattered!?" Leonora cried out, making
Artemisia's eyes widen a bit.

"I..." Artemisia breathed, before suddenly feeling her head. Though another tingle went off and she just ignored it. "I don't know what you're saying, is this some kind of trick? The fact you just said you were wizards though..."

Artemisia soon equips her Shiva and the others get on guard.

"...I've never seen you at the DEM, so I'm going to have to assume your enemy wizards allied to Ratatoskr. I have no choice but to take care of you as my job being Adeptus 2." Artemisia said, a somber look on her face.

"Adeptus... 2?" Cecile breathed, that only meant one thing... and Cecile shook as it hit her. "No, that can't be true!"

Cecile forms the Longma and jumps off her wheelchair, flying at Artemisia.

"Cecile, no!" Ashley called out.

"How could you betray everything you taught us, how could you!?!" Cecile screamed, her CR-Unit's weapons flying forward from her back to strike Artemisia. Unfortunately, the Adeptus 2 of DEM drew out Masamune, and fired a beam from it, Cecile dodged and activated her territory jamming as she rushed in again.

"No good, that won't work on me." Artemisia replied sadly, looking away slightly.

Artemisia raised a hand and deployed her territory, suddenly cutting through Cecile's field to her shock as the beam twist sand turns before blasting right through Cecile's chest.

"CECILE" Ashley and Leonora cried, running towards her. Cecile fell to the ground, clutching her stomach in pain. Luckily her CR-Unit had limited the damage to the equivalent of a phantom stabbing.

"Guess that's it, and now... I have no choice but to clear the witnesses." Artemisia stated as she readied Masamune to fire again. Cecile simply turns to her though and gives her a dark glare.

"You're right, we don't know you... the Artemisia we knew wasn't some cruel murderer like you!"
Cecile screamed, making Artemisia suddenly stop and gasp silently. Cecile struggling to move as Ashley and Leonora held her.

"Why did you become what you hate, why did you join the DEM when you wanted to protect the Spirits? When you never wanted innocent people to die or have to kill... so why did you become just like Minerva!??"

Artemisia suddenly shook at that claim, and suddenly noticed a few forest animals nearby, but the moment she looked they all ran away from her like seem some savage predator rather than letting her get close like usual.

"I... don't know, why?" Artemisia gasped, suddenly feeling her head in pain again. This time it was no tingle, it was burning, and the others saw it as she did. "SSS... Ashley... Leonora... Cecile... Minerva... DEM... my..."

Artemisia suddenly screamed loudly and her eyes opened, suddenly flashing before the burning suddenly vanished, she gave them the same somber stare.
"...I don't know what you did, but I'm in no mood to face it again. I need to find Nightmare now. Get in my way and I will have to finish you." Artemisia replied, soon using her CR-Unit to jump into the forest and vanish. Leaving the others to stare at her.

Cecile soon collapsed and fainted, her CR-Unit Vanished.

"Hey, Cecile! Stay with us!" Leonora called out, tearing up again. Ashley checked her wrist and sighed as her pulse was unchanged.

"She's alive, but we should have where she was hit checked." Ashley replied, soon looking where Artemisia flew off to. "More important, she recognized us for a moment... I swear it. That can only mean one thing."

Ashley closed her eyes, making a sad and angry face as she cried.

'Something happened to Artemisia when she went missing, and whatever happened doesn't want her to remember who she really is!' Ashley thought before crying, making Leonora wrap an arm around her as she took a few minutes to sob.

Mildred and Ryouko were seen running around the city, trying to find the SSS trio after Reine's message warning them to find the three immediately. Mildred tried checking her phone and typing in something but got a disconnection error.

"Seriously, where are they? I still can't use the observation device to find them!" Mildred grunted, sweating at the fact they couldn't seem to do anything. Ryouko soon however noticed Leonora and Ashley walk into view, Ashley moving Cecile's wheelchair while Cecile was being carried in Leonora's arms.

"They're the are!" Ryouko shouted, getting Mildred's attention as they ran towards them. Leonora notices them and looks at them sadly. "What happened? Is Cecile OK, are you any of you hurt?"

"Cecile's alive, but she got struck a bit. She needs checked out and..." Leonora began, soon shaking as she teared up to Mildred and Ryouko's surprise.

"...Artemisia's no longer MIA. Tell Ratatoskr to update her status, she's..." Ashley answered, closing her eyes and looking away. "...She's become the DEM's Adeptus 2!"

Ashley soon ran off, making Ryouko and Mildred turn towards her with the former gasping at the information she just heard. While Ryouko looks at Leonora who was still tearing up... and she soon sighed as it was clear what happened and the truth.

'She's with them now? Damn it, how many people are going to end up falling over to the enemy's side?' Ryouko thought to herself, clutching her fists tightly.

Artemisia soon landed near part of the forest panting a bit as she landed on the ground, dispelling her CR-Unit and resting up against a tree.

"...What happened to me? For a moment, it was as if I knew them, but why? I haven't seen them before, have..." Artemisia panted, suddenly feeling her head burning again. "...have I?"

Artemisia screams again, as she did, a certain spot on her head began glowing in response as if there was a suppressant there, but this time it's task to subdue it was failing as Artemisia felt something leak back into her mind.
Artemisia was with her friends at the SSS with the exception of Minerva who didn't want to hang out with them, the four doing a small training spar with everyone in training CR-Units, having not yet been given personal suits to use. In mere moments, everyone but Artemisia were soon groaning on the ground as their ace wizard giggled at them.

"Oh come on, how is it even three on one isn't a fair fight for us to defeat you!?!" Ashley complained, hitting the ground with her fist after she got up.

"She truly is the ace of this team, not even I can get close to her." Cecile panted, too tired to open her eyes despite she could while wearing the CR-Unit. Soon she and Ashley heard Leonora begin to snuffle.

"Don't... cry... don't cry!" Leonora quietly told herself, Artemisia soon kneeled down and hugged her close.

"There, there. It's fine. No one else is here to see it." Artemisia smiled, rubbing her head. Leonora soon began crying, and felt Artemisia pat her back. Ashley and Cecile smile a bit before the sound of someone walking into view caught their attention.

"So what's this freaking sob story about, pitiful!"

Everyone saw Minerva, before the days she had either of the scars on her eyes, and saw her with an unknown CR-Unit equipped that the group knew wasn't her training suit, but a stolen personal suit. She drew her sword.

"Artemisia, we're going to settle this here! I'm going to beat you and humiliate you, finally prove I'm the strongest!" Minerva grinned wickedly, Artemisia only looked and sighed while the others gave her glares.

"Get off your high horse and stop acting like a bitch, you're taking this superior fighter crap way too far!" Ashley spat, purposely gagging a bit for emphasis.

"Oh shut your whining you wimpy tyke." Minerva replied, making Ashley form a vein, and prompting Cecile to hold her back and she shouted gibberish and attempted to attack her. "Come on Artemisia, draw your sword and prove it."

"...Minerva, I don't care who's the strongest or not. If you wanna tell everyone that then you can. I just wanna be here to help people." Artemisia replied softly, not wanting fight. Unfortunately for her, Minerva didn't accept that answer.

"If I don't beat you then I can't call myself the strongest, you will fight me! If not... then I'll make you!" Minerva screamed, soon looking at the others. Ashley, Leonora and Cecile all saw Minerva rush at them with her sword held out. "Maybe you'll fight me if I turn you into an avenger!"

The three gasped as Minerva prepared to swing her sword down, making Artemisia gasp. It seemed Minerva would make it to her when...

*SLASH!*

"AAAAAAAH!" Minerva screamed in agony, the CR-Unit she was wearing was destroyed as she suddenly held her right eye, a trickle of blood escaping through her fingers as Artemisia was seen over a slightly scorched ground with her sword in hand.
Her friends stared in shock at the speed she had showed, and Artemisia herself panted as she turned to Minerva, for once giving an angry look.

"Minerva, I'll make it clear now. I'm not here to humor your superiority complex. I don't try to be better than you, nor do I intend to make you jealous..." Artemisia began, soon sighing as she sheathed her sword. "But if you ever try to attack my friends again, I can't guarantee that next time I'll avoid dealing you a fatal blow."

Minerva turned and glared at Artemisia, moving her hand revealing the nasty cut that would become her right eye's scar, her eyes full of hate as she let the blood staining her eye represent her newfound hatred in the girl.

"You bitch, I'll make sure you regret this one day!" Minerva spat out, soon running somewhere. Artemisia soon collapsed to her knees, crying a bit as the others comforted her for what she had to do.

"I don't want to hurt anyone, I... I didn't have a choice." Artemisia cried, feeling awful for how she had to make Minerva stop.

-End Flashback-

Artemisia gasps a bit, the memory possibly setting back in.

"What, I think I do-" Artemisia began, but suddenly screamed as the suppressant finally kicked in, and the memory vanished. "...Dang it, why did that group affect me so much? I think I need to rest before I deal with Nightmare again."

Artemisia gets up and heads back home.

Back at Arubi Island, Marina was in her projection form as she stared at the readings for Artemisia and scowled slightly, right as that moment she noticed father walking by and turned to see him.

"Father, a moment if you will?" Marina called out, getting Westcott's attention.

"Something wrong?" Westcott inquired.

Marina sighed and pointed to the screen she was examining.

"It's the memory control realizer, Artemisia's stress levels are getting too high. The realizer's nearing the breaking point, something keeps making her true memories return and at this rate the entire device will dissolve into her cerebral spinal fluid and she'll remember the truth." Marina sighed, making Westcott take a look.

"So, what should we do? We won't be having her as our Adeptus 2 much longer, we can't just ignore this."

Westcott things a bit, and soon smirks as he gets a plan. Marina's eyes widen and she gets giddy as she recognizes that look.

"Strengthen it to maximum for now, that way if she does remember it'll knock her comatose. I think we can use her memories like a trap for a different plan I have in mind. In regard to a replacement... how about you give Minerva a call?" Westcott reasoned.
Marina begins to giggle evilly.

"Father, you are sick sometimes! I love it!" Marina smirked, turning back to the screen. "I'll get right on it, and should we prepare the next phase of [Material A]'s work? We're getting close to the main event, and I've already gotten word we've finished the warm-up too."

Westcott smirked and chuckled at that.

"Go right ahead, I'd like to see where this game will go before I claim my prize. In fact... let's get ready to deploy [Material B] by tomorrow." Westcott added, and Marina showed surprise at that.

"What, this early? That seems daring... but I know better than to question you if you smirk. It always means you got something interesting planned." Marina smirks, Westcott ruffled her hair before walking out. "Alright, time to begin this little game."

Kurumi soon walked out of the bathroom stall she had hid herself in, moving to the sink and splashing her face. She breathed as the stress of what Origami had managed to pull fully sunk into her and she breathed.

"Damn it, I can't believe she managed to pull a trick like that. I underestimated how clever she was. Should have considered that when she chose to face me alone." Kurumi panted, soon splashing her face again.

As she did, she looked at the water, seeing it ripple as she saw her old self, she closed her eyes and unintentionally drifted to an early memory from long ago, back at the day... when everything had changed for her.

_Kurumi and Saya were both coming home from Rindouji High, both of them talking about their day, and after a bit... Kurumi finally brought out the elephant in the room and turned towards her._

"Saya, why is your hair a different color today?" Kurumi nervously asked, and Saya looked at her currently maroon colored hair and blushed.

"Oh this, well... little Chestnut decided to be a bit funny when I was trying to bathe him and it ended with red food coloring landing all over my head. I've been washing my hair every chance since yesterday and it still hasn't gone back to normal." Saya replied, soon sighing. "I'm worried I might need to get it cut if I want my natural brown back."

"Aw, Chestnut's so adorable at times, isn't he?" Kurumi giggled, she always enjoyed playing with Chestnut, Saya's pet kitten she had brought home after finding him on the streets a few months before they first met.

"You know Kurumi, if you like cats then why don't you get a little kitten yourself?" Saya asked, making Kurumi sad. Saya suddenly realized it. "Oh no, did you have one?"

"O-Oh no! There's just no way my family can have one, you see... my mom's allergic." Kurumi replied, sweat dropping a bit from the confusion. "She'd really like to get me one, but even she can't risk her health for my sake."

Saya sighed in relief.

"I see, well just know if you ever wanna come play with Chestnut just give me a call. We could share him, he does like you after all." Saya giggled, making Kurumi blush lightly and smile. Saya soon
turned and stopped. "Oh, here's my house Kurumi, see you tomorrow."

Kurumi nodded as she waved to her, Saya entered the gate to her house. As Kurumi headed home through the park, she suddenly noticed some black mist in the area.

"Huh, what... what is this?" Kurumi gasped, suddenly afraid. At that moment, a giant machine that revealed itself as a DEM Jabberwocky walked into view. She saw it leaking out the black mist through an oil leak that was heated up by its inner components. "A robot?"

She suddenly heard a heavy cough, and saw something near the trees on the other side of the park, something... no, someone invisible was coughing in pain, and the Jabberwocky was coming right towards them.

"Is this machine hunting her?" Kurumi said to herself, suddenly look at the machine and seeing her fear, and then the girl and seeing her fear, Kurumi stood there thinking of what she should do. That's when she remembered what she wanted to do most, help the innocent across the world. Dropping her bag, she rushed in front of the machine.

"Leave this person alone!"

The invisible figure gasped at her courage, and the Jabberwocky's eyes glows as it registered Kurumi aiding the Spirit, it soon raised up an arm and prepared to slam it down and crush her. Kurumi closed her eyes before she felt herself moved out of the way, looking to see the invisible being had saved her.

"(You... you helped me, and you don't even know me. Why?)" Phantom asked, surprised anyone would do what she chose to do in this situation.

"Because... I can't stand seeing people being hurt, I hate having to see anyone suffer." Kurumi answered, and Phantom's eyes widened at how pure this girl was as she noticed a glow from her pocket. She took out the Zafkiel Crystal as it glowed brightly.

"(I don't believe it, I've never seen Zafkiel glow like this in years, it's as if you both chose each other.)" Phantom gasped, confusing Kurumi. Phantom saw the Jabberwocky aim at them again and jumped away with Kurumi in hand.

"(I can't tell you my real name, but I call myself Phantom, and that thing is after me because I have a power that in the wrong hands could doom this world... and the one after this power wants to cause this. This may be a stretch to ask but... this power wants you to accept it because of who you are. Please, I beg you to help me keep it safe, I've already gotten you involved because you saved me, so at least let me give you the strength to protect yourself.)"

Kurumi looked at the crystal, and with no hesitation, she grabbed it to Phantom's surprise.

'(No hesitation, I've never seen someone so sure to walk down this road!)' Phantom thought, suddenly Kurumi transformed into the Spirit know as [Nightmare] to the DEM. Though her Astral Dress didn't look like as it did in the present.

"What the? Phantom, why am I wearing this?" Kurumi asked.

"(I'll explain later, but know that by accepting this crystal, that monstrous machine has even more reason to attack you now.)" Phantom explained, surprising Kurumi. "(Sorry. I didn't think you'd accept it that easily and still had more to say. For now, just believe in your power and the crystal's strength will protect you.)"
Kurumi stared for a moment before she shakily nodded, the Jabberwocky soon jumped at the two.

"...I honestly thought that she was a good person, but in the end, she manipulated me." Kurumi stated shakily, soon looking at the mirror darkly. If she was any angrier she'd have punched it. "Not to worry, it's only a matter of time before I'll rewrite the past change everything with my own two hands."

Suddenly a familiar alarm blared to her surprise.

[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE!]

"Hmm... it seems the DEM wants to make their move. I guess I should watch how little Shido takes care of this." Kurumi smirks, giggling as she prepared to head out.

Meanwhile at a certain area of Tenguu City, Phantom suddenly slid around the area as she tried to find something, and after a bit she did as she appeared by a large containment building with the DEM logo on it. She tapped her hand on an access panel and overloaded it to make it think her DNA was registered and open up.

"(Here it is.)" Phantom told herself.

Phantom walked in and soon saw a pod inside, and on it was a label saying [Material-B].

"(Don't worry, I'm here to make sure you'll be unshackled rather than chained.)" Phantom smiled, soon putting a hand on a nearby access terminal and altering some of the data inside as the pod opens up, making mist come out as the being inside slowly rose up and saw her.

"(It's good to meet you.)" Phantom giggled.

"Who are you?" The being asked, looking at herself and then Phantom.

"(I have everyone call me Phantom, but my real name is...)"

Poor Cecile, poor Ashley, and poor Leonora... their best friend's memories have been tampered with and the realizer that's doing it wants to ensure she can't remember. Worse part of it though is that Westcott's abusing it for his own amusing sick pleasure! What's gonna happen to Artemisia, just what is this Material A that he's kept mentioning?

And we got to see the first meeting between Kurumi and Phantom, though how much of it is accurate considering we're clearly seeing parts of her memory don't match what we've seen from Saya's memories? Whatever's happening, Kurumi intends to see what Shido and his friends do with the DEM threat that's about to come next chapter.

It also looks like we've gotten to see a bit of what Phantom's been doing in Tenguu City, she did have a reason for being there and could this be the reason, or is it just part of it? Whatever it is, this new Material B has been freed, and Phantom's made sure they're no DEM puppet... but who is it she freed? Also... sorry, but you're not officially learning who Phantom is yet. *giggles* You'll have to wait a little bit longer for that revelation ^^
Get ready for next time, when Shido and the others prepare to face the newest DEM machine, and Shido ends up experiencing something new that unfortunately gets Kurumi even more determined to catch him as he finally proves that she has the power she's searching for.

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 75%
Origami - 57%
Yoshino - 42%
Kotori - 67%
Alright, time for the DEM's first major attack of this arc, but definitely not the last one. Now you probably remember me mentioning Shido would be getting something new in last chapter's end notes, right? Well... that "new" thing just happens to be a new ability, and you'll just have to wait and see just what that ability is. Though how he gets it? I think that'll be the bigger twist overall *giggles* ^^

Oh, and to the one Guest reviewer. While Mio is indeed the First Spirit in canon, I stated back in Chapter 1 that this fanfic's idea was made before Volume 16 had even come out, so that isn't the case in this fanfic. The only thing this fanfic has that has any relation to Mio in the slightest is both Tohka and the mysterious being that talks through Shido using the name using it to be identity during the periods they forgot their names.

Now, since I've been bringing up Material A quite often as of the recent arcs, and just introduced Material B, I think I should clarify something here since I actually answered who Material A isn't all the way back in Tohka's arc, specifically Chapter 2 where Marina indirectly confirms this, but back then it wasn't as significant. Since Chapter 2 did reveal it, it's not a spoiler for me to reveal it here.

Back in Chapter 2, Marina stated that Artemisia and Jessica's reasons for being absent and unable to aid in capturing Tohka was because each of them were coming back from a failed assignment, to capture Kurumi and Nia respectively. In canon, Material A is none other than Nia, but as you can see by what Marina said that she isn't in the DEM's clutches. So unlike canon, Nia was never captured, and Material A is someone else entirely :3

Also, while Mana's still in her recovery period, we will see her again in this chapter. Let's just say that a certain someone wants to talk to her about what she should do the moment she fully recovers and gets discharged. Though the question is this, am I talking about this arc, events leading to Date A Re:Strike... or somehow both of them? Well...

You'll have to read and find out ^^

Now here's Inverse Origami's data sheet before we begin today's chapter.

- Inverse Origami, Code Name: [Devil]-

Demon King: Satan, the "Demon King of Salvation" - Metatron's Demon King counterpart, Satan takes the form of a crown that looks more like a spiky black halo and having black feathery pillars with a sharp appearance than Metatron's golden pillars. Similar to Nahemah with Sandalphon, Satan is not that different from Metatron, but does have a single addition in comparison.

- Alternate Form: Gilgul, The Moon - This formation is the Inverse counterpart of "Shemesh, The Sun". The formation acts identical to its normal counterpart, but there's now two circles made from the pillars floating around Origami, creating less openings to slip through.

- Alternate Form: Moloch, Demonic Wings - This formation is the Inverse counterpart of "
Mal’akh, Heavenly Wings ". The formation acts identical to its normal counterpart, but the wings can now slice through anything it flies through, and they can actually fire their light beams.

- Alternate Form: Tanahk, Blades of Darkness - This formation is the Inverse counterpart of "Kadour, Sword of Light ". The formation acts identical to its normal counterpart, but now the pillars don't need Origami to guide them herself, she can just have them follow a pattern or act of their own free will, and they move much more erratically too.

- Alternate Form: Nusach, Regalia Blaster - This formation is the Inverse counterpart of "Arteliff, Crown Cannon ". The formation acts identical to its normal counterpart, but the beam has piercing qualities and the pillars thrust forward like a drill after firing at their target for a second blow.

- Alternate Form: Merkavah, Shadow Prison - This formation is the Inverse counterpart of "Zohar, Holy Gate ". The formation acts identical to its normal counterpart, but combine both the shield and barrier positions for a double layer of effectiveness and protection against attacks. They can even possibly reflect some attacks if they have the right properties.

- Alternate Form: Chassidei, the Lunar Slashers - By detaching a section from two of the pillars, they can attach to Origami's hands and become a pair of swords she can use for limited close combat. They're not very strong, but are good for situations where Origami can't or shouldn't use long ranged attacks against an opponent.

- Powers: While in her Inverse Form, the normal limitation Origami has with a lack of photons vanished because her light attribute gains a darker color and therefore does not require pure photons. Her teleportation technique is almost much faster in reaction time, and in distance, while it is still possible to trick Satan into being struck like Metatron, it is much more difficult because Satan and predict three attacks in a row before it can be truly caught off guard.

Risk Factors: SS

Spacequake: AAA

Spirit's Astral Dress: AA

Demon King Rank: AAA

Strength: 198

Consistency: 202

Spiritual Power: 242

Agility: 188

Intelligence: 230

Chapter 17, S1: Kurumi Fallacy, Part 4
The being inside the pod gasped as she heard the unseen female only known as Phantom, who had just told her real name, and then continued by explaining why she was here and what she had done when had freed her. Needless to say, she was horrified... yet eternally thankful for Phantom.

"I... would have been a slave... and never realized it?" The being asked, her hands shaking as she looked at them.

"(That's right, this whole project was something that was meant to expand on a mind control device that I think was used to secure the loyalty of one of their top fighters. This whole organization is run by a sick madman.)" Phantom explained, soon rubbing the female being's head.

"(Not to worry though, I've completely rewritten the whole system. Not only have I guaranteed you free will, but there's never going to a Material C or above. I didn't just destroy their data, I've made them whole network refuse to accept any information related to the concept of stealing free will or unwilling control. Your life is yours now.)"

"...Thank you, I'll be forever thankful to you-" The female being was about to say Phantom's real name, but Phantom waved her hands to warn her no. "Oh, I'm sorry. I guess you have a reason to hide your real name for now Phantom... but wait, this pod says I'm Material B, who's Material A?"

Phantom looked down.

"(...I don't know, the only thing I could get from this terminal was it was extended of the original idea which manipulated someone to a degree they're being controlled without even realizing it. That person thinks they have free will, but that's because they're unaware of the lie hidden within.)"

"Oh my..." The female being said. "...Phantom, I don't have any memory or identity to call my own. I'm artificial according to what you told me. So... if it's alright, I want to properly repay you and aid you."

Phantom gasped.

"(...Are you sure? The last two times I had people say they wanted to help me, I wasn't there when they needed me most. One died, and the other has become murderous and nothing like the sweet girl I gave powers to.)" Phantom answered honestly, she wanted this girl to know what path she'd get stuck to if she followed.

"I am, no... I want to! You gave me a purpose! You gave me the right to choose, and I chose this!" The female being answered, and Phantom's unseen eyes widen.

"I found my purpose with Humanity, so for that reason I've chosen to make my path in life to protect them. For the remaining flowers left of their kind, I will nurture them with all I can do. That is my dream, that is the purpose I've given myself."

"(I wonder, was this fate? Those words ring so familiarly to me it's crazy. Alright then, but first...)" Phantom smiled, soon looking at part of the room and revealing some shards. compressing them together, she made a disfigured gem like a Sephira Crystal.

"(I don't have any more Sephira Crystals since I gave the last one to Tohka, so I hope you don't mind this attempt at an artificial one.)" Phantom said, scratching her cheek a bit in embarrassment.

"It's alright, its more than enough." The female being said, touching it and soon feeling herself transform as it embedded itself in her.

"(Welcome to the Spirit family, glad to have you... oh my god, you don't even have a name. Let's fix
that then. The question is, what should I name you?"
Phantom wondered, soon looking around until seeing something that gave her an idea. "(I know! How about the name...)"

Meanwhile at school, everyone heard the Spacequake Alarm as it went off. By the time everyone had evacuated, the Ratatoskr members minus Origami had all gathered in Tamae's classroom.

"Maria, what's happening? Please don't tell me another Spirit just showed up." Shido asked worriedly, Kurumi was already problematic enough that having another Spirit appear would just make things impossible in saving either of them.

"Well, I think it's."
Maria began, however Mio interjected.

[No, this isn't a new Spirit. It feels more like it was set it off intentionally, just like Tohka did to keep the civilians safe back when the DEM tried capturing her in April.]

"But why would they need to do that? If there's no new Spirit then it's pretty much useless, not to mention that the DEM knows by now that trying to capture a Spirit in Tenguu City is gonna backfire on them with us here." Kotori wondered, it didn't make any sense to her.

At that moment, Origami came back from her little meeting with Kurumi and soon panted, getting the group's attention.

"Hey Origami, you took a while to get back. Is something wrong?" Tohka asked.

"L-Look outside! There's a giant robot coming towards the city!" Origami screamed in a panic, making everyone gasp.

Maria soon shifted Shido's phone to see through an emergency observation device and the sight of a giant version of a Jabberwocky with a more bipedal posture in comparison to them. It was seen being flown towards the city by a few Bandersnatch that carried it, and it was getting closer by the second.

"Holy shit!" Shido shouted.

"That thing's gotta be at least ten times bigger than the Nidhoggr was! I don't even know about the Hydra that you faced!" Katie panicked, sweating bullets after seeing it. "Why's it even here, is this just for capturing Kurumi?"

Tamae bit her nails a bit.

"I hate to say it, but it may very well be made especially for the purpose of catching Kurumi. It might destroy the entire city just to capture her!" Tamae panicked, making everyone pale at her reaction. Worse is she could be right, especially after they saw that video.

Tohka made a determined face.

"Then we've gotta stop it! Come on!" Tohka declared, soon summoning her Astral Dress and jumping out the window, flying towards the scene.

"...I hope that doesn't come out of my paycheck." Tamae said, sweat dropping a bit.

"She's right, we can't just sit her, let's go guys!" Shido replied, and everyone nodded. The AST members all summoned their CR-Units while Kotori and Origami summoned their Astral Dresses, all of the follow Tohka immediately after this.
"Shido, I'll give you a ride over." Yoshino mentioned, offering her hand.

"Thanks Yoshino." Shido replied, holding out his hand in return

Yoshino formed her Astral Dress, and soon she took Shido's hand jumping out the broken window and landing on Zadkiel as the Angel formed below them, soon flying after the others.

"Hang on Shido!" Yoshino exclaimed, Shido shakily nodding as the wind of their flight blows against them. Meanwhile from the shadows of the building wall, Kurumi formed and watched them head on over.

"It seems I need to find a good seat to watch from." Kurumi giggled before falling back into the wall to head somewhere else.

Artemisia suddenly noticed the Goliath heading towards the city, and soon tried to contact Westcott.

"This is Adeptus 2, please pick up!" Artemisia requested, soon getting through to Marina who sighed as she was interrupted from her usual work.

"What is it Artemisia, father's got me busy with work on Material A?" Marina asked.

"Are you aware that someone or something brought the Goliath to the city? That machine's not meant to be used in a place like Tenguu City!" Artemisia yelled in a panic, and Marina showed surprise... or rather acted out the script her father had set. She was smirking on the inside.

'Phase one complete.' Marina thought, keeping her poker face. "It is? Oh no, I guess Edgar didn't just have Minerva in his little rebellion. Unfortunately, we don't have anyone who can come aid you on time. Sorry sweetie, you'll have to destroy it without our aid. I'll at least see if I can shut it down from here."

Marina hangs up, making Artemisia panic.

"Crap, well... guess I don't have a choice then." Artemisia replied, summoning her Shiva CR-Unit and taking into the sky to where the Goliath was about to be dropped, accelerating as fast she possibly could.

The Goliath soon reached its drop off zone, and the gigantic machine suddenly had its eye flash before it gave a mechanical roar, smashing the Bandersnatch that were carrying it and soon crashing on the ground. It dropped the Bandersnatch' scrap onto the ground.

"DESTROY!" Goliath said, claiming its sole motion before swing its arm and smashing apart a portion of the city as it swept through the buildings like it simply cutting paper with a pair of scissors. It roared again before it suddenly noticed that it was being hit by a sword.

"Take this!" Tohka exclaimed, swinging down Sandalphon on the giant mechanical nightmare. The Goliath turned to face her and charged a laser blast from its eye. Tohka gasped before flying out of the way, soon seeing a whole block of the neighborhood blow up in smoke.

"Oh no... this is bad!"

The Goliath prepared to clap crush her, making Tohka's eyes widen before intentionally making herself fall and stomping the ground, making her throne appear before kicking it, shifting it into a vehicle form.
"Chrysaor!" Tohka declared, soon sheathing Sandalphon inside and causing Chrysaor to rocket forward at the monstrous machine. Tohka made it spin and a few slash waves hit it before slamming the front and boosting forward. "Now pierce it!"

Tohka soon crashed into it, but to her shock she was flung up high as the Chrysaor broke and Sandalphon got sent flying far away from her. Tohka could only stare as the Goliath turned towards her. Kurumi appeared on a nearby building top and began watching.

"Hmm... so this is the one they call Tohka Yatogami? Interesting, but it seems she's not as powerful as I heard she was." Kurumi sighed, not impressed with Tohka's tactics against the Goliath Tohka saw the Goliath charge another beam at her, her eyes shaking as it fired when...

"Zohar - Holy Gate!" Origami shouted. Suddenly Metatron's pillars fly out and each has their ends touch at a focal center point, shining light as the beam struck it but failed to break through the shield. Origami soon flew by Tohka and grabbed her to move her to safety.

"Sorry for the delay, go find Sandalphon while we distract it." Origami smiled, making Tohka nod before she jumped down to grab her sword. Goliath prepared another attack when a wave of fire suddenly struck it. The Goliath soon saw Kotori and the AST members before the latter all initiated fire from their blasters.

"DESTROY!" Goliath roared, suddenly beginning a run towards the group. The AST all scatter and form territories for it to crash into, but it simply smashed through them like they were just pieces of breakable glass.

"I've got this!" Kotori shouted, rushing ahead. Goliath swung its arms at her, and she dodged before reach the eye of the beast. "Time to smash you apart!"

Kotori screams loudly as she swings Camael across the Goliath's eye, causing the optical unit to shake a bit as she did. Soon she begins spinning around, each rotation smashing the Goliath's eye strongly before it suddenly began to glow and charge again. Kotori gasped before she's blasted. 

"AH!" Kotori cried out, soon catching herself in midair as her flames begin to heal her. At that moment, Tohka finds Sandalphon and grabs it. "Tohka! We need to hit hard, let's give it a taste of a Megiddo and Halvanhelev combo!"

"Right!" Tohka replied, giving a toothy grin.

Tohka swung Sandalphon, gathering the broken shards of her throne that resulted from Chrysaor's crash and gathered them to form the Halvanhelev. At the same time, Camael shifted into its cannon form, Tohka rushed towards Kotori as the Goliath charged at the two.

"DESTROY!" Goliath roared as it charged its eye beam again, and the two got into position. Tohka shouted as she swung Halvanhelev back and then swung it down on the machine, crashing into its optical as it fired and slashing the eye laser while holding the Goliath in place and holding it.

"Oh?" Kurumi wondered, suddenly more interested in Tohka now as she slightly pushed the giant machine back. "It seems I may have been a little too hasty in my judgment. Perhaps I picked too strong a machine to base my standards on."

"Burn it all to ash, do it Camael!" Kotori declared, blasting Megiddo at the tip of Halvanhelev, the sword and beam collide and make the Goliath shake from the force that was smashing into it. Soon
the Halvanhelev began to glow red as it overloaded. "Just a bit more Tohka!"

"Right! If I release the overload into the machine that should do it, keep it coming Kotori!" Tohka replied.

Soon the Halvanhelev sparked and Tohka ripped Sandalphon out from the rest of the blade as it got stuck in a small dent she forced into the optical. Kotori screamed and forced the biggest burst of the Megiddo blast to shoot out, Camael soon reverted to normal as the rest of the fire beam melded with Halvanhelev and everyone saw an explosion at the same moment Yoshino and Shido arrived.

"Whoa! No way, did you guys already take care of it?" Shido asked in awe, Tohka and Kotori flashed him a peace sign.

"DESTROY!"

Everyone suddenly turned in shock as the saw the Goliath run out of the smoke undamaged, only the small dent to the Goliath's eye was a sign of any mark left on it.

"This thing's almost invincible!" Origami sweated, soon motioning her hand forward. "Kadour - Sword of Light"

Origami's pillars all shot forward and stabbed into the Goliath, throwing it off balance as it fell to the ground. As it did, Shido soon stood up and closed his eyes.

"I call to a second power sleeping deep within my darkness, now break the dimensional limits before me... and form a new power beyond the horizon!" Shido shouted, within his body both Tohka and Kotori's spirit power lined up with his mana core, leaving only some of his body untouched by spirit mana. "Sandalphon, Camael... unite!"

Shido's hair and eyes took on Tohka and Kotori's colors as copies of both angels appeared in his hands. Kurumi gasped at the sight, she had no idea Shido had such an ability.

"He can use the power of the Spirits? Not just that, but multiple Spirits at once?" Kurumi blinked, soon smiling a bit. "Hmm... and yet his body still looks like it hasn't fully been touched by it either. I wonder..."

Kurumi looked at Zafkiel and smirked, the small clock gems on the sides of each gun shifting to the 'X' spot.

"Yoshino, I'm depending on you to get me close to that thing. Alright?" Shido requested, making Yoshino nod. Yoshino soon bopped Yoshinon on her head... but nothing.

"Huh?" Yoshino gasped worriedly, trying a few more times.

"What's going on? We can't swap to our Inverse Form, this is bad!" Yoshinon said, seating a bit as the Goliath swung at Zadkiel. "Incoming!"

Suddenly the Goliath hit the Angel, making it shatter. Yoshino screams as she fell to the ground.

"Yoshino!" Shido called out, forcing himself to dive at them before catching them, and landing roughly but still mostly intact. Shido looked at Yoshino who weakly looked back. "Are you alright?"

"Shido, I... I..." Yoshino cried, tears flooding down her face. As that was happening, the SSS trio flew into the area after their slight delay. Cecile looked at the DEM weapon and slightly gasped.
"That thing's massive, we'll need to focus our attacks at a specific armor point without erring to
damage that thing," Cecile told the other two, both nodded as they flew near the other AST
members. "Attention troops, is there any damage we've made so far?"

"We have one spot, while it didn't do much, Tohka got a small dent in the optical that acts as its eye."
Mikie answered, pointing to it. Leonora focuses on it and nods.

"Alright, everyone gather around while we do a combination strike." Leonora replied, soon looking
at the Spirits. "Can you three distract this mammoth machine for us while we get ready?"

"Yeah, we'll cover you." Origami nodded, flying off as Tohka and Kotori zoom around the Goliath.

"DESTROY!" Goliath roared, firing its optical while trying to swat them with its arms and hands as
they swiped at the trio of Spirits. Soon the sight of Ashley using her CR-Unit's mana to write up a
plan was seen.

"Everyone understand it?" Ashley asked, they all nodded.

"Ma'am, yes ma'am!"

Cecile smiles and soon flies at the machine.

"Alright, here we go! Territory jamming activate!" Cecile shouted, creating the disruption field as she
neared the Goliath, its movement slowed a bit as it felt the effects and soon tried to kill Cecile with a
hand clap. Cecile smirked and her CR-Unit had its shoulder weapons stretch out and strike, parrying
its hands and sending it off balance.

"Mikie, take the right leg! Everyone else focus on your joints!" Ashley ordered, everyone nodded as
she went to the left leg and Mikie the right. Blades shot out from Ashley's wrist guards as she
grabbed her double-edged swords and the Asura blades on her back opened up.

"Right!" Mikie replied, forming her dagger claws as the two rushed at the legs and stabbed into the
stabilizer areas, making the tipping Goliath sway as it began to lose balances. The other AST
members either struck with their weapons or fired their blasters at the other join spots on the Goliath.
"Katie!"

"OK, we got the green light." Katie stated, making Leonora nod as she readied her blasters while
Katie used her scope to focus her sniper rifle. She got the information on the wind, coordinates and
her range. "Coordinates locked synchronizing shoots when ready."

Leonora nodded and moved her arms over Katie's shoulders, electric signals linking their weapons as
Katie waits for her scope to give her the confirmation. Soon it does.

"Fire!" Katie exclaimed, making her and Leonora fires at the dent in the Goliath's eye, causing it to
shatter a bit and fall over. Everyone in the AST alongside all the spirits gathered around and soon
charged their best attacks.

"Here we go!" Tohka shouted.

Everyone either blasted, struck or thrust at the dented area of the Goliath and soon hit it hard, the
machine looked like it had finally stopped moving to everyone's cheer. However, it soon got up and
shook.

"DESTROY!" Goliath roared again, managing to kick itself back upright and then force everyone to
scatter before it tried another beam. At that moment however, a unique territory suddenly defended
against the shots as Artemisia flew into view.

"Artemisia!" Ashley called out, seeing her fly at the machine.

"I won't let your malfunctioning hardware doom this town, DEM's orders!" Artemisia shouted, soon rushing forward and smashing into the Goliath's chest area.

In moments, Artemisia drew the Masamune and fired a beam from it, smashing its optical sensor while slashing the blade, cutting slightly into the Goliath's arm. She flies ever faster and cuts into ever more areas, and soon went for the eye again.

"Game, set and..."

Artemisia was suddenly cut off as the Goliath covered its own eye and blasted a laser, the flash it made blinding her before she was suddenly swatted away a bit. She saw the Goliath had soon repaired its optical to a non-damaged state from the heat.

"No, it... it can't be! You didn't have that function!" Artemisia breathed, unaware that the Goliath's programming had an alternate routine for her. As Artemisia prepared her territory, the Goliath jumped up into the air, shocking her before it slammed down, pressuring her territory before the machine grabbed her, slowly breaking it apart as it began to crack.

"Ah! Y-you won't stop me, I'm Adeptus 2 of the DEM, I..."

Artemisia felt the burning in her head continue, and the Goliath squeezed harder. Cecile, Ashley and Leonora all flew at it to help her.

"ARTEMISIA!" They all shouted.

"DESTROY!" The Goliath roared, soon squeezing so hard that Artemisia's territory shattered. The moment she felt the Goliath's fingers clutch onto her, she suddenly screamed loudly as the burning reached its peak.

'Ashley? Leonora? Cecile? Is... is that...' Artemisia thought before her eyes widened, a burning electricity running through her head.

Inside her head, a realizer smoked before it dissolved apart, but soon passed through a certain area of the brain and made her eyes lose their light before it dropped her, Cecile dived at her and tumbled after the catch.

"Artemisia, wake up! Please wake up!" Cecile begged, but Artemisia didn't respond as she seemed almost... comatose, or vegetative. "ARTEMISIA!"

The Goliath began its charge again as it rushed towards the group, everyone looking at it worriedly considering that they were facing off against what had seemed to become an indestructible machine. As this happened, Phantom and her new partner began floating in midair.

"Shouldn't we help them?" The female being asked, but Phantom shook her head. "Why not? That thing might destroy them."

"(Its simple, because I believe in Shido. When the odds face him he always finds away. He can do this because...)
"

Phantom answers, showing an unseen smile. "(...she believes in him too.)"

The female being stared, wondering who 'she' was, but decided to trust Phantom. Meanwhile back with Shido, he was still with a crying Yoshinon.
"...I'm so useless. I can't Inverse and switch places with Yoshinon, I'm too scared to truly fight fully or hurt someone. I can't even lend you my strength with the Spirit Ascension." Yoshinon cried, Yoshinon worriedly looking at her. "I'm nothing compared to the others, I'm just weak and pathetic."

"...You're anything but that Yoshino!" Shido yelled out, getting her attention.

"Don't you remember back then? When we first met, you made the choice to talk to me as yourself before you let me seal your powers. You were the one who chose to follow us to go and save Kotori, and you chose to fight the Nidhoggr and Hydra. Not to mention earlier today you stood up for me without even needing to fight back when my classmates became jealous. You don't need to Inverse to be strong, maybe you're not strong physically... but your heart is where your power comes from!"

Yoshino gasped, tearing up more.

"Shido... thank you. Thank you so much!" Yoshino sniffled, hugging him. Suddenly Shido feels a huge surge between him and Yoshino.

"Whoa! I feel all tingly, what's going on?" Yoshino asked confused, not realizing what it was.

[S-Shido! It's amazing, in just one moment... I think your bond with Yoshino's just finally hit 50%! This is incredible!]

"Are you serious Mio!?" Shido, Yoshino and Yoshinon asked surprised. Seeing this opportunity, Kurumi smirked as she decided to start up the idea she wanted to see. She aimed Zafkiel at Shido from a blind spot.

"I guess this is a good chance." Kurumi smiled, giggling as she prepared to fire.

"YUD!"

Suddenly the bullet fired off and hit Shido, hitting him on the back. At that moment, he and Mio suddenly feel something weird, but the one who saw something was Mio. A bunch of memories flashed too fast for her to properly register, but what it did show was some glow within Shido... and then the two gasped.

[Shido, did you feel that?]

"I did, I don't know why but... I think the fact that all the Spirits I've sealed have bonded enough with me has revealed a new power!" Shido gasped, soon making a determined face. "Mio, I'm going to try it... I'm going to see if I can do a Triple Spirit Ascension!"

Mio gasped.

[Shido! Do you know how worried I was when you tried a Double, trying a Triple right now might just fail, regardless of the result it may be too much for you! Don't take the risk-]

"Do you trust me?" Shido asked, making Mio go silent. He closed his eyes, and Mio felt his determination and despite she wanted to say otherwise... something else told her to believe in him.

[...I trust you, do what you believe you need to do!]

"Thank you, Mio." Shido smiled, soon looking at Yoshino and Yoshinon. "Can you two wait here? This shouldn't take much longer."

Yoshino nods, and Shido smiled and nodded back. Soon leaving Yoshino to watch him walk
towards the Goliath. Kurumi curious to see if what she tried had done anything to help him see what she was looking for.

- (*insert Asterisk War - Brand New World*) -

Soon enough the Goliath noticed Shido, and as its readings saw him as the bigger threat, it quickly turned around and began rushing at Shido at full speed. As it prepared to crush him, everyone else stared as Shido.

"SHIDO!" They all cried out in worry.

Shido soon recalled Sandalphon and Camael, soon hold them together as he channeled more power. He soon felt his eyes widen and his body pulse, feeling the stress of what he was about to do pressurizing into his body like crazy.

"Damn it, my whole body feels like it's being compressed... but I know I can do this! Tohka, Origami, Yoshino and Kotori! This is the power we formed together, so I won't let it fall to a mechanical machination like this one!" Shido shouted loudly, holding his arms up high.

"I call to the power savage force rampaging inside my will, now break the dimensional boundaries before me... and create a new potential in this reality!"

Yoshino's power surged through his body, and everywhere else inside of it where Tohka and Kotori's power hadn't encompassed its presence was filled before it also linked up to his mana core. Yelling in pain again, Shido soon gained a focused look as he glowed brightly.

"SANDALPHON, CAMAEL, ZADKIEL... BREAK THE BOUNDARIES TOGETHER!"

"Wait, he just called out three Angels!? Then this is a..." Kotori began, realizing what he was achieving.

"...Triple Spirit Ascension!?" Tohka and Origami finish together in shock.

Suddenly the power surged out and the Goliath which was right at Shido was suddenly forced away and shot into a whole group of buildings, crashing into it and struggling to get back up afterwards.

"D-DESTROY!" Goliath shakily roared, getting back up.

A warning signal soon appearing in its analyzer as it noticed Shido's readings. Everyone looked to see Shido now with red, purple and blue hair while sharing the three Spirits' eye colors. His whole body was shaking as he rode on Zadkiel with both Sandalphon and Camael in hand.

"Amazing, he really did it!" Tohka smiled, raising a fist into the air as she gave a cheer sound.

[You... you actually did it! I can even tell the force your body's handling this time and your still OK! I think this form's side effects may be still be cause for concern. Shido, you need to finish this ASAP!]

"I intend to! This is not a machine I'll hold back again, let's go!" Shido exclaimed, Zadkiel roared as it rushed forward on Shido's command. The Goliath rushed back at Shido again and went for a ramming smash, charging its optical laser again. "Now Zadkiel!"

Zadkiel kicked its hind legs and then smashed hard into Goliath, throwing it off as it spun and its optical laser fires into the air, missing everything before it faded. Soon Shido jumped up high and slashed with Sandalphon, denting a slashed into Goliath, and then using Camael to make a second
and making said dent an 'X' shape.

"D-D-DES...TROY!" Goliath shakily replied, starting to be overwhelmed. Shido screamed loudly as he slashed down on Zadkiel, soon breaking it apart and making its pieces fly as Camael changed to its Megiddo form.

"Angel... Fusion... OVERDRIVE!" Shido shouted, soon placing Sandalphon inside and having Zadkiel's pieces fall into Megiddo's cannon. In response, the Megiddo cannon shifted back and the three Angels became a new red and white version of the Halvanhelev that was emitting rings of fire and ice.

"Time for you to go back to the scrap where you belong, now go... HAIL FIRE SLASHER!"

Shido slammed the sword down, and the minute he did, the tip of the blade caused a rapid succession of fiery and icy explosions, it was almost like watching miniature bursts of a reactor core fluctuate as soon enough the Goliath's body began to crack where the 'X' shaped cut was made!

"He's breaking through the armor!" Origami shouted, soon gasping. "That's it! The rapidly hot and cold bursts of spirit power, they're literally eating away at the armor, chipping its strength and turning the hard metal completely brittle!"

Meanwhile Kurumi stared before she suddenly began laughing in a loud and slightly unhinged, but happy sounding manner. What she was seeing right now? This... beautiful display of force that Shido was showing, it made her smile.

"This is it Shido, any doubts I had before now are gone! You are the real deal! The one who has the power I'm seeking! This is the power you gained from [Princess], [Angel], [Hermit] and [Efreet]! You are the one I definitely need to eat!" Kurumi declared.

The Goliath tried in vain to reach out and crush Shido, but Shido just poured more power and the machine began to spark.

"GO!" Shido shouted, soon unleashing one final burst. The Goliath was hit by the entire attack and soon consumed as Shido soon was forced out of his Spirit Ascension. Landing on his knees as the two forces soon consumed the Goliath as it exploded. Everyone watching cheered.

- (insert song end) -

"He did it, the Goliath is destroyed!" Mikie cheered, but soon the celebration was cut off as she noticed Ashley and the others of the SSS trio by Artemisia. "Ash?"

Everyone soon saw the same sight of the three all in tears over Artemisia's current state, and suddenly the victory cheer was cut short.

"Artemisia! Please, please wake up! I beg of you!" Leonora cried, shaking Artemisia in vain as she only gave weak unconscious groans. Leonora soon began to break down crying loudly. Katie contacted Ratatoskr.

"We need a medical chopper now! Artemisia B. Ashcroft is in an unknown medical state!" Katie reasoned.

"Understood, a chopper's being deployed as we speak." Reine replied, soon sighing. "Katie, can you tell me Shido's condition? His stress levels went up like crazy."

"Don't worry Commander, he just used a new level of Spirit Ascension. He's fine now if just tired."
Katie replied.

Reine smiled and sighed in relief.

"That's good, I wouldn't forgive..." Reine began, soon catching herself. However, Kotori who was nearby Katie however turned as she heard that sudden cut off and suddenly raised an eyebrow. "I mean its good Shido didn't suffer any serious damage. Commander Reine out."

Meanwhile back at the DEM, Marina in her android body watched from a couch as the Goliath signal finally vanished and the available data it took to take the machine out. Smirking at the results they got.

"Just as planned, you did well in helping us get the data we needed Artemisia..." Marina smirked, soon moving a finger at the screen to show Kurumi as she saw the recording of her leaving the scene. "As did you Nightmare, now all that's left is to finish our true weapon."

Marina got up and walked to a part on Arubi Island where an even more massive attack machine was nearing its completion.

"Just a while longer before you can finally begin, and Father's dream will take the first big step he's been waiting for." Marina chuckled darkly, smirking as she made a contact. "It's me Minerva, head back to Arubi Island. Your new CR-Unit has been finished... Adeptus 2."

Soon at the hospital, Reine was with the SSS trio as they saw the bedridden Artemisia, her lifeless eyes having failed to close as she was hooked up to a few life support machines due to her unresponsive state. Reine sighed and turned to them as her examinations finished.

"Well, I have good news and bad news. The good news is that physically there's not a thing wrong with her. Her health, vitals, not a single part of her is in lethal harm, she could live a long life easily."

The SSS trio looked happily, but Reine cleared her throat reminding them that was only the good news.

"The bad news? Well... I realized exactly why she's like this, and it turns out Artemisia never betrayed us."

The trio gasped.

"It seems that when she went missing... the DEM did something to her. My analysis showed traces of a realizers that acted as a memory suppressant. Every time she tried to remember something the realizer registered as a trigger, it would respond to keep her from fully recalling it."

"Wait, so you're saying... of course, that's why she seemed to start recognizing us but then suddenly was sure she didn't!" Cecile gasped, and Reine nodded.

"That's where the news gets bad, that Goliath had a sub-routine to overload that device by defeating her and when it did... the device dissolved away, but in the process, it took away Artemisia's memories." Reine continued, soon sighing as the three gave frightened stares.

"Right now, due to that, she's in a mixture of a coma and vegetative state, but also neither of those at the same time. I'm sorry to say this to you three, but if we can't somehow recover Artemisia's memories..."

The three all stared as Reine said the dreaded line.
"...She will never wake up again."

"No... no, no, no!" Ashley cried, soon grabbing Artemisia's hand. "Artemisia! We finally got you back, you can't go away for good... you can't!"

Soon Ashley cried over Artemisia's body, Cecile and Leonora got close to her, putting hands on their back as they did the same. Reine closed her eyes and looked away, knowing the three needed to grieve over this together.

She soon walked out as she took a tablet and began preparing for some method to find and recover Artemisia's memories. She was a fellow ally of Ratatoskr and a fellow friend, she would not let the DEM get away with this act. As she did this, Kotori looked at her leave and entered Mana's room, Mana looking out the window.

"Hmm?" Mana suddenly blinked, turning to see Kotori come in. "Oh hey Kotori, you came to see me?"

"Yeah, how close you getting there trooper." Kotori joked, making Mana giggle a bit.

"My temperature's still a bit high, but I'm doing a bit better. My mind still feels hazy for any long thoughts though." Mana answered, and Kotori smiled before giving a serious face to Mana's surprise. "What is it?"

Kotori sighed.

"Mana, what was the last thing you did before you passed out?" Kotori asked.

"Uh... I think I grabbed Reine's teddy. She left it here to watch me as a get well gift." Mana answered, and Kotori looked at it. The younger sister of the Takamiya siblings tilted her head in confusion. "Kotori?"

"Mana... Reine's hiding something from us, more specifically you and Shido. I just know it. I heard her say something odd earlier to Shido... and now a teddy bear of hers causes you to end up recovering here?" Kotori explained, making Mana’s eyes widen slightly as Kotori writes a note.

"Exactly, it isn't a coincidence. When you can be discharged... we will make her talk. I know just where to have her meet us and do that. Don't tell anyone about this. I've even written a note so you have a reminder while your thinking's still all scrambled."

Mana nodded, and Kotori walked out of the room as Mana looked at the note before her. She gulped a bit as she looked back outside and a strange feeling felt it had crept into the room from the revelation.

With the rest of the group who fought the Goliath, they went back to school as despite classes had been cancelled for the rest of the day due to the attack, they still needed to gather their stuff since the school was luckily not in the vicinity of the 'Spacequake'. As the group walked, Shido and the others minus Kotori were all talking.

"I hope that Artemisia girl will be alright, she seemed like she had something serious." Tohka mentioned sadly, Shido rubbing her back. He could tell she felt really sad about it since she wasn't touching the snack he had given her.

"Ratatoskr's doctors are gonna make sure she recovers. I think she'll be OK." Origami assured, even though she was doubting her own words. "What I'm more shocked about is how the Goliath didn't
even seem to ever spot Kurumi. Why was it here if that was the case?"

The group all thought hard on that, feeling stumped.

"Whatever it is, we need to know what we're gonna do in regard to with our little black Spirit."

Yoshino stated, getting to the main point. Shido nodded.

"You're right Yoshinon, that's why I've decided what I need to do with her next." Shido replied, getting everyone's attention. Origami held her neck at that... looking at Shido worriedly.

"Shido, are you sure? I mean..."

"I understand why your worried Origami, especially after what you told me. Yet she hasn't done it despite having every chance... I wanna believe that somehow she isn't just here for that." Shido answered, putting a hand on her shoulder. Origami was worried... but simply nodded.

"For that very reason, it's why I've decided I'm going to ask her on a date for tomorrow."

Take that DEM pile of scrap, Shido just sent you to the junkyard! There you have it, Kurumi indirectly helped Shido and Mio unlock the Triple Spirit Ascension! It is much more powerful than his Double, but one of the most taxing and the burnout it faces is pretty crazy. The crazy thing about it though? Well... this is even the final limit of the Spirit Ascension! There's still one more even more dangerous level, and all I can say about it is that it's not a "Quadruple Spirit Ascension".

At the same time... Yoshino's finally hit 50%, so now Shido can use the Spirit Ascension with all the spirits he's managed to seal for. Though it seems that before bumping it to 50, strengthening their bond has done something to Yoshino and Yoshinon's free use of their Inversion, and now she can't use it anymore. Is there something happening between the two we don't know, or is what powered the transformation simply no longer there for them?

Dang it Westcott, that was cruel what you did to Artemisia too! Well from here on out, Artemisia's out of action for the rest of this season and most of Date AST Re:Strike, and the only consolation prize is that Phantom stole Material B from him. Unfortunately, the heroes don't know who she or even Material A actually are, so... they really don't know of this victory.

Well here comes the big guns everyone, Shido is about to ask Kurumi on a date. Hopefully Shido can keep it from being a date to die for. *plays a rimshot* Hah! I actually managed to make myself feel a pun actually worked for once, nice!

See you next time when Shido and Kurumi's date begins, so stay awesome everyone! ^^

Also, since the Triple Spirit Ascension has now been revealed, it's time to give you the update to Shido's stats when he's using it, so time for his third fact sheet.

-Shido Takamiya, Triple/Maximum Spirit Ascension State-

Angel: None

- New Powers: Shido has the same benefits and drawbacks as his Double Spirit Ascension, but
the sheer amount of stress and strain from using three Spirits' powers all at once taxes Shido's body to the point if he uses the technique too long, his whole body is left sore and leaves him in that state for an hour, while he can Spirit Ascend again during this time, he will not be able to fight at full power and will reset his soreness timer if pushed too far again. Like the previous two forms of this technique, Tohka also named this one for the same reasons she named the first upgrade as the Double Spirit Ascension.

- Angel Fusion Overdrive: By linking the three Angels together, Shido can combine them into a super powerful attack. The downside compared to the Double Spirit Ascension's Angel Fusion attack is that in doing so, Shido will force the Spirit Ascension to cancel itself, and he won't be able to use it again in any form for a 5-minute period, though it may allow him to avoid the soreness from using it too long. Reine describes the power of these attacks as the equivalent of hand grenade sized Fusion Bombs.

Risk Factors: SS

Spacequake: None

Spirit's Astral Dress: None

Angel Rank: Varies on the stronger of the two Angels

Strength: 150

Consistency: 210

Spiritual Power: 255

 Agility: 141

Intelligence: 190

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 77%

Origami - 60%

Yoshino - 50%

Kotori - 69%
And here we are, after four chapters that comprised pretty much all of Episode 7 in the anime, we're finally moving on to events from Episode 8 in full. I'll tell you here that things are going to get crazy since not only does Shido ask Kurumi for a date... but so does the rest of his harem, all around the same time!

Yep, that's right, that actually includes Yoshino and Kotori this time. A three way date is hard, but a five way date? Yikes, we knew you well Shido... *laughs* just kidding, you'll survive Shido! Well, at least you'll survive physically. I did originally consider having Kotori and Yoshino take over some of the scenes, but then I remembered how Yoshino and Kotori's dates were shown during Mayuri Judgment to be just too different for that to work.

So I decided to just make up some new scenes, admittedly doing both that and trying to find the right moments to fit them in kinda worries me. Hopefully it won't feel all tossed around like a salad when I post it, I'm already partially worried that's how I felt with Ch 18 of A Dragon's Heavenly Bonds. I guess the best I can say is... wish me luck there everyone ^^;

Either way, as of this point in the story, Shido's only got a little time left before he learns the hard way that Kurumi is just as bad as she appeared to be... and also, we're gonna see a bit of mess in-universe as a certain character's presence in a certain situation causes a certain reaction to a certain other character... *giggles* I wonder which two I'm talking about, am I talking about Kurumi? I probably am, but... well, you never know :3

Alright, now time for Yoshino's data sheet before we begin. As a small heads up and reminder, I decide to not use Mizusagi as her last name. Yoshino's official last name will be Mizui instead.

-Yoshino Mizui, Code Name: [Hermit]-

Angel: Zadkiel, the "Freezing Puppet" - Zadkiel is a white mechanical puppet in the form of a rabbit, while technically a puppet its mechanical nature allows the angel brief movement through autonomous programming while Yoshinon isn't controlling it. When Yoshino puts her hands into the control panel area, Zadkiel can unless its full potential. If Yoshino is wearing Yoshinon when she's controlling Zadkiel, the latter will project her voice through Zadkiel.

Alternate Form: Zadkiel, Yoshinon Mode - Not exactly a form change, but just the state when Yoshinon's on Yoshino's hand. This causes Zadkiel and Yoshinon to temporarily be one and the same, allowing Yoshinon to talk through the Angel. If Zadkiel has something to say to Yoshinon, it can still communicate with her.

Alternate Form: Siryon, the "Frozen Armor" - By shifting its body, Zadkiel will essentially 'equip' itself onto Yoshino becoming a set of armor for her to well. Using this technique also overlays some ice on Yoshino's Astral Dress. Yoshinon best defines the form as Yoshino essentially turning Zadkiel into clothing and then wearing it.
Powers: Yoshino's elemental affinity as a Spirit is the three phases of water, she can gather water molecules from the air and convert them into her spirit mana for her attacks, as a consequence she is weaker in areas with little moisture or extremely hot. The phase of water she uses depends on her choice or her emotional state if unconsciously used. She'll use the solid state of ice if afraid, sadness will cause her to use the liquid state and create rain, and if angered which she rarely enters... she'll use the gas form and burn what she touches with boiling steam.

Risk Factors: B

Spacequake: C

Spirit's Astral Dress: B

Angel: AA

Strength: 95

Consistency: 82

Spiritual Power: 199

Agility: 212

Intelligence: 152

Chapter 18, S1: Kurumi Fallacy, Part 5

Kurumi was standing by her school locker, and soon as she gets her non-school shoes on, she suddenly hears a knock by the locket and turns to see Shido was standing there while looking at her directly.

"Oh, well hello there Shido. Do you need something? Kurumi asked.

"Nothing much, I just wanted to ask if you wanted to hang out tomorrow if your free." Shido asked, making Kurumi blink.

"Tomorrow? As in like tomorrow, tomorrow?" Kurumi questioned.

"Yep, tomorrow! If you want that is. I figured I could show you around town, show you some sights." Shido replied, hoping he didn't sound like a playboy with how he chose to word that last part. 'I need to think these replies ahead better!'

"Hmm... that sounds fun, hey wait a minute. Shido, are you by chance asking me out on a date without actually using the d-word?" Kurumi smirked, making Shido blush a bit from her tease.

"Uh... yeah, guess I am. So, what do you say?" Shido wondered.

"Alright, I'll go on a date with you. Although admittedly I'm a bit surprised you'd ask me that." Kurumi replied, smiling a bit while giving a silent giggle.

Shido blinked at her confused.
"I figure you might not want to consider what Origami likely told you." Kurumi replied, Shido prepared his poker face and tilted his head confused.

"Origami? Why would she tell me something about you, even if she did she gets nervous so often I tend to worry if she's just exaggerating something. She is kinda shy." Shido replied, making Kurumi blink a bit.

'She didn't tell him? That's odd, it seemed like she would have. Still, if he doesn't know then I can use this to my advantage and lure him in where I want him.' Kurumi thought, smirking and giggling internally. Externally on the other hand, she gives Shido a smile. "Oh never mind, I must have fallen for one of those occasional fake rumors."

"OK, is 10:30 by the station gates OK?" Shido asked, and Kurumi nods.

"I'll see you there, looking forward to it." Kurumi smiled.

Shido soon sees Kurumi head off, and once she was out of sight he drops his poker face and looks more serious. Soon Origami sees Shido from afar, and realizing he had asked her, sighs in relief as she walks closer and stops beside him.

"I was so worried she might catch onto you." Origami replied, shaking a bit as she held her neck again.

"Honestly, so was I. We may have just been lucky she didn't notice that I was faking that part." Shido replied, soon breathing as he stared off the direction Kurumi left. "I swear I'll get her to fall for me. I swear it. I'll see you back at the house Origami."

Shido heads out the school gates, and as she did, Origami rubbed her throat from where she had been grabbed by Kurumi once again, remembering the sight of Kurumi's clock eye firsthand. She still didn't understand why, but that eye felt... wrong.

"Why am I so obsessed with that thing?" Origami told herself, soon remembering the strange white hands themselves. "And just what were those shadows, should we really be letting Shido do his on his own?"

Phantom and Material B soon landing at part of the city, namely the park that Phantom and Kurumi had first met at. Phantom took a look around and used her mana to sense for anything of in the area's energy, getting her partner's attention as she began her searching through the area.

"Uh... OK, I'm lost here so please explain." Material B questioned, making Phantom flinch as she realized she forgot to tell her.

"(Yeah, I need to work on remembering I have a partner again after so many years.)" Phantom replied, chuckling as she sweat dropped. Soon turning. "(I'm trying to see if I can find any information that can help me figure out what caused Kurumi to change like she did after Saya died. That make sense Watcher?)"

"Oh, so you're basically-" Material B began, but soon stopped herself and blinks a bit. "Wait, did you just call me Watcher?"

"(It's a code name, consider it the equivalent to why I call myself Phantom. Every Spirit has a code name, and I decided to make that one yours based on your appearance.)" Phantom answered, and 'Watcher' looked down, wondering what Phantom was seeing in her Astral Dress to come to that name.
"...I have no idea what led you to that, but I guess it's not a bad code name either." Watcher replied, soon walking near Phantom as she resumed her search. "Though to ask, who exactly is Kurumi that you feel something's wrong with her now?"

"(Remember the two partners I told you about? Kurumi and that Saya girl I just mentioned were those partners, and probably the first real friends I had on this long journey.)" Phantom explained, recalling the memory.

"(I was nearly captured by a DEM Jabberwocky robot once, the only time they nearly got me. At that time, a girl came into the area and despite not knowing me or the situation, she chose to protect me. Zafkiel reacted, saying it really wanted to be bonded to her. She didn't hesitate to accept the role of a Spirit, even after I quickly told her the most shocking thing of all.)"

-Flashback Start-

Kurumi saw her current self after having become a Spirit and gasped, the new outfit she was wearing that was partially made of light shocking her a bit.

"What the? Phantom, why am I wearing this?" Kurumi asked surprised.

"(Because you've become a Spirit, you're essentially still human but at the same time much more than one. This is power that when abused ends up as a Spacequake.)" Phantom explained, surprising Kurumi.

"(I'm sorry, but I figured I'd have to tell you more before you accepted the crystal. I promise I'll explain this to you, but right now defeating this machine is our top priority.)"

"B-but I don't know what to do." Kurumi said worriedly, soon feeling Phantom put a hand on hers. "Huh?

"(Calm down Kurumi, listen to me carefully. Just believe in your power, and the crystal within you will protect you. This power entrusted itself you, so you must trust it in return.)"

Kurumi looked at her and nodded, the Jabberwocky rushed at the two as Kurumi closed her eyes.

'Believe, just believe... if anything can hear me please lend me the strength to protect everyone.' Kurumi thought, a small bit of sweat trickled down her side as she tried to keep calm.

[I am here Master, I will protect you.]

Kurumi opened her eyes to see the pair of guns known as Zafkiel. Phantom smiled as she saw it, looking at her.

"(This is Zafkiel, otherwise known as the 'Emperor of Shadowed Time', it's your Angel. These pair of guns will the sword and shield that shall be by your side whenever you wish for them to come.)" Phantom explained, soon turning at the Jabberwocky that was about to strike them.

"(Now trust yourself, trust that you can protect us!)

Kurumi stared and breathed in as she wished for Zafkiel's power to save them, and as she did... she suddenly felt herself and Phantom knocked back as the two guns suddenly fired a blast of darkness, and it struck the Jabberwocky right in the chest.

The giant machine stopped in place as it suddenly glowed and exploded into shards, the two
Phantom winced a bit at the sight as she sent out a mosaic wave to clean it.

"(Better hope no one saw that.)" Phantom aid, her unseen face sweat dropping. She soon turned to Kurumi. "(Thank you for saving me, I'll always be thankful to you Miss... oh no, I never got your name. I'm sorry.)"

"Oh, my name is Kurumi. Kurumi Tokisaki." Kurumi replied, bowing a bit.

"(Thank you, Kurumi. Now that I've given you this crystal I have much to tell you. I've put you into a terrible fate and never got the chance to warn you. After that, I'll be going.)" Phantom said, but soon Kurumi looked at Zafkiel and...

"...I want to help you." Kurumi suddenly said, surprising Phantom. "That thing was after you, and you already said were protecting this power from someone who wanted to abuse it, right? I can't bear to make you take that burden alone. We're friends now, aren't we?"

Phantom gasped a that.

"(Friends? I... I've never had a friend before, for two whole decades I've been alone with only the task I have keeping me going. You... you really want to help me?)" Phantom asked, her voice shaking as if she wasn't sure this was real or not.

"I do, I promise." Kurumi confirmed, smiling as she took Phantom's hand.

-End Flashback-

Watcher teared up happily as Phantom finished her story, wiping her eyes clean, she sniffled a bit and showed her eyes sparkling in awe and admiration.

"She's such a sweet girl, you were so lucky to have her as a friend." Watcher cried.

"(Yeah, and it wasn't that long before I ended up inviting her best friend Saya, leading to her becoming my second partner. It seemed like for a time we could stop the DEM's attempts to kill anymore Spirits... but I was too confident in the change.)" Phantom sadly continued, making Watcher worry.

"(One day I sensed the current host of Haniel's crystal die, so I was forced to go get it before the DEM stole it. Unfortunately... I learned I was tricked, and then I felt Camael had its host die... and I realized to my horror that Saya had just been murdered. I went back and got the Camael crystal, but wasn't able to rescue Kurumi and she was taken somewhere to probably be kill. She somehow escaped after that, but she was more distant after... it was my greatest failure.)"

"My god... you had to see a friend of yours die?" Watcher repeated, and Phantom nodded.

"(For that reason, I began only seeing Kurumi out of necessity or if she wanted to see me herself, I only felt she had grown more distant from losing Saya... but then only a few days ago I realized the sweet girl I knew had vanished and I had left myself grow that way because I failed to spot the change.)" Phantom continued soon looking down.

"(When I realized this, and knew she was after Shido, I knew I couldn't delay things with her powers being sealed. If I waited any longer, she'd kill Shido without trying. She's the most powerful Spirit right now and for good reason.)"
"So... you think this is where we might find a clue?" Watcher asked.

"(I do, she became a Spirit here. If something in her spirit mana changed, this spot is the best place to notice the difference. Let the past expose the future. Now come on, let's search every spot here we can.)" Phantom replied, and Watcher nodded as she began sensing for mana in the area.

Shido and Tohka were seen walking home, the two holding grocery bags as they began bringing home dinner groceries. Shido looked at Tohka who still seemed a little down because of what happened to Artemisia.

"Sorry today's been a bit crazy. Oh yeah, did you get a chance to eat during lunch at school?" Shido asked.

"Yeah... I got to eat." Tohka replied, Shido smiled at that. Only problem... Tohka had lied, not wanting to bother him with what really happened.

-Flashback Start-

Tohka was sitting at one of the school desks, looking at her bento... and then her stomach growled as it demanded to be fed. However, Tohka didn't listen as she felt all sad and had no appetite.

"Shido..." Tohka sighed, feeling lonely. At that moment, the talkative trio walked in.

"Can't believe we only managed to get two of these tickets instead of three. I don't think we have the money to split the cost of a third." Ai moaned, holding two aquarium tickets. The trio wanted to visit, but only managed to win two from an offer and couldn't get the third one they needed. She soon noticed Tohka. "Oh, hey Tohka."

"Why haven't you eaten lunch yet?" Mai asked, that's when the trio noticed Tohka was being unnaturally quiet and they heard her stomach growl. They moved in front of her and saw her sad face. "Oh no, what's wrong!?"

"Yeah, tell us everything!" Mii panicked.

Tohka looked at them, soon showing her crying tears to their surprise and worry.

"Shido isn't here right now, and then I began thinking of how we haven't really had any time together lately. When I began to focus on it..." Tohka began, soon not even continuing as she cried more, making the trio gasp before hugging her, surprising Tohka.

"Girl, don't you dare shed another tear!" Ai quickly began.

"Yeah, we're gonna make sure you don't feel sad about this anymore!" Mai added.

"That's right, we've got an anti-sadness charm guarantee." Mii finished, making Tohka blink confused.

Ai quickly held out the aquarium tickets to her.

"We can't use these pair of tickets with the three of us, but you and Shido are a pair too. It's the perfect date chance!"

Tohka gasped at that.
Tohka made a determined face as her flashback ended and the two walked into the house. Once they did, she quietly locked the door and closed the curtains, making Shido blink before he shrugged. At that moment, Tohka reached towards her shirt.

"Hey Tohka, we got some time before dinner, so do you want me to draw a bath for you first?" Shido asked, however he turned a moment after not hearing her reply and... soon wished he hadn't. Tohka had unbuttoned part of her outfit, making Shido suddenly panic. "Huh!?"

Tohka turned towards him, and soon Shido noticed that she wasn't wearing a bra!

"Why aren't you wearing a bra!?" Shido replied loudly, blushing red everywhere on his face. Steam firing out of his nostrils.

"Well..." Tohka trailed off, pointing to a spot in the room with a busted bra, Shido's eyes wander that way before wandering back and quietly muttering gibberish. "A few days ago, when all of us were changing..."

_FLASHBACK Start-

The day before Mana ended up in the hospital, the girls were all in the 'Changing Room' as he decided to call it since it was meant for everyone but himself as he was the house's only guy unless Kotori's dad came back unexpectedly. Yoshino looked as Mana put on her bra, soon looking at her current lack of breasts sadly.

"Hey, don't feel bad Yoshino. You're younger so you'll grow soon enough." Yoshinon replied, making whimper a bit to her surprise. Mana clears her throat. "...And I just remembered you haven't aged a day for years. I'm shutting up now."

Yoshinon pops off Yoshino's hand and onto the ground in response. Mana kneels by her and rubs her head, making the Water Spirit look at her.

"Hey, I'm not exactly that big either. I'm only about at... 77 or 78 cm?" Mana replied, making herself sweat drop. "Besides, look at Kotori. She manages to... grow everyone without actually getting older, in just a single... moment."

Kotori turned at Mana as she began stuttering, turning her head. Mana slowly turning as she saw Kotori's breasts bounce a bit and then screamed to everyone's shock.

"It's not fair! I'm the older one of the two of us, and yet you went from 72 to 84 cm in a minute flat while gaining 7 cm of height!" Mana yelled in jealousy, making Kotori go red at that.

"D-Don't blame the fact I went through instant puberty on me! Saya's the one that made it happen!"

"HEY!" Saya called out briefly, soon going back to sleep. As the two argued, Yoshino picked up Yoshino and moved away from the area. Origami sweat dropped a bit.

"Uh... I don't think the size of your boobs is that big a deal?" Origami tried to interject, hoping she'd end the fight. Big mistake.

"Then what's your size!?" Mana shouted, making Origami shake a bit. She got closer and Origami's
shyness and nervousness kick in, soon gulping a bit she answers.

"...88 cm?" Origami softly replied, soon making Mana scream and causing her to shriek. "I'm sorry!"

*SNAP!*

"AH!"

Everyone turned to see Tohka's bra on the floor, having snapped in half and fall into two on the floor as she covered herself with her arms. The others all staring while Yoshinon covered Yoshinon's eyes.

"It... it broke..." Tohka said, feeling embarrassed. "And that was my last one too, why have they all kept breaking lately!?"

Origami blinked.

"Uh... Tohka, I think I should measure you." Origami replied, getting the measuring tape. Soon enough, Tohka slightly lifted up as origami checked over her bust line and then under it until... she gasped at the number. "Tohka, what size was the bra you were wearing meant for?"

"An 84 cm like Kotori, I had to give him a few of mine. Why?" Tohka asked, not aware of the situation. Origami sweated a bit.

"Uh... Tohka, you're not that size anymore. As of now you're a..." Origami looked behind her, knowing she was about to feed the shark known as Mana. "...a 96 cm."

"Are you freaking kidding me!!?" Mana screamed, getting the attention of Shido who was cooking downstairs.

"Huh? What was that all about?" Shido wondered.

-End Flashback-

"...And I haven't had a bra on since then since I haven't been able to go shopping." Tohka innocently replied, not realizing the full weight of that statement.

Shido suddenly went even redder and turned around, covering his nose and mouth as his cheeks swelled.

'Don't get a nosebleed, don't get a nosebleed, don't get a nosebleed!' Shido thought, unaware of Tohka reading something on a paper the talkative trio had given her. Once he calmed down and turned again... she was suddenly on the floor like a tiger with a ticket in her mouth.

"Wha? Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, hold on a second." Shido stuttered, soon falling onto his butt on the couch as Tohka crawled closer. "I am very confused!"

Tohka got closer, doing some kind of breathing motion. Shido still confused to what she was doing, soon she dropped the ticket and stuffed it into her still view-able cleavage and Shido swore he went so red his ears ended up releasing steam as Tohka crawled over him.

'Wait, oh my god! Tohka... I'm not ready for this yet!' Shido thought as his brain shut down.

"Shido, I have a question for you..." Tohka began, Shido not responding. "Tomorrow, will you please go on a date with me?"
Shido suddenly had his face reset as he blinked, mentally sighing in relief.

'Oh thank god, false alarm.' Shido thought, soon swiping the ticket quickly. "Uh... sure thing Tohka!"

Tohka jumped off him and cheered.

"How wonderful! Ai, Mai and Mii really did know what they were talking about!" Tohka exclaimed happily, and Shido blinked in surprise. "Meet me by the station statue by 10 AM, see you then Shido! Don't forget!"

"Wait, did she just say 10 AM?" Shido panicked, but Tohka had already vanished from view and went... somewhere. "...Crap!"

Soon he heard Origami call him, and he answered it.

"H-Hey Shido." Origami called, sounding a bit nervous.

"Hi Origami, say you think you c-"

"Shido, I'd like you to take me on a date tomorrow. I'll make you by the station statue at 11 AM, OK? W-well then, b-bye for now!" Origami quickly replied, hanging up right after. Leaving Shido with his jaw open.

"...What!?" Shido gasped.

Soon the phone rang again, and he didn't bother to check the caller ID and thought it was Origami again so he just answered.

"Hello?" Shido replied.

"Hey Shido, Kotori here." Kotori replied, and Shido attempted to tell her something. "I want to actually go on a date with you, so meet me by the Station Statue at 11:30 AM. Bye!"

Shido screams as she hangs up.

[...Oh boy. I'm expecting a reaction from you in 3, 2, 1 and...]

"I'm on four dates now? Dang it, at that rate Yoshino's gonna call me for a date!" Shido shouted out loud, making Mio go silent and then sigh.

Soon the phone rings again to Shido's horror.

[I could have told you that would jinx it, but you didn't give me the chance so... sorry. I'm gonna go sleep and ignore your little harem drama this time.]

Mio did just that, and Shido hang his head down as he answered.

"...Hey Yoshino, yes to whatever you're about to tell me." Shido replied, having given up at this point.

"Really? OK, I'll see you at the Station Gate by 12 PM, OK?" Yoshino replied before hanging up.

Shido soon slumped onto the couch and went fully white, his ghost flying out of his mouth and wiggling to represent his panicky spirit.
"...That's it, I'm dead. I wonder if me or Mana's head is more heated and overcooked right now."

Back at Tenguu Hospital, Mana was about to eat some mashed apples when suddenly...

*ACHOO!*

Mana suddenly sneezed, she blinked before sniffling and wiping her nose.

"Where did that come from?" Mana asked.

Meanwhile at the DEM base on Arubi Island, Minerva was seen wearing anew CR-Unit, one with a snake like design to it. It was called the Basilisk. Something truly fitting for a slippery and venomous woman like herself.

"This new suit feels right, I feel so... strong!" Minerva smirked viciously, striking a wall and smashing it before it melts apart to her pleasant surprise. "That stupid Manticore has nothing on this one."

Westcott chuckled at her natural blood lust.

"This is the kind of personality I need from my top Adeptus numbers, vicious and without any restraint to hold them back. Oh, and that's not all there is with this CR-Unit. It has a special power source." Westcott replied, getting the insane wizard's attention.

"That suit has the memories of your most hated person build into them. You now have all her skills. Small story short, you have truly surpassed Artemisia because you've become her and more."

Minerva gave a sick grin at that.

"Finally, I've overcome that bitch! Speaking of which, what happened to her?" Minerva wondered, and in response she saw Westcott bring up an image of her state after Goliath crushed her easily. "Hah! She's finally ended up with what she deserved, that pretty face is gonna stay that way forever!"

"I'll need you to wait on standby for now. There's a very important mission I'm planning, but it will be a while before I can fully execute it. Right now, I need to focus on the efforts of Material A. I've already gotten her set up for what I'm about to pull." Westcott chuckled.

Suddenly he heard the door slam open as Ellen rushed in, though soon looking a bit green. Westcott and Minerva sweat drop at the sight. For some strange reason, when night fighting or in a CR-Unit, Ellen was... destructively clumsy and not in good shape. Just going up two flights of stairs would make her nearly puke.

"Ellen, breathe first and then tell me what's wrong?" Westcott sighed, putting a hand on his head and shaking it in response. Ellen nods and catches her breathe, soon straightening herself.

"Ike... Material B escaped its prison due to a... annoying pest. Worse is not only do we have no control of her, but the pest who freed her made sure our systems would refuse any data relating the project and its related research. We've lost all of it." Ellen stated.

Westcott's eyes widened, soon making his teeth grit.

"Minerva, I think you've just been given the first hint to your mission. You see... I have a certain
Spirit I need dead." Westcott replied, taking a look at her. "She goes by the code name of Phantom. She's the Spirit that creates other Spirit. It should be fun for you since she seems to be a child."

"So, the root of the Spirits then? Heh, I'll enjoy making her bleed bit by bit!" Minerva cruelly smirks, walking off somewhere. "Let me know when the mission's green lit. I gotta warm myself up first."

Westcott nods, and soon grunts a bit.

"What about Material A's status, has she been compromised?" Westcott inquired, Ellen shook her head. "That's good, as long as we have her then any other loss of this kind still is one that we can spare."

Westcott walks up to a screen as he pulls up the face of the enigmatic Material A, smirking.

"Now, make sure to finish your goal... We have a grand prize only a few steps away after this point. I know you won't fail me." Westcott smirked, chuckling right after.

Reine sighed as she looked at Shido sitting across the table from him, Maria sweat dropping with a smile as she appeared in her hologram form in the middle of the table from a projector. Shido had just come in explaining the fact he planned a date with Kurumi... only to get a date with every Spirit as a result.

"Really Shido? I know you have a harem and have accepted it, but five dates on the same day when we have a specific spirit we need to worry about?" Reine asked sarcastically in response to him finishing his story.

[Probably could have made it four, but nope. He couldn't say no to Yoshino.]

Shido groans and slams his head down on the table, groaning loudly.

"What am I supposed to do now? I can't cancel on any of them or that'll make them feel bad, but I can't be in multiple places at the same time either. I'm so freaking screwed!" Shido groaned as he raised his head, only to slam it back down. "If only I could make clones of myself or something then I could work around this issue entirely."

"Well... we can't make clones of yourself, but we can help you get to multiple places at once in record time." Maria suggested, making Shido raise his head. "Remember the Fraxinus has teleporters. Right?"

Shido blinks before screaming and slamming his head on the table. Reine sliding a pillow under it.

"I feel so stupid now!" Shido yelled.

"I'm an AI and even I can feel that way, it's not as bad as you might think it is." Maria chuckled, rubbing her cheek a bit. "Don't worry Shido, me, Reine and the Fraxinus crew are on your side! We'll get you through a five date festival or we'd shame the skills of Ratatoskr!"

Reine sweat dropped at that, chuckling slightly to the side. Maria blinked at her response.

"What? What was wrong with what I said, please tell me." Maria inquired, Reine purposely whistling to avoid an answer. "You're no fun.

Kurumi soon began walking through the city, when soon she gets the sign of Phantom's presence in
the area of the park that the two of them first encountered one another at, and she smirks a bit.

"Hmm... are you up to the usual antics you try hiding from me Phantom? Well, let's see if I can sneak a peek on your dark secrets."

Kurumi heads into the park, as Phantom and Watcher continue their search, Watcher suddenly notices some mana concentration in one spot after hours of searching and gasps. She grabs it and moves towards Phantom.

"I found some!" Watcher called out.

"(You did? Quick, let me verify it!)" Phantom exclaimed, rushing over as she looked and... "(You found the real deal! Nice work, now we-)

Phantom suddenly got a familiar feeling and sweated.

"(Oh no, Kurumi's coming here! Uh... quickly, give me the mana and then let me disguise you!)

Phantom panicked, Watcher panicked too and tossed it to her before the former contained it and then hugged Watcher's form close as she disguised her as a teddy bear with her mosaic.

"A teddy bear?" Watcher asked curiously?

"(I'm only a young child, it's the most believable thing I could think of this quickly!)

Phantom admitted in embarrassment. At that moment, Phantom turned as Kurumi walked into the scene, and Phantom pretended she was just humming around.

"Well, interesting to see you here Phantom-" Kurumi began, but soon stopped and blinked when she saw the teddy bear. Phantom looked at her as she sweat dropped. "Uh... as I was saying, I'm just curious you sense you were here."

Phantom giggled a bit.

"(I can't help it, this place is special to me. Its where we first met. As for this teddy bear... I'm allowed to act my age on occasion, right?)

Phantom questioned, making Kurumi turn her head, chuckling oddly at the question.

'How do I answer that without sounding so wrong with how I say it!?' Kurumi thought, slightly paling a bit. "So how's work been going on your end?"

"(Not as lucky as I'd like, the DEM's hiding what I'm looking for pretty well. I worry they either moved it or it was never here.)" Phantom answered, sighing a bit. Looking at Kurumi. "(What about you, how're you going with finding that boy you got interested in?)"

"Already did, and already proved it. Now all I need is to eat him and get the power I need." Kurumi chuckled darkly, making Phantom nearly toss her cookies and Watcher sweat as she worried she'd do it on her. "Well, I better be prepared. He's asked me on a date tomorrow."

Phantom stared in surprise as Kurumi giggled, spinning into a tree before disappearing into the shadows of her power. Phantom released Watcher who shook a bit.

"Did she feel unnatural to you?" Watcher asked, Phantom nodded. "Oh god, not just me then. Who's this Shido exactly? I think I heard you mention him around the time we began this search."

"(He's someone important to me, but his sister and I don't know I exist... and it isn't the right time for them to know me. You see...)" Phantom began, soon whispering the rest to Watcher who gasped in
shock.

"No way..." Watcher breathed.

"(And I had no choice but to have him deal with Kurumi now. This is why we're searching, even if indirectly... I need to aid him when he already has a low chance of saving her. I couldn't delay or it he wouldn't have any chance.)" Phantom finished.

"...Wait, you said they don't know you exist. Couldn't you still go see him if you could... I don't know, just not say who you are? You could encourage his efforts by giving him a friendly warning and then say he'll learn how you know him if can seal the Spirits." Watcher asked, making Phantom freeze and blink.

"(...Watcher, have I told you how much I love having you as a partner yet?)" Phantom asked, and Watcher shook her head. "(OK, then I love having you as a partner!"

Phantom hugged Watcher, making the latter blink.

"Is it weird I kinda feel I'm an older sister here?" Watcher asked.

"(Nah, Spirits don't age physically or mentally. I'm as young as I look in mind too.)" Phantom giggled, making Watcher chuckle a bit.

Shido woke up the next morning about 9 AM, as he went outside to go get the mail... an invisible being appeared upside down before him.

"(Hi there Shido!)" Phantom greeted.

Shido screamed and fell on his back, gasping for breath before he suddenly blinked and realized what he was looking at. It was... a mosaic, and he recalled that Reine once told him about someone who was a Spirit who hid her appearance in a mosaic cover.

"Wait a second, are you..." Shido asked.

Phantom giggled before flipping around and landing on the ground, soon making a 'shh' motion before making an umbrella shaped barrier to cloak their vision from the outside world. Soon she gets closer to Shido.

"(Sorry about that, don't want anyone seeing either of us here. That's right though, the elusive Phantom at your service!" Phantom replied, soon hugging Shido to his surprise. "(I've wanted to see you for so long, and now I'm finally doing it! Phantom's so happy!"

This surprised Shido, making him look at her unseen face.

"Wait, you know me?" Shido questioned, and Phantom nodded. "Then that means you must know what me and Mana have forgotten, and how we lost our memories. Please tell me!"

[Do you know me by chance? I'd like to recognize who I am, what I am.]

Phantom gasped as she heard Mio's voice, the normally distorted voice she spoke with that didn't define a specific gender that barely sounded more female to have everyone call Mio as a girl for convenience? When Phantom heard it, she didn't hear the distortion, she heard a clear female voice... one she knew.
"(You have a second voice? How did you create it, tell me!?)" Phantom declared, making Shido face fault and Mio sigh, Phantom at the reaction he gave. Shido got back up in a few seconds after the sudden shock. "(But you're right Shido, I do know. Unfortunately... I can't tell you.)"


"(It's simple, I just can't. Not yet anyways. The time isn't right, but...)" Phantom giggled as she pats Shido's head. "(If you can seal more of the Spirits, then I can tell you. So if you want to know, you'll need to keep going, starting with Kurumi.)"

Phantom jumps up and sticks onto the wall.

"(Oh yeah, before I go? I'll help you out since I heard about that date with Kurumi you have today. A piece of advice, a warning, and a brownie points tip.)" Phantom said, showing three of her invisible fingers.

"(The advice is Kurumi is quite playful, she tends to twist things into her favor. However, a twist back to her own will not have a follow up since she doesn't like dragging things out. The warning? She's the strongest Spirit out here right now, don't let her emotions get negative or you'll probably die... badly. Finally, the brownie point tip? She really loves cats, so try getting anything cat related you can on hand. With that, I'll take my leave.)"

Phantom prepares to take her leave, but before she can...

"Hey wait, can I ask one question at least?" Shido asked, and Phantom blinks before nodding. "Tell me... are you an ally to Ratatoskr? Someone we can trust and not fear or question?"

Phantom smiles.

"(I may be secretive, but its only due to necessity Shido. I assure you that I have no reason to harm or hinder Ratatoskr... after all, the DEM wants me dead as much as any other Spirit. I'm the reason they've failed to gain a crystal.)"

Phantom soon flies off, though stops in midair.

"(And here's one last gift for showing you trust me. The reason Tohka got away from the DEM, the reason you reunited with her? I saved her, but I had to make her a Spirit. Take care of her, you're the only thing she has left now.)"

Shido gasps as Phantom vanishes and the umbrella barrier disappeared, and he stood there shocked at the revelation.

[So, she's the reason Tohka and you reunited, though needing to make her a Spirit... I don't think I wanna know why it was a necessity. I wonder who Phantom really is?]

"...You and me both, but now more than ever I'm fully serious about saving the Spirits." Shido replied, looking out at the sky. "Not just because I want to, but now I know it may help me and Mana find our answers. Maybe yours too."

[I'll be by your side Shido, we're in this together. Now you better get ready for Tohka's date, she's up first and you have less than an hour to get ready.]

Shido's eyes widen as he checks the time, panicking as he sees its 9:15 now.
"Oh crap, I gotta hurry!" Shido exclaimed, running back in the house. At the same time, far away from Shido's neighborhood, Kurumi was sitting near the tallest tower of the city. Smirking a bit.

"Be prepared Shido, because today I'm going to make you and your powers all mine."

Woo, and Shido finally asked Kurumi out on a date, only for each of his harem girls to do the same... all with a 30-minute time gap between them, is fate mocking Shido? You're just too nice to say no to your girls, aren't you? *giggles* Well, as of this chapter everyone... Kurumi Fallacy is now officially the longest arc, and we're still not anywhere near done with it!

It also seems Material B, who we'll give the code name Watcher for the sake of convenience, is already getting along with Phantom smoothly, helping her out with her work. I wonder what that trace of Kurumi's spirit mana is gonna tell her? The happy thing at least is she finally got to meet and have a small talk with Shido, something she's been wanting to do for a while. Unfortunately, she had to lie about realizing who Mio was for some reason.

Also, we finally saw Phantom's version of the memory of her and Kurumi's first meeting, and you can already see the big contradiction. Phantom told Kurumi she was a Spirit almost instantly, but if you check back in Chapter 16, you'll notice Kurumi doesn't remember that detail. Not to mention when you look at Saya's memories... you see just how altered her memories are and how little she realizes it... 0_0

To anyone questioning the scene with everyone in their bras and why I even have that in here? There's a few reasons, the first? This IS a harem story, I need some harem hi-jinks every once in a while, even if it's only just between the girls. The second? I really wanted to do something like the bra scene from this arc which was funny on its own, though had to rework it so Tohka's not aware she needs to wear it, but may need to buy new ones. The Third? It was just too perfect a lead up to how Tohka asked Shido for a date for me to not try! ^^

OK, with the main issues out of the way now, see you all next time for the five way date extravaganza! Truths will be revealed, and all of them connect to one single point. So until then, stay awesome everyone!

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 77%

Origami - 60%

Yoshino - 50%

Kotori - 69%
Alright, it's date time everyone! The 5 date extravaganza between Shido's and Kurumi is about to begin, and none of the others even aware that they all (sans Kurumi) asked Shido for a date right after each other. *giggles* I swear, since Kurumi was already a creation Tachibana had based on info I remember right, he likely already had things up to Volume 4 before he began. This is the scene that probably gave the series the same "Date A Live", though unless someone can ask Tachibana this question... the world may never know.

I hope what I decided with in regards to Yoshino and Kotori's dates would work well, I went with things similar to their Mayuri Judgment dates as a reference since I had some trouble thinking on how to get the ball rolling with theirs' considering where they are and having to squeeze things from their dates in. In hindsight, it's probably a good thing I'm not even bothering to show what time it is aside from the meet up points.

What's probably my favorite part about the dates was the creation of Kotori's date outfit. I may not be the best when it comes to fashion, especially when it isn't anything not considered tomboyish... my one weakness ^^;, but I think I did pretty well with how I designed them at least. For Tohka and Yoshino's outfits, I went with the one Yoshino wore during this scene, and Tohka's yellow outfit during the beginning of Mike's arc since she already wore her pink outfit from canon back in Origami’s arc.

I think the biggest thing that will come from this chapter though? Finally returning after napping for a while, not counting the brief reply she made during the previous chapter's flashback scene, Saya's finally gonna speak up again... and I think you'll all know what that results in since this is going to happen at the same point the group mentions Kurumi's name. From there, the whole game changes.

Now it's time for Kotori's data sheet before we start, and as a bonus I've also added Kurumi's. Though hers is at the end notes so I don't crowd the start notes more than I already have. Enjoy the chapter everyone ^^

-Kotori Itsuka, Code Name: [Efreet]-

Angel: Camael, the "Bright Burning Annihilating Demon" - Camael is a battle axe that's primarily red with some traces of black, large enough that before her body's empowered growth spurt, it was even larger than Kotori, yet still able to be held in one hand. Camael can generate flames that can reach up to 40 degrees Celsius, but will only do so upon Kurumi's command to avoid accidentally starting a fire as a consequence.

- Alternate Form: Megiddo - By contracting and shifting some of its parts around, Camael changes into a large cannon. Megiddo focuses flames channeled into it or converted from nearby spirit and then releases them all on Kotori's command into a concentrated fire beam. Megiddo's destructive force is usually around 50 degrees Celsius when fired on average, but can reach up to around 300 degrees Celsius if Kotori has a sufficient power supply to draw form or properly charged long enough.
- Powers: Kotori's elemental affinity as a Spirit is Fire, she can gather heat molecules from the air and concentrate them into her spirit mana for her attacks, as a consequence this becomes harder in colder areas, but can sometimes be amended if she can burn the area to create her own heat. Kotori mentions that during the Tengu Fire, she was the most powerful she had ever been and wasn't able to stop her body from producing flames during the event until Phantom locked her powers away.

Risk Factors: AA

Spacequake: B

Spirit's Astral Dress: A

Angel Rank: AA

Strength: 170

Consistency: 100

Spiritual Power: 215

Agility: 130

Intelligence: 178

Chapter 19, S1: Kurumi Fallacy, Part 6

Soon Shido was heading over to the Station Statue, heading over for the first of his five dates. As he did, Maria replied as he tapped his headset to make sure it was fully functioning and in working order.

"Test, testing. Can you hear me Shido?" Maria asked.

"Yeah, I hear you Maria." Shido replied, breathing a bit. "So, do we have things covered for everyone but Kurumi?"

"Best that we could, I had had everyone visit the girls separately to help them get ready for the date and any advice on where to go, so we've limited the chances of you meeting up with the other girls best we can. You'll be what guarantees if they see you or not though, no pressure." Maria confirmed. Shido breathes.

"Alright, first is going to the aquarium with Tohka." Shido confirmed.

"She came 5 minutes early, so she could call you soon enough. Now... let's start our dates, shall we?" Maria giggled. "Shiiizaki?"

"3, 2, 1. Date has begun." Shiizaki counted as the time hit 10:00.

-Tohka's Date-

Meanwhile by the station statue, Tohka was checking her reflection using her cell phone. The moment she noticed Shido however...
"Hey, Shido!" Tohka called out happily.

Shido saw her wearing a pale yellow-orange dress jacket only zipped up near the bottom with poofy sleeves with both had ruffles at the ends of both, a pale yellow sleeves dress with a white stripe design at the top, jean shorts with ruffles at the bottom of the sleeves and a pair of blue and white sneakers. He blushed a bit.

"I helped her choose that outfit, what do you think?" Maria asked.

The crew gives their thumbs up of approval

"Hey Tohka." Shido replied, scratching his head. "You look really cute in those clothes."

Tohka blushed, soon taking Shido's hand.

"Come on Shido, let's go!" Tohka giggled, Shido nearly tripping as she did. As they headed off towards the aquarium, Minowa noticed something show up on the Fraxinus' screen... and then her eyes widened.

"Commander, we have a problem!" Minowa responded, showing Origami had come an hour early as she waited by the statue worriedly.

"Origami!? I thought she was coming at 11!" Maria panicked.

"Judging by her face, it seems she was just more nervous than she was impatient." Reine answered, noting Origami was checking how she looked every few seconds.

Back with Tohka and Shido as they were heading to the aquarium, as they were...

"So Shido, what kind of place is this aquarium thing?" Tohka wondered, surprising Shido.

"Wait, you don't know? Why'd you wanna come if you didn't know what it was?" Shido asked.

"I just wanted to go on a date with you, it didn't matter what is was." Tohka replied. Shido chuckled, realizing he should have expected that.

"An aquarium is a place full of creatures that live in the water." Shido replied, and seeing Tohka beginning to drool he sweat dropped. "No, it isn't a place to eat marine based food. You'll realize it when you see it."

The two soon reach the aquarium and walk into it, and Nakatsugawa sees the screen alert them to Kurumi's presence.

"Main target has appeared!" Nakatsugawa alerted, and Maria shrugs.

"At least she's only 10 minutes early compared to Origami, that's less cause for worry." Maria smiled, soon resuming focus on the Tohka date.

Meanwhile inside the aquarium...

"I can't believe this place is real!" Tohka shouted, making Shido panic.

"Tohka, use your inside voice!" Shido whispered, making Tohka blush embarrassingly.

"Right sorry. I can't help myself, this is the neatest thing ever." Tohka said, her eyes sparkling at all the marine life she was seeing swimming above her. "Those are all real fish and more up there? It's
all so beautiful. Come on, let's go see the rest!"

Tohka began happily skipping through the rest of the aquarium, and at that moment Shido's phone beeped, warning him of the current time.

'Uh oh, I need a way to excuse myself and not seem suspicious.' Shido thought, and soon got an idea as he whispered into the phone. "Maria, make a stomach growling sound so I can go say I'll get us some lunch."

Maria gives a thumb’s up, and Tohka suddenly heard the sound, blinking as she looked at her stomach and then Shido.

"Was that you Shido?" Tohka asked, surprised to hear her stomach not doing it for once.

"Uh... yeah, you go on ahead to the next section and I'll go grab us some food real quick." Shido replied, Tohka nodded as she continued on. Shido sighed before rushing towards the bathroom.

"Beaming you now!" Maria replied, sending Shido to the ship and then to a nearby corner building near the station square. He soon began rushing over to Kurumi's location, trying to make himself look like he just barely made it on time.

-Kurumi's Date-

Kurumi notices him coming as he stopped to catch his breath, and noticed she was wearing a black Gothic Lolita dress, black boots, a black purse with a purple rose design on it, and her usual yellow scrunchies had been swapped out for red ribbons that also had purple roses on them.

"Sorry for... nearly being late." Shido panted.

"Don't worry, I got her a bit early anyways. So where should we go first?" Kurumi asked.

Soon Maria brings up some choices.

1. Safe Option - Take her to the mall
2. Romantic Option - Take her to the movies
3. Risky Option - Take her to the lingerie store

"Go with number 2, then their hands can touch during a romantic movie moment!" Kawagoe giggled, blushing a bit.

"Option 1 is an obvious choice, what girl doesn't love shopping? You can't go wrong there." Shiizaki replied, holding up a finger for emphasis. Reine thought on it a bit and turned to Kannazuki.

"You have a thought?" Reine asked.

Kannazuki puts a finger to his mouth and hums a bit before answering.

"Neither choice is bad, but both are attached to the station. Considering each girl so far arrived earlier than expected, having anything that requires being close to the station might be too risky if Kotori and Yoshino end up doing the same." Kannazuki answered. "It is often better to not go looking for trouble, even if its little."

"True, and Kurumi didn't seem to have a problem with showing Shido her panties. Even if it was an act back then, right now she'd know not agreeing to it would make her be the suspicious one to Shido." Reine replied, tapping a button. "Shido, go with option 3."
Shido blushed at the response he got.

"The lingerie store!?!" Shido shouted loudly, Maria coughing to remind him where he was. Shido covered his mouth as he realized this and blushed. Kurumi looked away blushing a bit as a result.

'In hindsight, maybe trying to show him my panties wasn't the smartest idea.' Kurumi thought, sweat dropping a bit. "...If that's what you want, I don't mind going to one of those stores."

'[She took the bait and ran with it!]

"Good... then let's go." Shido replied, feeling his face heating up. Even more as Kurumi grabbed his arm.

"It'll be your job to help me pick out something cute." Kurumi smiled, leading him towards the store as he sweated a bit.

'This is the swimsuit store all over again!' Shido thought.

Meanwhile as they headed over, the waiting Origami suddenly feels birds land on her.

"Eh?" Origami blinked, soon seeing more of them do so as she sweats. "Maybe I should just stand still... please don't release any droppings on me!"

Soon Kurumi and Shido reach the store, the blue haired boy barely keeping himself together as they went in.

"Wow! There's so much here for me to try on." Kurumi giggled, some of the girls staring at Shido already. Kurumi soon picked up a pink and blue pair and held them up towards Shido. "Which one do you think would look best on me?"

Maria's eyes float around.

"Nice try Kurumi, but we've seen through her moves, time to double knot that twist of yours! Shido, tell her you like that black one next to her!" Maria shouted, making Shido's brain heat up as a result.

"Well... they're both nice, but I like that black pair next to you better." Shido replied, making Kurumi's eyes turn to it.

'I really went too far at school, I think he knows what I'm trying to do now. No choice, I'll just have to go along with it and lead him to a feint.' Kurumi thought, looking at him again. "You really think the black one suits me better? Alright, I'll try it on so we know for sure."

Shido sees her go in a dressing room and takes a moment to breath and slow his heart rate as a bunch of woman stare at him, finding his choice a bit perverted. Shido mentally groaned since he knew they didn't understand the situation.

Soon Kurumi opens the blinds to the room, and Shido blushes red as she sees Kurumi wearing the lingerie while somewhat shyly blushing. Trying to hide her own embarrassment in wearing them.

"So, how do I look?" Kurumi asked, Shido's brain shutdown and went through a reboot. 'Because this feels really embarrassing!'

Meanwhile the talkative trio who was watching from afar all stare in shock.

"Look at that body she has." Ai began surprised.
"She's like a supermodel!" Mai added in shock.

"No fair, I want a body like that." Mii finished with jealousy, soon blowing a paper wad to wake Shido back up and regain his focus.

"U-Uh... you look in-freaking-credible!" Shido blurted out, making the trio pale slightly. "Uh... I need to go use the bathroom real quick, I'll meet you outside the store!

"...Oops." Mii whispered to herself, the trio seeing Shido rush out the store.

Luckily, Kurumi seemed more bashful than embarrassed and blushed, smiling with a hand on her face.

"Was that honest or just his orders, either way I think I'm really blushing." Kurumi told herself.

Once Shido went outside and caught his breath, Maria alerts him again. He checked his phone to see it was nearly time for Origami's date with him.

"Already?!" Shido exclaimed.

"Get to the bathroom and we'll beam you!" Maria replied.

Shido rushes over to it, and soon he's beamed up.

In the aquarium, Tohka watched some Dolphins swimming around happily, soon wondering why Shido was taking so long.

"The lines can't be that long can they-"

Tohka soon heard her own stomach growl, making herself blush as she put her hands over it.

"...Of course, he's probably just buying my share. No wonder that would take a while." Tohka chuckled embarrassingly.

Mana stared at her hospital room ceiling, tapping her fingers as she yawned.

"...This is boring, I feel fine and I'm still not allowed to leave." Mana groaned, unable to even sleep it off. "Something distract me already!"

Mana's flung her arms into the air, causing part of the equipment to bunk her on the head.

"Except for that." Mana said a bit dazed, soon falling back onto the bed.

-Origami's Date-

Shido panted as finally made it to the station statue again, panting before he saw the scene with Origami and the birds. Origami noticed him and sweated.

"Please help! I'm too afraid to move because I worry I might make them go on me!" Origami sweated, tearing up slightly.

"Hold on, I think I have an idea." Shido replied, soon turning around a bit and whistling with his fingers, the birds all heard it and flew in the direction he whistled, flying off Origami without any
worries. Origami sighed in relief.

"Thank you Shido." Origami smiled, blushing a bit. Shido saw she was wearing a sleeveless white top with a blue skirt with floral designs on the bottom, a pair of sandals and a simply silver necklace with a diamond shaped green gem. "Is it... too plain?"

Shido shakes his head.

"Not at all, it highlights your nature perfectly, being simple is what makes it look great." Shido replied honestly, making Origami's whole face go red as a result. "So where do you wanna go exactly?"

Origami, still too bashful to talk, points at the movie theater.

"The movie theater huh, any particular movie?" Shido asked.

"Well-"

Origami suddenly heard her stomach grumble, and she blushes red as she looks down a bit. Shido blinked a bit.

"...Origami, who long have you been waiting here?" Shido asked, and Origami whimpers as she looks away. "The movie isn't for some time right? How about we get you something to eat first?"

"Uh... O-OK." Origami nodded, feeling herself blush and then smile as Shido took her head and lead her to a restaurant. They soon both ordered a pasta dish, with Shido being surprised she got one all red colored, indicating it was likely super spicy. Origami noticed him staring.

"What?" Origami asked worriedly.

"Oh, nothing. I just didn't expect you'd get a spicy one." Shido replied, making Origami sigh in relief.

After eating for a bit, Shido heard the headset alert him as Kotori finally arrived for her date. Looking at his plate, he takes another bite and then coughs a bit after eating it, getting Origami's attention.

"Oh no, do you need the Heimlich!?" Origami panicked, waving her arms erratically. Shido holds out his hand though.

"I'm fine, just went down a wrong pipe." Shido said hoarsely, rubbing his throat. "I'll be right back, gonna use the bathroom."

Shido got up and headed into the bathroom, once he had, Origami stared at his plate and soon noticed how much food he had left. Then recalled about an indirect kiss and blushed.

"...Well, I'm sure he won't mind if I do it once." Origami blushed, taking his form and a bit of his food, taking a bite. Meanwhile Shido was beamed out of the bathroom and towards the Station Statue area for the third time.

-Kotori's Date-

Kotori was sucking one of her usual Chupa Chups when she saw Shido and smiled.

"Shido!" Kotori shouted as she waved to him, getting Shido's attention as he came over. Shido saw that Kotori was wearing a light green and white colored blouse with three layers and a pair of dark blue jeans. Her usual ribbon around her wrist, though she had her hair tied in a small scrunch at the
end, hanging it over her right shoulder.

"So... how do I look?"

"You look really pretty, but then again you were always really cute."

Kotori's cheeks get a twinge of pink from that reply.

"Y-yeah, I've always been cute. Although..." Kotori began, her fingers twitching together. "I've never really been on a date so I don't know what to do."

Shido blinks before taking Kotori's hand.

"Just go where you feel like you'd like to visit, it should come to you as you do." Shido replied, making Kotori silently gasp before smiling a bit.

"W-well, if you say so. Then let's go this way." Kotori replied, taking them towards a crepe shop.

Origami soon took another bite of Shido's food.

"...OK, last one I swear." Origami whispered to herself, but soon noticed she had eaten everything off of Shido's plate and goes white as she realized this. "Uh oh!"

Origami sweats a bit.

"Oh wait, I'll just say the movie's soon and to just head over there. Then he won't notice this!" Origami said nervously, putting money down to pay while leaving the table and texting the message to Shido.

Kotori got a strawberry crepe and Shido bought a blueberry crepe, both took a bite out of them and smiled.

"These are really good, aren't they?" Kotori asked, smiling at Shido.

"Yeah, they really are." Shido replied. Soon Kotori blinks as she remembers something, and giggles a bit to Shido's surprise. "What is it Kotori?"

Kotori giggles again.

"Well, it seems a little dumb and probably not something too serious. Though I did hear one of my classmates while I was still in middle school say if you eat mixed berry crepes with someone you like, you'll find true happiness with them." Kotori answered.

"I see, though we didn't get one of those. Now that I think about it the menu didn't..." Shido suddenly stops and blinks. He looked to remember he had a blueberry crepe, and Kotori had a strawberry crepe... "Wait, you mean!?"

"Took you long enough. So, what do you think, wanna a bite of each other's? If that whole indirect kiss thing is weird then just bit the other side. Besides, it is only a rumor. No need to take it that seriously." Kotori giggled.

Shido chuckled a bit, and took a bite of Kotori's crepe as she held it out before offering the same. The two laugh after it was done.
"Simple things like this, they're kind nice, aren't they?" Kotori noted, making Shido smile as he rubbed her head. Making her blush as she smiled a bit.

"Yeah, they are." Shido replied. Soon Maria sent another alert as it was nearly time for Yoshino to arrive, and Kotori noticed as he pulled out his phone. "Oh, I got a text from Mana. She's a bit bored and wants to talk with me for a bit. Mind meeting me by the shoe store while I take this?"

"Go ahead, I've gotta figure out where to take us next." Kotori nods, and Shido walks off to go meet Yoshino. As he did, Kotori checks a mirror.

"Please don't let this be a pimple!" Kotori panicked, soon touching it to reveal it was just a strawberry piece from her crepe. "Phew! Just a strawberry, that's a relief."

-Yoshino's Date-

Shido soon headed back to the Station Statue, Yoshino was seen kneeling on the ground, looking at a butterfly that flew onto her finger. Yoshinon soon noticed Shido behind them.

"And the guest of honor has arrived!" Yoshinon announced, making Yoshino turn as she saw Shido. The butterfly flying off as she turned. "Thank you for coming Shido."

Shido saw her in a yellow and white one piece dress, a sun hat with a pink ribbon, and sandals with pink ribbon laces. Yoshinon was wearing a similar dress herself. Shido's face goes pink for a moment at the sight before her pinches his focus back into place.

"Yoshino, you look adorable!" Shido quickly said, making Yoshino blush a bit as she had Yoshino cover her mouth bashfully.

"Thank you Shido." Yoshino replied happily, and soon she takes Shido's right hand in hers as they begin walking. "I hope it's alright, but I don't think I have much to do on this date. Will that be a problem?"

"Not at all, it'll be a Yoshino style date. You should enjoy it." Shido replied, making Yoshino smile in response. The two soon stopping by an ice cream stand as Shido buys them some ice cream.

'I don't think I've ever seen Yoshino this happy, so sweet.' Yoshinon thought.

Kurumi finally walked out of the store, having taken a while to leave after debating on if she should by the lingerie or not, eventually she ended up going with buying it.

"I can't believe I actually bought it. Shido, you are a very dangerous man." Kurumi giggled to herself.

Meanwhile from a distance, Watcher was looking at her from a distance with binoculars while wearing a sailor fuku uniform to go incognito. Phantom having used her powers to create a necklace to watch through the events by, knowing Kurumi would sense her otherwise.

"Is she making a move or has she not started?" Watcher whispered, unsure of Kurumi's actions.

"(Not sure, don't drop your guard though.)" Phantom replied, making Watcher nod as she adjusted the binoculars to look closer.

Soon the dates resumed, and Shido began getting back to the others before they worried he suddenly
disappeared, starting with Tohka. He came back to the aquarium where he saw Tohka in the same place, she smiled as she saw him.

-Tohka's Date-

"There you are Shido, I was getting worried!" Tohka smiled happily.

"I had too much food to carry back, so let's head back to the food court together.

"OK!" Tohka giggled.

They headed over, and due to Ratatoskr's aid, Shido already had a ton of sushi ready for Tohka to devour. Shido stared in shock at how much she ate.

"Wow, I guess seeing all the fish made you really crave the sushi." Shido chuckled, sweat dropping a bit. Tohka smiles and nods in reply.

"Takoyaki please!" Tohka requested, making the chef nod to prepare it.

-Kurumi's Date-

Shido blinked as he noticed Kurumi with a shopping bag.

"Wait, you actually bought that lacy underwear?" Shido said surprised, he didn't think she'd actually get it either.

Kurumi giggled a bit.

"You did tell me 'you look in-freaking-credible' in it, didn't you? I felt I had to buy it." Kurumi smiled, making Shido chuckle a bit. "So where to next?"

"Well... I think I got a good surprise ready." Shido replied, making Kurumi blink.

Soon they passed by the pet shop, and Kurumi saw a bunch of cats in view of the window, making her shake as she stared at the adorable and cute little creatures in their full fluffy glory.

"Something wrong Kurumi?" Shido asked.

"N-No, nothing at all!" Kurumi quickly replied, sweating a bit as she looked at the cats. 'Don't give in... don't give in... don't give-

At that moment, Kurumi put her face to the glass and made a face like an adorable schoolgirl's as she stared at them.

"Cats and kitties, it truly is Kurumi's kryptonite, isn't it? Score!" Maria cheered, raising a fist victoriously. "Shido, we have a member in there who'll offer you to play with them. Put out the catnip for her. Please hurry before I do another cat pun too."

Shido chuckled mentally, soon seeing the said Ratatoskr member put a sign up.

"So, you like cats huh?" Shido asked, Kurumi tried not to answer and Shido pretended to noticed the sign. "Hey, that sign says you're allowed to play with them. If you want we can do this instead."

Kurumi flinched, sweating... and unfortunately her love of cats won over.
"Yes please!" Kurumi suddenly shouted, soon blushing from embarrassment as she left herself wide open. 'I wanna say he did this on purpose, but I never gave him a clue about this! I dropped my guard!"

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**-Origami's Date-**

Origami and Shido were inside the movie theater, and Shido ended up learning it was a scary movie about a monster attacking and destroying all of China. He was a bit freaked, but Origami?

"S-Shido, I wanna leave now!" Origami cried, hugging Shido tightly.

"It's alright, I'm here. Besides the movie's almost over." Shido replied, holding her closer and making Origami blush as she unconsciously snuggled him closer to Shido's surprise.

"P-Please protect me Shido." Origami begged, making Shido rub her head to comfort her.

Soon the movie got to a scene where things looked up for the citizens, making Origami blush as it reminded her of Shido beating the Goliath.

"You're amazing, just like he is." Origami said to Shido, who hadn't been paying full attention and blinked at her.

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**-Kotori's Date-**

Kotori and soon ended up going on a small go-kart course, the both of them feeling the kart's high speed blow onto them.

"S-Shido! Slow it down, this is too fast!" Kotori shouted, screaming loudly.

"Believe me, if I could I would have already. I can't feel my arms or face anymore!" Shido shouted in return, yelling as they dealt with a swerve Shido had to make on the course. "Who designed this thing to be so dangerously fast!?"

On the Fraxinus, everyone turned to Kannazuki who whistled innocent to avoid suspicion. Soon the two stopped as they reached the course's end.

"Whoa... that was crazy. Despite that, I kinda enjoyed it." Kotori replied, Shido looks at her.

"One more time maybe?" Shido asked.

The two blink at each other before nodding, the two paid for another ride before they repeated the event above.

"This thing is crazy!" They both shouted.

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**-Yoshino's Date-**

Shido and Yoshino soon visit a garden area, seeing a bunch of animals and flowers present everywhere.

"It's so pretty Shido." Yoshino replied, smiling at him.

" Yeah, maybe we should make our own garden at home and see what it brings us?" Shido offered,
and Yoshino nodded as a butterfly landed on her nose and surprised her a little bit.

"Looks like you got a little friend their Yoshino." Yoshinon giggled.

Shido smiled and soon takes his finger to get it off Yoshino's nose, who smiled as she saw it fly back into the garden.

After a lot of rotating back and forth, Shido eventually returned to Kurumi right as they neared the very same park that she and Phantom first met at.

"Hey, I'm a bit thirsty. Want anything to drink?" Shido offered.

"A nice orange juice would do." Kurumi replied.

"OK, I'll be right back. Why don't you take a seat until then?" Shido nodded, soon heading off to get some drinks. Kurumi sits down on the bench as he heads off.

"He's a bit all over the place, but..." Kurumi began, smiling a bit as she giggled. At least he knows how to treat a woman right. I guess it doesn't matter where he keeps going, after all..."

Kurumi smirked.

"He'll be mine soon enough. Ooh, it makes me all warm and tingly-"

*Meow!*

Kurumi's eyes widen at that, hearing the sound of a cat... no, a young possibly close to newborn in age kitten. Worse, it wasn't a normal meow, it sounded like a pained one. Kurumi got up to get closer to the source of the sound and soon found it before suddenly glaring and shedding any sweetness her face had.

"Her emotional state, it's getting-" Maria began, only to see the camera suddenly go entire black on Kurumi’s end. "What the? What happened, get the picture back up!"

"We can't! Nothing's disrupting the feed, the lens has been entirely blocked!" Mikimoto reported, making the AI gasp.

"...I don't like this." Reine said, biting her nails a bit.

A group of punks who clearly seemed to be gangsters based on the apparel they wore, most of which hid their faces, were firing BB guns at the defenseless kitten she heard. Worst part of all? They intentionally missed a few times just to scare the cat, which had no way to know when it would actually be hit.

"Man, this guy's a feisty one!" One of the gangsters said, firing at the kitten even more.

"Look how close it is!" Another of the gangsters followed up.

Kurumi grit her teeth at the sight, and soon at that moment, her hair blew slightly revealing her clock eye as it suddenly shined bright, getting the attention of the gangsters as they turned towards the black light shining from where she stood, the kitten running away.

Tohka, Origami, Kotori and Yoshino were all looking around for Shido. Wondering where he went and then...
All four of them crash into each other from behind and fall on their butts.

"Oh, I'm sorry!" Tohka apologized.

"No, it was my fault!" Origami apologized as well.

"I should have paid more attention." Kotori winced, falling a bit harder than the others but nothing too serious.

"I'm OK..." Yoshino softly said.

Soon the four girls all realize they had crashed into each other!

"Huh? Why are you here!?'" They each asked. "Because I'm on a date with Shido!"

Soon they all blinked at that response.

"Eh!? No way, I asked Shido on a date for 10!" Tohka exclaimed.

"B-But I asked him on a date for 11!" Origami panicked.

"I asked him on one for 11:30, what do you mean!" Kotori asked confused.

"Uh... I asked him on one for 12." Yoshino added.

They all blinked again.

"Wait, does that mean Shido accepted them all? I swear, he just can't turn a girl down. Especially if it's us." Kotori giggled.

"But wait, where is he if he's not with us?" Tohka wondered, now curious to his whereabouts. "Even funnier is we all had a 30-minute gap between our dates except me and Origami's."

Origami suddenly gasped.

"Oh no..." Origami suddenly breathed, getting their attention. "This is bad! There's still someone else who could have been on a date with him on 10:30, I'm so stupid! I didn't ask Shido when he was going to be on his date with Kurumi! He must be alone with her right now!"

Everyone panicked.

"Quick, we gotta find him right now!" Yoshinon declared, raising a hand urgently. Everyone quickly ran around to start looking.

Shido comes back with the can of drinks, but sees Kurumi's not on the bench anymore, surprising him.

"That's weird, where did she go?" Shido asked, taping his headset. "Maria, do you know where Kurumi went? I don't see her here."

...No response.

"Huh? That's odd, why can't I reach her?" Shido asked, hitting it a few times to hear static. Right at that moment he sees the injured kitten walk into view and collapse. "Oh my god, what happened to
you?"

Shido picks up the kitten, and right as the headset static clears up a bit.

"S-Shido!" Maria replied loudly. "S-something's h-h-happened, we can't find Kurumi and... interference, if... request, this may be the last for a while!"

"I found this injured kitten, can you get some help? I think I have an idea where Kurumi went." Shido requested.

"O-OK Shido! Just... careful out there!" Maria reasoned, blanking out before Shido saw the kitten beamed away. He rushed into the forest, soon walking around. Looking around the park's stone path, he eventually smells something off and soon sees a mass of shadows he barely avoided. The sound of a clock ticking was heard.

"This is..." Shido gasped, pretty sure it was Kurumi's power.

Once the shadows retreated, Shido ran their source, and once he got there... he saw a gruesome sight, one that the Fraxinus got as their video feed and it alone was finally restored.

Against the trees and part if the ground, there was blood, and shredded clothing. The scariest part of it though? Not... a single... body. It was as if someone just spilled blood transfusions and cloth tatters for a prank, but the current location made that unlikely since few would find it.

Everyone on the Fraxinus stared in horror, Reine herself had her eye shake in pure terror as she began breathing heavily. Shido's breathing soon became a bit too fast before finally... he screamed at the top of his lungs as he nearly had a break down, soon holding his mouth before he puked a bit at the sight.

"What the hell? Who... who did this!?" Shido asked, hoping the answer didn't come from who he thought it would.

"Oh dear, looks like you finally saw me." Shido gasped as he turned, and soon turning to meet his gaze was none other than Kurumi Tokisaki in her Astral Dress, her left eye still hidden from Shido's view. Shido felt the danger from her aura leak out as if she wanted him to see it, and soon he tried to run.

"Nuh uh Shido, you don't just walk off on a lady." Kurumi smirked, flicking her hand forward as her shadow extends and white hands restrain him. Pulling him to the ground. "It's such a shame, I honestly wanted our date to last a little longer. I guess it can't be helped now."

Shido breathed heavily as Kurumi got closer to his face, but before she could do anything... Shido screamed and a flash went off.

*SLASH!*\n
Kurumi's eyes widened a bit, and Shido was seen holding Sandalphon in his hands, his Spirit Ascension active as he struck the sword against Kurumi's side. Horror on his face as Kurumi's side was shown starting to bleed as she tumbled back and fell to the ground.

"No..." Shido gasped, unable to comprehend what he had done. Kurumi looks at him and smirks with a weak chuckle.

"I knew it... you really are good Shido." Kurumi commented, after hearing that... Shido soon ran off.
Leaving Kurumi there, she soon got up, and a gunshot was heard as she was back on her feet. "You can run Shido, but you can't-"

Suddenly Kurumi noticed an attack and dodged it, she grits her teeth as Phantom dropped into view.

"(I can't believe you'd do this Kurumi, sure they were scum and not completely innocent... but you devoured unarmed civilians! This is how you've been getting stronger all this time?)" Phantom called out, Kurumi only gritted her teeth. Soon firing at Phantom to her surprise. "(What the?)"

"Look at the pot calling the kettle black!" Kurumi yelled, confusing Phantom.

"Don't play innocent, I remembered everything you did after you erased my memories. Lying to me about the Spirits and not telling me I was one... killing the hosts you gave them to for the sake of refining them for your precious 'First Spirit'... and most of all, you hid a cruel persona under that sweet child act and cruelly ripped the truth into me after you made me murder Saya!"

Phantom's eyes widen.

"(What? What are you talking about?)" Phantom asked, she knew that wasn't what happened. Suddenly it all became clear as she felt Kurumi's aura now, why it was so much crueller and twisted.

"I'm done acting like your friend to hide the truth! I will destroy your dream, and I'll do it in the cruellast way possible!" Kurumi screamed, summoning Zafkiel and firing at Phantom. The invisible dodged the shots before Kurumi got up close and fired a successful shot on her.

"(AH!)
"(What?)" Phantom cried, holding it. "(Phantom is in pain, it hurts Phantom!)

"Oh, it'll end soon. Once I kill you that is." Kurumi coldly replied, aiming her gun at Phantom's head. Taking this chance, Phantom thrust her hand on Kurumi and soon she felt her powers disrupted. "What did you do!?"

"(...Phantom locked your powers away, you're too strong so you'll break free by tomorrow. For now, its long enough.)" Phantom heaved from the pain, looking up at the sky. "(Watcher! Please, help me!)

Kurumi looked as Watcher jumped into view and landed by the two.

"I've gotcha buddy, just hang on." Watcher replied, Kurumi trying to rush at them before Watcher flew off, making Kurumi glare at them.

"...So, you've seduced another with your lies, haven't you? I swear to you Phantom, you will burn for your sins, and for trying to lie about them." Kurumi spat darkly, glaring with pure hate in her eyes.

Meanwhile back in the city, the other Spirits were still trying to find Shido without any luck, until Tohka suddenly gasped as she saw him walk towards them with a somber look on his face.

"Shido!" Tohka called out, getting the others' attention. Shido looks up at them as they run towards him, his face no less sad after seeing them.

"What happened?" Yoshino asked.

"Yeah, we've been looking for you." Kotori followed up.

"Spill, what's going on?" Origami asked worried, she tried to take his hand before she pulled it away
to her surprise. "Shido?"

"I... I'm sorry, I need to go!" Shido quickly replied, running off. Leaving all the girls worried.

---

The Fraxinus soon returned to the Ratatoskr base, its entire crew in a bad mood. Everyone turned as they saw Reine and the others walk back in looking defeated. Maria reappeared on his hologram projector and curled up.

"We heard what happened, it was really bad. Wasn't it-" Mildred began, but stopped as she heard Maria sniffling a bit.

"Were we... were we doing the right the right thing?" Maria suddenly said, getting Mildred's attention.

"After getting to know four Spirits, Shido had clearly come to recognize that Spirits don't cause spatial quakes on purpose, that they don't want to hurt others... it was all he wanted to believe from what you told me. I honestly wanted to believe that."

Mildred soon rubbing the projector, trying to comfort the AI.

"...but after what he saw with Kurumi, that's no longer the case at all. We didn't see it, but she killed intentionally, and she enjoyed it! How is... how is Shido supposed to do this now? Especially after what he did to escape Kurumi!?" Maria cried.

Nearby, Reine watched this before heading to her private quarters. She put her hand to the wall and lowered her head before slamming it into the wall, not caring how much it hurt her. Tears quickly began to fall from the ground, her eyes leaking them as she showed genuine sadness from them.

"Everything I've done led to all if this. If only... if only I did things differently." Reine cried, covering her eyes. "All those innocent people who died would still be alive right now, if only... if only I hadn't made that one choice."

Reine slowly slumps to the floor, crying loudly as only the room stood between her and anyone who could listen.

---

Shido went around walking for a few hours, calming his nerves. After that he returned to the house as night was nearly upon Tenguu City, and once he came back, his harem was present there waiting. Tohka noticed him as he finally arrived, making the others turn to look as well.

"Hey... are you feeling any better?" Kotori asked, Shido looked up at her. He sighed a bit and walked up to them before answering.

"No... but I think I've gotten past the worst of it by now." Shido replied, not wanting to lie about how he felt.

"I see, then we can go now." Tohka said, grabbing his hand. Shido blinked as the others did the same.

"Huh? G-go where?" Shido asked confused before they began pulling him to his surprise.

"We're continuing our dates silly, though as a group date." Origami replied. "The day's not over yet, so let's use the rest of it before its wasted."
Shido chuckled, and he soon felt them take around. It was mostly getting food together, and spending time at the arcade since those were the only things that were open at this late in the date. Afterwards, Shido and the other stopped at the viewpoint.

"I'm surprised we ended things here." Shido lightly chuckled, soon noticing the girls staring at him seriously. "What?

"...Maria told us about what happened, about what went on between you and Kurumi." Yoshino suddenly said, surprising Shido. Yoshinon nodded in response.

"I gotta say, now it makes sense why you ran off like that. Going through all that, and then how you ended up escaping? No one wants to go through the former, and the latter? You're not the kind of person who'd ever wanna hurt someone like that, much less get praised for it." Yoshino added, making Shido nod.

"I see... then you know how I feel." Shido answered sadly, remembering the cruel smirk on Kurumi's face when she saw her in her Astral Dress. "Then you also know I have to somehow stop her from killing anymore people."

"Yeah... we do." Kotori said, looking sad as she saw Shido's troubled face.

"It's just... I don't know how I can do that. For once, I don't feel like I can save a Spirit, because it's almost like she doesn't want to be saved. I'm not sure how I should go about it with her. You're all Spirits, but Kurumi's completely different from you all... both in what she is and how she acts. So I-" Shido began, soon feeling Tohka and Origami take his hands, and Yoshino and Kotori put a hand on his shoulders.

"Now that isn't true and you know it." Tohka smiled, soon taking hold of Shido's left hand.

"Huh?" Shido asked.

"Kurumi is the same as us... the same me." Tohka replied, still smiling as Shido stared at her surprised.

"You remember, right? When we finally met again back in April, we didn't even remember our past together. I was anything but kind to you, I treated you like a monster out to hunt me, but you talked to me, you listened to me. Slowly but surely, you broke through my shell, and even when I tried pushing you away to protect you... I still ended up having you there for me. You saved me... I didn't even know I needed you, but I did. Finally, you made me remember, both you and how amazing this world really is."

Shido stared in shock, surprised by how wise Tohka's words were.

"If you and I hadn't met that day, if it weren't for you, I most likely would have ended up just like Kurumi." Tohka stated.

"Tohka..." Shido breathed, soon he felt Origami take his right hand and he looked at her.

"Tohka's right, you haven't forgotten, have you?" Origami smiled, looking directly into Shido's eyes.

"When you first saw me as a Spirit, I had given up on life, on any reason to keep living. I let my parents' death by my powers swallow me in despair, and that despair became the chains that bound me. I wanted nothing more than to die, because what was the point of living if I was just going to continue suffering in those chains? It honestly seemed like only death would free me. Then... you came along, you gave me hope, gave me a family. You gave me a reason to live again."
Shido stared deeply at Origami.

"I'll never get my parents back, but because of you I learned I had to keep living. You became that reason for me Shido." Origami replied.

"Origami..." Shido breathed again, soon Yoshino put her hand on Shido's right shoulder.

"I was always so scared, so alone..." Yoshino said softly, Yoshinon looking at Shido. "I only had Yoshino to protect me, and... Yoshino couldn't trust others if they ever looked like they could hurt me. You said you'd be my friend, my hero... and soon I grew to see you as more than that. First a brother, then as someone I want to be with forever."

"Yoshino..." Shido breathed, before finally he felt Kotori's hand on his left shoulder.

"And me?" Kotori started, grinning a bit.

"I've know you most of my life, but then you made me fall in love without even intending to. I was always a crybaby and shy, I still am. I wanted to be stronger but didn't know the right way to do it. I wanted to be more than your honorary little sister... and then you taught me something important. To be strong isn't to be powerful, it's to stand up and have courage even though you're afraid. That's a memory and lesson I'll always cherish."

"Kotori..." Shido breathed one last time.

The girls all stare at him, each giving their own smiles after their words of encouragement.

"You see Shido? We're all the same, and Kurumi is no different. Right now, there's only one true difference between us, and that..." Tohka answered, having her and Shido's fingers grasp each other. "Is having someone close who's reaching out his hand."

Shido gasped, and remembers when he first met Kurumi. She had plenty of chances, and the look she gave seeing those cats earlier today? There's no way that could be fact, only experience could give you them... that part of her had to have been real, and was waiting to return.

"...Thank you, all of you. Because of all your words, I've finally realized what's important." Shido smiled, his determination restored.

"So then, does that mean you're not afraid anymore?" Yoshinon asked.

"Nope, I'm completely terrified. Though I'd actually be worried if I wasn't... Kurumi's still dangerous after all." Shido chuckled oddly.

"Don't worry, even if you're scared, the four of us and everyone in Ratatoskr is here to protect you." Tohka smiled, resting her head on Shido. "You'll save her Shido, just like you saved all of us, and just like you save the others."

Shido smiles as the others all rest their heads closer as well.

[Shido, you're really lucky to have girls like this in your life. Even among harems I bet this kind of bond shared between everyone is rare.]

Shido chuckles.

"Hey, don't leave me out of the conversation!" Saya suddenly said, using Kotori's left eye to communicate. "So what's going on, what were you all talking about? Sounds like something
Serious."

"Oh, sorry Saya. We were just talking about the most recent spirit we encountered. Her name's Kurumi Tokisaki." Kotori replied, and suddenly...

"Wait... that name, what did you say?" Saya suddenly gasped.

"Uh... Kurumi Tokisaki?" Kotori repeated.

Saya's consciousness suddenly began to shake, with that one name... something in her clicked as the memories that Kotori had seen of Kurumi since she came connected to her own. With that, her mind finally registered her forgotten friend.

"Saya!" Kurumi's voice echoed, smiling happily.

"I remember... I remember everything!" Saya suddenly stated, Kotori's left eye shedding her tears for her. "My best friend, that's her name! Kurumi Tokisaki's the one I've been looking for all this time!"

With that, the entire group's faces give a reaction of shock. All this time, the friend of Saya's that Mildred's information thought had proven dead, the one Saya knew as the Spirit known as [Nightmare] during her time...

...She had been standing right in front of them all along!

And the bomb has exploded! Saya has just confirmed the truth everyone was missing this whole time! Took her long enough to wake up, could have avoided a lot of problems if she had managed to appear much earlier, but considering Saya's lifespan right now I think we can excuse her absence. Also... poor Phantom, she learned just how bad that trick that caused Saya's death during her absence has truly run.

Now that they know, the final moves of this arc's game are about to be made. Ratatoskr's gonna stand to support Shido, Kurumi's going for her plan in canon, Shido and the others are going to save Kurumi so Saya can reach her, and the DEM... are going to reveal just how much they've been involved with this arc despite their single attack.

That means the reveal of the mysterious Material A, the secret DEM weapon that Goliath seemed be a prototype test for, and then the epic reveals of who Mio, Phantom and Watcher/Material B. Most of all however... the whole catalyst and reason behind Kurumi's edited memories and only off-screen kills :3

So until next time everyone, stay awesome as we enter the most important part of this arc!

-Kurumi Tokisaki, Code Name: [Nightmare]-

Angel: Zafkiel, the "Emperor of Shadowed Time" - Zafkiel is a pair of guns, specifically a flintlock pistol and musket, that look like normal black colored guns with the addition of small spherical gems on the sides that show clocks. Zafkiel can fire strong bursts of shadow, but can also manipulate time energy with the shots if charged by Kurumi in advance. Similar to Metatron, Zafkiel doesn't really have alternate forms, its 12 Bullets do count as them however. Her bullets either have a one-shot use, temporary, or permanent effect depending on how they manipulate time.
- Alternate Form: First Bullet, Aleph - Accelerates time on a target object or subject, a one-shot use ability.

- Alternate Form: Second Bullet, Bet - Slows down time on a target object or subject, a one-shot use ability.

- Alternate Form: Third Bullet, Gimmel - Causes a target object or subject to age, a temporary ability.

- Alternate Form: Fourth Bullet, Dalet - Rewinds time on a target object or subject, a one-shot use ability. It doesn't work on the deceased, with Kurumi proving this when she failed to revive Saya using it.

- Alternate Form: Fifth Bullet, Hei - Allows Kurumi to see a glimpse of a future event, a one-shot use ability. Kurumi mentions she can't use it to see the same event twice.

- Alternate Form: Sixth Bullet, Vav - Sends the consciousness of its target into the past, a permanent ability. Kurumi states this bullet is her most costly and places heavy stress on her mind, making her only use it as a last resort or if necessary.

- Alternate Form: Seventh Bullet, Zayin - Temporarily freezes time on a target object or subject, a temporary ability.

- Alternate Form: Eighth Bullet, Het - Creates a clone of a target object or subject, a one-shot use ability.

- Alternate Form: Ninth Bullet, Tet - Allows Kurumi to share her senses with someone in a different time or dimension, a temporary ability. This is Kurumi's least used bullet due to the strict conditions it needs.

- Alternate Form: Tenth Bullet, Yud - Peeks into the past of a target object or subject, a one-shot use ability.

- Alternate Form: Eleventh Bullet, Yud Aleph - Allows Kurumi to directly devour a Spirit's power, a permanent ability. Kurumi states this is her second most costly bullet, and she must completely drain a spirit for it to work, otherwise all the stolen power will just return to its owner.

- Alternate Form: Twelfth Bullet, Yud Bet - Sends its target subject or object through time, a temporary ability.

- Powers: Kurumi's elemental affinities as a Spirit are Shadow as her primary element and Time as her secondary element. Despite this fact however, Kurumi is more often seen using her time powers over her shadow powers, which she's most often seen using for the sake of transportation. Kurumi's time powers also rely on her clock eye which represents her secondary time energy, which Phantom states is not her life force. If the clock is empty, Kurumi can't use her powers until she refills it, she had mentioned that her stored power does go beyond the "XII" spot though.

Risk Factors: S
Spacequake: C

Spirit's Astral Dress: C

Angel Rank: S

Strength: 109

Consistency: 128

Spiritual Power: 220

Agility: 103

Intelligence: 201

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 80%

Origami - 68%

Yoshino - 55%

Kotori - 72%
Aw man... *sniffles* I ended up crying while writing 70% of this chapter, that's how strong the sad emotions I was typing felt, as the few heartwarming ones. I will say that this is because we'll be learned the story behind the despair of Reine Murasame, bringing up one of the biggest reveals this entire season has hinted since day one, and even Kurumi herself.

Most of all... Material A and Material B's identities will be confirmed, and it's quite possible that most of you already realized who Material A is. Either way, this chapter... its nearly everyone in Ratatoskr vs Kurumi at Raizen High School as she finally decides enough is enough in this little game she's played with Shido and his harem. Even then, we're not anywhere near done with the reveals, and this is just revelations I've planned for this season too! :3

Now for the biggest part before we begin, a data sheet. This is the real reason I gave you Kurumi's last chapter. By now you've seen this pattern with Yoshino and Kotori, so... *drum roll* ta da!

A/N: The Calibers were named after a form of translations for Japanese numbers, while the first ten use their actual numbers in a translated form, the 11th and 12th calibers don't as I wanted each one to have a name that didn't reuse part of another's.

-Inverse Kurumi, Code Name: [Paradox]-

Demon King: Lucifuge - Zafkiel's Demon King counterpart, and one of the most dangerous Demon Kings. Lucifuge evolves into a long and short rapid fire guns that allows both rifles to fire multiple shots at once rather than one at time each, allowing multiple targets to be struck at once. The most dangerous new ability is that if Kurumi normally needed to fire at herself in order to activate a bullet, her calibers will automatically activate without the need to shoot. Kurumi still needs to shoot others if she needs them to affect her enemies instead.

- Alternate Form: First Caliber, Hitotsume - The Inverse counterpart of Aleph. Like its original, it accelerates time on a target object or subject, but the acceleration is double that of Aleph's. A one-shot use ability.

- Alternate Form: Second Caliber, Futatsume - The Inverse counterpart of Bet. Like it's original, it slows down time on a target object or subject, but now they're slowed to half of the speed reduction of Bet's. A one-shot use ability.

- Alternate Form: Third Caliber, Sanbanme - The Inverse counterpart of Gimmel. Like it's original, it causes a target object or subject to age, but now Kurumi can control it and can age them backwards. A temporary ability.

- Alternate Form: Fourth Caliber, Yottsume - The Inverse counterpart of Dalet. Like it's original, it rewinds time on a target object or subject, but can rewind much faster than Zayin can. A one-shot use ability. It doesn't work on the deceased, with Kurumi proving this when she failed to revive Saya using it.
- Alternate Form: Fifth Caliber, Gobanme - The Inverse counterpart of Hei. Like its original, it allows Kurumi to see a glimpse of a future event, but now she can see the same event again, even if she already saw it once prior. A one-shot use ability.

- Alternate Form: Six Caliber, Rokubanme - The Inverse counterpart of Vav. Like its original, it sends the consciousness of its target into the past, ironically this ability is weaker as it only can go back an entire minute so it uses less power. A permanent ability. This ability doesn't work if in the presence of another Spirit.

- Alternate Form: Seventh Caliber, Shichibanme - The Inverse counterpart of Zayin. Like its original, it temporarily freezes time on a target object or subject, but can last for an entire minute rather than a few seconds like Zayin's. A temporary ability.

- Alternate Form: Eight Caliber, Hachibanme - The Inverse counterpart of Het. Like its original, it creates one or more clones of a target object or subject, but these clones while unable to use Lucifuge's abilities now can have the real Kurumi transfer herself, making her impossible to kill unless every clone is killed. A one-shot use ability.

- Alternate Form: Ninth Caliber, Kokonotsume - The Inverse counterpart of Tet. Like its original, it allows Kurumi to share her senses with someone, but it's now no longer limited to working on those in a different time or dimension. A temporary ability.

- Alternate Form: Tenth Caliber, Jubanme - The Inverse counterpart of Yud. Like its original, it allows Kurumi to peek into the past of a target object or subject, but unlike Yud allows her to get the information she specifically needs and exclude what she doesn't need or doesn't care about. A one-shot use ability.

- Alternate Form: Eleventh Caliber, Yakuman - The Inverse counterpart of Yud Aleph. Like its original, it allows Kurumi to directly devour a Spirit's power, but twice as fast as the original. A permanent ability. Like the original, she must completely drain a spirit for it to work, otherwise all the stolen power will just return to its owner.

- Alternate Form: Twelfth Caliber, Okubanme - The Inverse counterpart of Yud Bet. Like its original, it sends its target subject or object through time, but unlike the original the cost is the same regardless of how far in time one is sent. A temporary ability.

- Alternate Form: Artemis - By combining both of Lucifuge's guns, Kurumi can transform it into a large replica of a M134 Minigun. It charges tachyon and shadow energy together for one fearsome and dangerous blast, but as a result leaves Kurumi unable to attack with Lucifuge for a long cool down period or change it back, leaving her temporarily defenseless.

- Powers: In her Inverse form, Kurumi's time powers are incredibly enhanced to the point some could say they're close to if not already completely broken in their strength and power. However, in return, her Shadow abilities which were already barely used reach the point where they're now pretty much non-existent, Kurumi has strong tolerance to pain in this state due to the fact her clones can now be used to transfer the real her and cheat death due to her Eighth Caliber. Just as Kurumi is the most dangerous spirit when none of them are in their Inverse Forms, she's the most dangerous in her Inverse Form when all of them have undergone an Inversion as well. If you run into Inverse Kurumi... you've pretty much been met by the Grim Reaper.
Chapter 20, S1: Kurumi Fallacy, Part 7

Watcher soon landed in an enclosed area. Phantom briefly removed the mosaic around her wound and Watcher hared her spirit mana to help it heal. Phantom lifts her head up slightly and looks at Watcher.

"(...Thank you, if you were there I'd have died. I'm glad you chose to walk this road with me.)"
Phantom weakly replied as the wound was nearly closed up. Watcher stared at her and asked. "(What is it Watcher? You can tell me.)"

"...Phantom, I trust you, but why would Kurumi say what she did? You haven't lied to me, have you?" Watched asked, and Phantom shook her head no, soon beginning to cry. "Phantom?"

"(Phantom should have seen it, but Phantom didn't. Phantom let this happen!)" Phantom cried, Watcher gasped, she knew Phantom only referred to herself like that when she was truly emotionally distraught and could hold her mask.

"(Phantom should have seen it when Kurumi escaped after being captured! She didn't change after she came back from the experience, she changed because of what she remembered!)
Watcher was confused, and blinked a bit.

"What do you mean? What did she..."

"(Watcher, remember how I said Saya was killed? What did Kurumi say?)" Phantom asked, and Phantom thought for a bit and then... she gasped.

"Kurumi said she killed her, that's a clear contradiction!" Watched replied, her eyes shaking. "But how can that be the case? If they were together, then shouldn't she have seen who really killed Saya?"

"(You're right Watcher, Kurumi was at the scene and she should have known the truth from that. Yet all this time she's believed I did it, that I lied to her somehow. I was wondering this for a while, now I've figured it out.)" Phantom breathed, her wound finished healing.

"(It's because Kurumi is...)"
At the hospital, Mana opened her mouth as a doctor put a thermometer under her tongue and another on her forehead, soon taking them out and checking. 

"Yep, your body heat's been regulated back to normal. As of today, you're officially cleared for discharge Mana, just make sure to drink a lot of fluids for a while." The doctor smiled, and Mana smiled back. "You want assistance or do you think you can get home by yourself."

"Don't worry, it's only been 3 days, I can make it." Mana replied, and the doctor nodded.

"Alright, just make sure you stop by the counter before you leave to let them know your rooms no longer occupied." The doctor answered, and Mana nodded.

The Doctor soon exited the room, and once he did, Mana stood on her feet and checked the reminder note Kotori gave her. Then at the teddy bear Reine had left her by her side... the one that had indirectly caused her to need to be in the hospital.

"You have a secret to you, but what is it?" Mana asked herself, soon picking it up again. The image of the same man appeared in her mind again. "...Reine Murasame, what do you know, why do you have the gift I received from my father?"

"So that's where it came from? Now I'm curious to what she's hiding."

Mana's eyes widen in surprise as she turns to see Kotori look at her with her Raizen High form on, one of her signature Chupa Chups in her mouth. Kotori takes it out as she finished it to leave the empty stick, twirling it into the trash.

"Kotori? Aren't you supposed to be at school right now, why are you here?" Mana asked.

"Remember what I told you on that note? Reine still isn't off her break as our class' assistant teacher, which means this is the best chance we have to make her talk." Kotori explained, making Mana blink. "Think about it, she's not gonna expect two of her students to catch her at this time of day. Much less one who just left the hospital."

"...The best moment, you really think this is it?" Mana asked.

Kotori nodded.

"You bet I do, plus I managed to trick Kannazuki a little into giving me some of the little information about her that wasn't private. I know how to get her into a trap she can't run from either, so for that reason I called in absent. Now let's do this." Kotori smiled, making Mana nod.

Westcott walked through the DEM base of Arubi Island until he saw Marina in her android body staring through the window of a certain section of the building. She was smirking at the sight before her and laughing.

"Oh, that reaction? Does that mean what I think it does?" Westcott smiled.

"Oh, it does, your greatest masterpiece yet is finally done!" Marina replied, making Westcott look at it and give a laugh as he puts a hand to his face. "That's right, this is the prime monster of Deus-Ex-Machina Industries' work. It won't be long before we use it to cream that boy and the other Spirits."

Westcott cackled loudly.
"Yes, getting 5 Spirits and cutting off the tumor that Shido Takamiya's caused in our plans. Now all that's left is one more thing." Westcott replied, looking at Marina. "Open up the connection to [Material A] for me. I have something I need to do before we reach this point."

Marina giggles a bit.

"Alright, I understand father." Marina replied, preparing to open the connection. "Identifying DEM administration ID, Marina Arusu. Grant access to the main servers."

'Just you wait woman... today I shall show you just how much of a failure to stop my efforts were. Here, your dreams are destined to die alongside the people you entrusted them too.' Westcott thought, walking to a chair and sitting down before electrodes attach to him, and veins appear in his eyes.

'Especially that boy and his sister you seem to have so much faith in.'

Soon at Raizen High, the second and final day of the Visitor's event was currently underway as Shido and the others had finally arrived at school. Shido was currently as his locker while he switched out his shoes for the school's shoes. As he did this...

"Why hello Shido."

Shido stopped as he heard the voice of Kurumi standing next to him, turning his left eye towards her. The way she did so was as if she had completely forgotten what she had tried to do to him the other day.

"How are you today?" Kurumi asked, looking as Shido closed his locker and gave her a serious look.

"I'm fine." Shido replied calmly

Soon enough near the lockers' sides, all the students allied with Ratatoskr were listening from the sidelines and trying to watch the best they could, as were a few others who were using the Visitor's event to be present.

"So... that's Nightmare. She doesn't look as dangerous as she does in person." Leonora noted, seeing the Shadow spirit face to face with Shido. "That's exactly why she is. It's pretty much how an assassin fools everyone into not thinking they're one, they seem so normal."

"Honestly, I'm more surprised that she's a Spirit that escaped the DEM an entire decade ago. No other Spirit has done that before." Cecile sweated a bit, remembering the other day when Shido and the others revealed the truth to them.

-Flashback Start-

"...Kurumi Tokisaki, she's the best friend Saya's been searching from. We got confirmation ourselves after she heard us mention her name." Shido revealed, suddenly getting the attention and shock from most of Ratatoskr's members. The biggest shock came to Mildred who dropped the cookie she was eating.

"What!?!" Mildred breathed in shock, realizing the horror of her early judgment and that the person Saya's best friend had been described us had become the Nightmare she knew. "Oh my god... then we really didn't get a new Nightmare. I'm so stupid! I sabotaged ourselves without realizing it!"
Reine put a hand on Mildred's shoulder.

"It isn't your fault Mildred, we just believed what the evidence at the time had shown us. Asking Saya could have easily only made her learn a horrid truth. Not to mention her lifespan before her consciousness fade mattered." Reine replied, making Mildred sigh, but at least easing her guilt a bit.

"So, what should we do now that we know this?" Kannazuki asked, curious to their game plan now.

Reine sighed.

"We're going to send everyone we can to the Visitor's event we set up at Raizen High. Kurumi will likely be back for her goals, we need to be ready and get Saya to her." Reine answered, making everyone nod.

"Kannazuki, the Fraxinus crew and I will watch from the sky. Ryouko, stay here in case the AST requests additional weapon deployment and to manage ground operations. We have to treat this like we're surviving a war... because at this point that's what Kurumi's made it."

-End Flashback-

The talkative trio all stare intensely at Kurumi from their spots.

"Well... no turning back now guys. Shido and Kurumi are gonna make their moves, and we have to be ready for whatever reaction this chain starts." Mii whispered, everyone hiding nods. Right then, the first move was made by Kurumi.

"I'll have to admit, I'm a little surprised. I was sure you wouldn't want to come to school today. Most people wouldn't after dealing with such crazy drama." Kurumi stated, not once dropping the smile on her face. 'Only a bit longer till Phantom's lock breaks, the moment my powers return... he's mine!'

"...Kurumi." Shido stated.

"That's me." Kurumi smiled, closing her eyes a bit.

"Just so you know, if you were trying to make me give up on you the other day. It didn't work. I've made the decision that I have to save you." Shido bluntly answered.

Kurumi gasped at that reply.

'What? No way, I... I don't sense any fear from him anymore. He's... he's not afraid of me?' Kurumi thought, for one in her life she was the one lacking confidence. She wasn't going to be deterred.

"Well, that's kind of a strange thing to say? Who wants to save the girl who tried to murder them?"

"I would. I will not let you kill anyone else, and I will not let anyone else try to kill you." Shido replied, making the two of them have a bit of a stare off, each holding a serious expression.

The others all watch closely as this happens, right now there was no clear way to know which of them actually did have the advantage. Not even Maria could tell via the emotional readers... it was an even stand off. Kurumi soon smirks.

"Well, how very big of you. You speak such grand words, but I get the feeling that's all they are." Kurumi smiled, counting ever second as she felt her powers nearly about to return to her. 'Sorry Shido, but you've lost this game.'

"What about you? It's clear you don't have to play this waiting game, you could have easily shot me
without having ever met you. Yet you wait." Shido fired back, making Kurumi frown slightly. "I wonder if you're the one who's actually talking big here?"

Kurumi giggled at that, not taking Shido's comeback seriously.

"Really, you think you can understand my goal-"

"Does it have to do with what happened to Saya?" Shido interrupted suddenly.

Kurumi's only visible eye suddenly widened and froze a bit once Shido spoke that name, and confidence and courage she had built up was suddenly shattered in a mere instant. Everyone gasped at that.

"Maria, what's going on with Kurumi's emotional state? That was a big shock." Hiroto asked in a whisper, and Maria hummed as she look at the psychological and emotional analytics before her.

"I see the feeling of caution, surprise, and also worry. Before this moment... Kurumi was confident and without any fear. Now Shido's shown her he has his own bullets to fire. That she no longer has an advantage." Maria whispered back.

"No anxiety or distress though, that means it's clear she still feels she has a chance to win. From this moment... I'm pretty sure Kurumi's got no choice but to stop holding back anything she may have been."

Kurumi just stood there, trying not to have a panic attack from the revelation. She breathes in a bit.

"You know it's rude to ask a girl her secrets. Well, I'll see you in class then, we don't want to be late." Kurumi smiled, soon walking off as Shido stared. Once she knew he couldn't see her, her poker face dropped as she revealed one of terror.

'How is this possible? There's no way he should know who Saya is, not even Phantom would be able to get Shido's trust that fast. Could that Artemisia girl could have told him? I've let myself believe he was just normal dog... but it seems he's been a fox all along.'

Soon Kurumi enters an empty hall and uses her powers to make it to the roof, once she does, she suddenly turns to the sky.

"Well, it seems I need to prepare myself for-"

Kurumi suddenly felt the white hands she usually grabbed someone with constrict her.

"What? No, please don't! It isn't my fault!"

"Oh, I'm sorry 'me', but you've been relieved of duty."

Kurumi turned scared as suddenly from the ground, black spirit energy formed and a shadow in the ground rose up to reveal... another Kurumi! Unlike the first one however, this one was different. Her right eye clearly had the whitened pupils that seemed to be occasionally absent on the first one.

"Don't get me wrong, you were a good clone. Unfortunately, you proved to me that I can't hold back with him, now that I know that... it's time the real deal gets this job done... so goodbye." Kurumi smiled, soon the now revealed fake whimpered as she was dragged into the shadows of the real deal and swallowed.

Kurumi soon did a pirouette as her spirit power spun around her, soon manifesting as her Astral
Dress. Once it finally manifested, she tapped the ground as her spirit mana suddenly became a black-red and began to slowly encompass the school.

"Get ready Shido, it's time to prove if what you claim is really the truth or if your words are just hollow promises." Kurumi smirked, giving a noticeable toothy grin.

Reine was seen walking towards the construction site of a building, looking around for any watchers, she soon enters and goes inside. Intending to use it to get to the Fraxinus and begin their work for today. They had to seal Kurumi before she began too dangerous, right before she could access the secret entrance leading to Ratatoskr's base...

"I hope you're not planning on going anywhere Reine Murasame."

Reine suddenly flinches and turns around, seeing Mana behind her, looking at her face with determination but also a strong fierceness that was often seen when a predator faced off against its prey.

"Reine, you and I need to talk and we need to do it now. You've hidden enough from me, from Shido, from all of us. So, it's time you finally spill the beans." Mana stated, Reine looked as a single trickle of sweat dripped down her face as she looked at Mana's stare.

"...I'm sorry Mana, but I don't have the time to talk. Right now it's stopping Kurumi that's important." Reine replied, trying to head to the secret entrance, when... it suddenly was blocked off by a wall of fire! Reine gasped at the sight.

"No, you're answering her here and now or you don't go anywhere."

Reine looked up to see Kotori in her Astral Dress, slowly descending to the ground before landing in front of Reine and changing back to her usual outfit. Reine backed up a bit as Kotori walked forward at her.

"Mana's right, you hide too much. We're out there risking our lives and busting our butts to help the Spirits. You've sent Shido to go unarmed against dangerous spirits, and now he's going against the most dangerous one and we're not there. Especially me who's vital." Kotori said, pointing to her head.

"Now talk Reine, or he could die. By all means your secrecy is enough I'm actually considering you could just be a spy for the DEM. That eternal youth thing you claim could just be some crap excuse or a DEM realizer. Talking is how you prove me wrong... so?"

Reine grit her teeth a bit.

"You think either of you know anything? About what's going on, what the world has suffered three decades of with barely anyone noticing!? You're too young to get it, your negligent at best! You should know the danger Kurumi brings by now. So why risk this here and now!?" Reine yelled.

"Listen well, I'm not just the Commander because I'm smart. I've been affected by the First Spacequake, I could easily-"

"Oh please, being born more than 30 years ago means you don't have any mana core to enhance your physical abilities, nor the potential to be hiding a CR-Unit. You really think you can feint us with that? I don't think so." Kotori smirked, making Reine's eyes widen.

"How did you know that!? That's information only Kannazuki..." Reine began, soon sweat dropping
a she realized it. "No way, how did you get him to let you find out."

Kotori went silent at that to both Mana and Reine's surprise.

"I had to... destroy my pride. I flashed my breasts to him!" Kotori yelled while blushing red, making Mana nearly face fault in shock and Reine's left eye twitched as she face palmed as Kotori began crying a bit. "Do you know how awful that experience was? It was horrible, I let a guy other than Shido see my breasts."

'Damn it Kannazuki, why did you let your perverted side beat you!?" Reine thought angrily, mentally groaning at the revelation while Mana patted the sniffling Kotori's back before turning seriously to face Reine.

"You aren't walking from this Reine. I need to know, or I'll never be able to trust you again. How did you get the teddy bear my father gave me?" Mana question, and Reine's eyes widened as she heard Mana say this. Kotori looked surprised from the declaration as well.

"Yes, I know. The reason I ended up getting that fever like state? When I picked this bear up, I saw it... a memory of the day my father gave it to me. I'm not sure where we were, but I heard myself call him daddy. He had the same hair, same eyes, even my birthmark was there."

Reine stared in shock, her mouth open and shaking.

"Tell me Reine... what do you know about my mother and father, I deserve to know. So please stop hiding the truth or like Kotori said, I'll make myself believe you're just someone in DEM. Someone who was there the day they kidnapped us!" Mana screamed, crying a bit.

Reine looked down, a guilty look on her face.

"...I should have known the fact I brought you to Ratatoskr wasn't me wanting to build Shido's trust. You were meant to come here as much as we were." Reine began, soon sighing as she looked up.

"Alright, you win. Just know this... you'll probably wish you hadn't heard some of what I'm about to tell you. There are points you'll wish the conversation ended. However I'm not going to allow that, if you want to know, then you'll hear the full story."

Both Mana and Kotori look at each other before nodded.

"Alright, no turning back now. Before I married my late husband, my maiden name, the name I was born with was... Reine Takamiya." Reine answered, suddenly making Mana gasp in shock. "That's right Mana, the man you knew as your father... was my older brother."

Reine soon began to cry to the surprise of the two.

"...And it's my fault he's was killed, why you'll never get to see him again no matter how much you me or Shido beg for him to come back."

Mana's eyes shrunk as if a knife had stabbed her in the heart.

Soon Shido took a deep breath as he looked out the school window, everyone else had spread out across the school so they'd have eyes everywhere in case Kurumi tried anything. He taped his headset as he tried to contact Reine.

"Hey Reine, are you ready? We'll need to start soon." Shido sighed worriedly.
"We haven't seen Kurumi leave the school, the real problem is if we'll get her to listen to what we have to say." Kannazuki replied, surprising Shido.

"Kannazuki? Where's Reine, I thought she was supposed to be there by now?" Shido asked.

"Something came up, for that same reason Kotori and Mana will be a bit delayed. Don't worry, they won't need too long. We do need Saya for this to work after all." Kannazuki replied, not wanting to reveal what he had an idea was going on. 'Shido would probably kill me.'

"So until then, you'll be my navigator." Shido realized, nodding. "Alright. Reine trusts you, so let's do this."

Right at that moment, a sudden dark eave of energy phased through the school, Shido felt the recoil push him for a moment before he regained his footing. Shido soon looked to see all of the students dropping to the ground unconscious.

"What happened?" Shido gasped, looking around. "Kannazuki, what is this? It's like we've been sucked into a different dimension!"

"I'm not sure, I've never seen anything like this!" Kannazuki said shakily, both he and the whole crew in surprise. Maria's hologram had fallen over before getting up.

"That barrier... something's not right, it feels like it's a vampire." Maria gasped.

Mana stared in shock, to hear her father was dead... and that she was looking at the woman who was her biological aunt? She didn't know how to react.

"You're my Aunt... why did you hide that fact? Better yet, if you were family, why didn't you take me and Shido in? Why didn't you take care of us and just left us in the care of Kotori's parents!?!" Mana screamed, feeling slight anger.

"...What right did I have to raise you when cost my brother his life? Not just him, my husband, Tohka's parents... and 6 billion people who were innocent and didn't deserve to die!?" Reine yelled, surprising the two.

"Yes, it's exactly what you think. When I was growing up, my brother was always there, I couldn't ask for a better big brother. My husband was even his best friend. When he grew up and set out on his own, he chose to be an explorer, to see and discover the world. However, one day... a news report told me he went missing. For years, we thought he was dead, it had been bad enough that I learned I couldn't bear children and even name one in memory of him. Then one day... he called me, and I heard his voice, telling me he was alive."

"Then... where was he?" Kotori asked.

Reine looked at the two, breathing in.

"He went missing... because he managed to somehow be sent to another world entirely. No, world isn't the right term, it was an entirely different dimension." Reine replied, making their eyes widen as they realized it. "That's right... the Spirit Dimension was that world he found himself in."

"Dad... found the Spirits' world? No way..." Mana breathed.

Suddenly the memory flashed as Mana realized parts of the scenery she saw.
"Wait, that was it! That place... my father and I were in the Spirit Dimension! Does that mean I was born there!?" Mana asked, and Reine nodded.

"Yes, he mentioned he wasn't the only human he found had landed there. Many others explored what he had and became trapped there. He was just the first to re-establish contact with Earth from that world." Reine answered.

"That's where he met your mother most likely, and you and Shido likely got your powers because you were born in that dimension. The exposure your mother had while pregnant with each of you likely made you the first Humans with mana cores... before that day."

Mana suddenly gasped.

"That experiment... the one that summoned the First Spirit, that wasn't what you really were doing, was it?" Mana reasoned, the fact she was on Earth was proof. "You tried to bring us all back home!"

Kotori's eyes widened at Mana, and soon looked at Reine for confirmation. Reine simply nodded to answer.

"That's right, but... that's when I made a mistake. I wanted to get my brother back so badly I didn't consider who I should be trusting. So when a brown haired man willing to shell all his money to aid us came? I didn't doubt it..." Reine replied somberly. "...That man was the one we know as Westcott."

"What!?" The two both shouted.

"That's right, he wanted to get contact to the Spirit World and with my brother connecting to this world, I gave us the opportunity and joined the 'Gateway Project' to let us enter the world and let others leave it." Reine confirmed, making the two stare at her.

"...Westcott however had a bigger ambition. After we succeeded in bringing everyone back, and around the time Shido and Tohka met each other, her parents having been part of the project, close friends of mine even... Westcott did something."

Reine's eyes squinted as she remembered the screams that day, the mana energy that zapped into her body and froze her again, and soon... the First Spirit as she was pulled into the world against her will and caused the first Spacequake.

"He... destroyed the entire Dimension, and the strongest Spirit that survived the dimensional genocide was forced out to our world. That's when the first Spacequake arrived. Very few of us survived, and Westcott's ambitions began. We had no choice but to fight back. I gained my status as a Commander through my orders, and during this... I sent your father and my husband on a mission, but their dead bodies came back to me in coffins."

Mana gasped, even more as she saw Reine tear up and begin sobbing.

"Then to make things worse, Tohka's parents were killed as the DEM kidnapped you, her and Shido. In the end... you and Shido escaped due to Tohka's sacrifice. She somehow got away after that, I don't know how. It didn't change I wasn't strong enough to prevent their deaths." Reine sobbed, the horrid memories making her tears flow.

"In the end, what stopped Westcott was the First Spirit herself, she fought him and did everything she could... at the cost of her life. In her last moments, she split her powers into the 10 Sephira Crystals, and I presume Phantom was born from that. Perhaps she saved Tohka? I don't know, but... that's what happened."
Kotori blinked for a moment in shock, then noticed something off.

"Wait, if Shido, Tohka and Mana were all born around 30 years ago, and Tohka's been a Spirit for 3 months, why aren't any of them that old?" Kotori asked, completely confused now from the contradicting information.

"I don't know the full details, but apparently, your mother and the First Spirit decided that to protect you from Westcott... you should be locked in a time freezing version of a cold sleep." Reine answered, making Mana blink.

"You didn't wake up until around the time before you were put in an orphanage, and I think it was this that caused you to have memory loss. Mio had likely been put into Shido before this as a precaution or a way to restore your memories. Problem is she forgot her memories as well. Tohka I'm assuming may have gone through a similar process, though Phantom likely did it since she became a Spirit later."

Kotori's eyes widen.

"I get it... you didn't take them in because you were worried you'd end up risking their lives, or causing them to meet your brother's fate. You were too scared to trust yourself with them, so you trusted them with people you felt could do what you couldn't. My parents were those people. Am I right?" Kotori asked, and Reine silently nodded.

"Now you know my sins... if you refuse to trust me again, I won't convince you otherwise." Reine finished, closing her eyes in shame. Then... she felt Mana hug her. "Mana? Why are you-"

Reine was suddenly slapped across the cheek to Kotori's surprise, Mana crying a bit.

"Don't... stop making yourself sound like a monster. So what if you've sinned, no one hasn't done something wrong, even if it was accidentally stepping on an ant or breaking a rock!" Mana cried, making Reine stare in shock.

"You're still trying to make things right, aren't you? If your hands cause the pain you claim... why do you keep doing it? Don't you get it? You haven't given up!"

Reine's eyes widen, more tears flood her eyes, and Kotori suddenly tears up as she smiles.

"I... I don't deserve forgiveness, I deserved to be damned. Even yet, you... you don't hate me?" Reine cried, hugging Mana back.

"I'm so sorry for everything, but... I promise you I will spend the rest of my life making it right. Maybe your father is gone, but... I never heard about your mother. She must still be alive out there, so I vow to help you find her. If we don't, then... I'll do what I should have done and raise you and Shido the best I can!"

Mana nods, shedding the last of her tears.

'See that Reine? We understood you, because you finally stopped hiding yourself. I'm sure everyone else will understand you too' Kotori thought, wiping her eyes dry. Suddenly the three of them heard their headsets ring.

"What is it?" They all say together.

"Oh thank god, everyone... its Kurumi! Mana, Kotori, I need you to hurry to Raizen High now! Commander, we need you on the Fraxinus ASAP." Kannazuki screamed in a panic, catching their
attention.

"I'll head to the beaming point now, wait for me. Kotori and Mana will fly over now." Reine answered before hanging up.

The three nod, but right before they leave...

"Wait, one last question." Mana asked, making Reine look. "You didn't mention who my mother is, so who is it?"

"Sorry Mana, but I honestly don't know. Things went crazy too fast for me to confirm her identity." Reine answered, making Mana sigh a bit.

"That's why she may still be alive, for all I know... she's a Ratatoskr member and I don't even realize it. Don't give up, because she may just be out there somewhere. In fact, this is one reason why we need Mio to regain her memories. Your mother put her into Shido, so she has to know who your mother is."

Mana gasps before nodding, and soon the three all ran off.

Shido looked around, trying to find someone who was still conscious, and soon...

[Look! It's Hiroto, and he hasn't passed out!]

Shido turns and sees Hiroto, he was indeed still conscious, but looked like he would faint any moment. Maria was heard also weakly grunting from his phone.

"Hiroto!" Shido called out, running over to help him up. "You alright?"

"Yeah, Maria and I are still wide awake. It just feels like my body's gone heavy." Hiroto replied, holding his phone up. "Maria?"

"Right, give me just a second... wide area link! Connect all headset devices within the school grounds!" Maria exclaimed.

Soon everyone's headsets showed all Ratatoskr agents and members currently in the school.

"Link successful, now listen carefully everyone. My analysis concludes this is some wide-area barrier, it seems to be manipulating the 4th dimension in some form I still need time to understand. It seems to at least debilitate everyone within its range." Maria explained.

"Kurumi must have done it, but why?" Shido asked himself.

"That's what I'd like to know, only due to what happened to us." Maria continued, soon showing the data she had so far.

"From what I can tell, those in Ratatoskr who aren't wizards or spirits are feeling effected, but not enough to faint due to slight spirit mana resistance from being around Tohka and the rest for so long. They just feel a bit weak. For wizards, they're only partially effected like they have a low fever. Anyone who's a Spirit is outright immune, almost as if Kurumi can't affect those who are fellow Spirits, unfortunately it may limit you to your Limited Astral Dress state however if you need your powers."

"But everyone else was completely effected, they're helpless." Shido realized.
Soon everyone heard the school speaker turn on.

"Shido darling, can you hear me?" Kurumi giggled, getting everyone's attention. "If you need anything at all, feel free to join me on the roof. Something tells me you might wanna get here as soon as possible though."

"Damn it, what do we do?" Shido questioned.

"Stay calm Shido." Reine answered, suddenly getting his attention.

"Sorry for the delay, Mana and Kotori are on their way as we speak. Listen close. Shido, head to where Kurumi is, we have to take her threats seriously, she likely has done the same for you. Tohka, Yoshino, Origami and every AST member, follow him in case danger comes. AST, I'm cutting off the link and replacing it with Ryouko's private line. Everyone else, help the downed students at least outside of the building. I have no doubt there's going to be a fight soon."

Everyone nods.

"Good luck Hiroto, we all need it." Shido said, running off.

"Be careful Shido!" Hiroto called out.

With everyone in the AST, the grabbed their emergency transfer devices to send their CR-Units over without using any of their mana.

"Identifying AST!" They all stated, soon stating their ID names. "Transferring personal CR-Unit now!"

All of them feel their CR-Units equip a bit painfully, but once they did, the pain vanished as they got up and began moving. Meanwhile with the Spirits, they prepared their Astral Dresses.

"Adonai Melek!"
"Ehyeh!"
"El!"

The three had their Astral Dresses try to form, but unfortunately, they could only overlay with their clothes, becoming their Limited Astral Dresses instead.

"Maria was right, we can't fully transform." Origami stated as she saw her outfit, sighing. "We'll have to work with what we've got, it's the best we can do right now. Hang on Shido, we're coming!"

Soon Shido reached the rooftop door and opened it, as he did, he turned to see Kurumi who he noticed had her whitened pupil finally showing up without it glowing.

"Welcome Shido, I'm glad you were so eager to come see the real me." Kurumi replied, giggling a bit.

"Real you, what do you mean?" Shido asked.

"Oh? I never mentioned it, I guess you could say I can bring the shadows of my past to life. I believe clones are a good reference for what you'd call them." Kurumi smirked, making Shido gasp.

"The me you've met was just a fake I scouted around with, but now I can't let you have an advantage over me. In fact... I've made sure your friends can't come to help you either."

Mikie was seen running through the halls.
"Mikie, go left and then straight ahead!" Ryouko replied.

"Got it!" Mikie replied.

As she went left and ran, she suddenly had part of CR-Unit shot, disconnecting her from Ryouko. She gasped to see... three of Kurumi?!

"What the!? Wait, why are their three of you?" Mikie panicked.

"There's plenty of me, and I assure you each is the real deal, so don't think this is an illusion deary." The middle Kurumi answered, the other two giggling alongside her. Meanwhile in the hall, Yoshino sees a bullet fly at her, making her form ice to shield herself.

"W-who's there?" Yoshino asked, and Yoshino pales.

"Uh... Yoshino?" Yoshinon pointed, and the Water Spirit gasped as she saw half a dozen of Kurumi, three on each side of the hall. Soon the other Spirits and AST members each got a group of Kurumi clones who blocked them off. The Fraxinus crew was shocked.

"Now I see it, this is how Kurumi can avoid being killed. She just sacrifices a clone and no one would be the wiser. She's had her aces hidden all along. The clones don't have them to use." Reine reasoned, biting her nails worriedly.

Shido sweated as he heard the sounds of fighting below, realizing the others wouldn't be coming for a while, possibly too late to help him.

"...Alright, if I'm involved in this then you at least have the right to explain what's going on. Why do this?" Shido demanded.

"Huh, I guess it's only fair. After all you were the one who sealed Tohka, Yoshino, Kotori and Origami." Kurumi shrugged mockingly, seeing no harmed in it. "This little barrier? It's my City of Devouring Time the barrier sucks up the time energy of anyone within its shadow."

"The time?" Shido asked confused, and soon Kurumi giggles.

"Oh that's right, Origami's the only one who got to see it so far. Take a look." Kurumi said, slowly lifting the hair blocking her left eye.

Shido gasped as he saw it, the golden clock that was her left eye.

"Your eye's a clock!?" Shido asked.

"That's right Shido, I don't just manipulate darkness and shadow. The power of my Angel can let me bend time, but it has a nasty habit at eating away too much of my spirit mana." Kurumi explained, giving an exaggerated sad face in response.

"However. I ended up realizing a simple solution to that. While I can't use up my own life force as compensation, I can simply replenish the clock in my eye with other people's time to replenish it."

Shido gasped at that.

"You mean you kill just to keep allowing your power to be used without any worries?" Shido exclaimed.

"Oh, nothing that short sighted Shido. My ambitions are much bigger, all the scum in the Earth I purge, they're mere prey for the power to achieve my ultimate goal." Kurumi smirked, unnerving
Shido slightly.

"My final power, the power to go into the past. I need the power to travel 30 years into the past to the moment after the original Spacequake. When I get there... I'm going to murder either Westcott or the First Spirit. Whoever is more convenient, perhaps both would be?"

"Then... why do you need me?" Shido asked.

Kurumi soon giggles, and then laughs before cackling a bit to Shido's surprise before she simply licks one of her fingers.

"Simple, you're the reason I'm even here." Kurumi replied, her gaze creepy and distant at Shido. "You have the power of four spirits sealed within you. I'll gain all the power I need from you, and all I need to do is eat you!"

"OK, fine! If I'm the one you want then you don't need to involve anyone else!" Shido shouted.

"Do I?" Kurumi wondered, her smile becoming a grin. "I disagree, in fact you gave me a reason to do that this morning."

"Huh?" Shido said confused.

"Obviously, you're not going to save me now. So... take back what you said this morning." Kurumi answered, making Shido's eyes widen.

"Come on, don't you think I'm downright awful to cause this pain for such a silly reason? So go on, you can say it. You hate me and it's clear I'm not someone who deserves mercy."

Kurumi walks up close to Shido and rubs his cheek.

"I will eat you, but I'm at least giving you the chance to take your words back. Do that darling, and I'll take down the barrier so your classmates won't die. So, what will it be Shido?" Kurumi asked, before laughing as if she had won.

Shido closed his eyes, and soon looked at her.

"I'm not giving up on you Kurumi." Shido said, surprising Kurumi with his answer.

"...So, you think you can be stubborn enough to find a solution. Sorry Shido, but now you've simply forced my hand. If this barrier isn't enough then this will be!" Kurumi raises her hand, and soon...

*[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE!]*

Shido gasped.

"That's right, just like [Princess], [Angel] or [Efreet]... I can set them off instantly, so don't even try to stop me." Kurumi cackled, making Shido sweat at his arms shook. Even if he had a Spirit Ascension with the power to stop her, he couldn't use it fast enough.

'Damn it, what do I do?' Shido thought, trying to find a solution.

*[Shido, she's bluffing. She's afraid of you.]* Mio whispered.

"What?" Shido whispered back.
[I can tell, the way she showed surprise to your first response? She's getting desperate, in fact... didn't she say she had to eat you? What do you think might happen if you were to die and not by her hands?]

Shido's eyes widened.

"That's it!" Shido declared, making Kurumi raise her eyes a bit as the outburst. "You said you came here to eat me, right? If that's true, take down the barrier and stop the quakes, if you don't..."

Shido jumps onto the guard rail.

"I'll commit suicide right here and now!" Shido exclaimed, making Mio nervous with his plan while Kurumi stared in shock.

"...Your making yourself a hostage? Nice try, but I don't think you'll actually follow through with it." Kurumi sighed, and Shido exhaled as he looked at her again.

"Watch me."

Shido jumped off the roof's guard rail, and Kurumi's eyes widen.

"ALEPH!"

Kurumi shoots Zafkiel at herself, soon accelerating fast enough to catch Shido and throw him back on the roof, Shido coughing as he landed on it.

"ARE YOU KIDDING ME!?" Kurumi screamed. "Damn it, that was incredibly stupid and reckless!"

Shido smirked as he looked at her.

"I'm not as dumb as you think, because by saving me you proved what I was thinking. If I don't die by your hands, you lose the power you want so much." Shido smirked, causing Kurumi's eyes to widen. "Oh by the way? At that height, I likely would have still survived due to Kotori's healing powers."

"No... that's not possible, you couldn't have outsmarted me!" Kurumi breathed, showing the same face she felt when Kotori's Megiddo aimed at her 5 years ago.

Shido got back up, staring as her as she stepped back.

"Now if you could do me a favor, take down the barrier and stop the Spacequakes. If you don't, I'll make sure I kill myself faster than you can stop me." Shido demanded, giving a look to clearly show he wasn't joking.

Kurumi shakes before snapping and doing just that. Back inside, the Kurumi clones soon saw the Spirits manifest their full Astral Dresses, and each of them give confident smiles. The clones all looked fearfully as the three Spirits all attacked them.

"Oh, there's one more thing. I want you to allow yourself to have another chance." Shido requested.

"Are we seriously back to this? Trust me, I'm more trouble than I'm worth. Kurumi sneered.

"That isn't true and you know it!" Shido stated, making Kurumi gasp. "You can change and be happy, and I know you do. If that wasn't the case you wouldn't have been so overjoyed to see the
cute when we were on our date! I know it!"

Kurumi's eyes widened.

"No... you're wrong!" Kurumi shouted, shaking her head.

"No I'm not, I can help you!" Shido screamed, making Kurumi stare in shock. "Yes, you'll live with what you've done for the rest of your life. That doesn't matter, no matter how terrible you've been that won't give me a reason not to save you!"

Shido reaches out his hand, and Kurumi looks at it for a moment before reaching out... and slapping it away to Shido's shock.

"Forget it, it's too late! I've come too far to throw it all away now!" Kurumi screamed, aiming Zafkiel at Shido. "Yud A-

"Kurumi, stop!"

Kurumi's eyes widen and she freezes as she hears that voice, she turns slowly to see Kotori fly down onto the rooftop, but her eyes were both blue showing that Kotori seceded control to her for the moment.

"...No, it can't be. It's not possible." Kurumi breathed, unable to believe what she was seeing.

"It is Kurumi, it's me... it's Saya." Saya replied, smiling at her.

Kurumi accidentally dispelled her Angel in shock, tears overflowing in her eyes as the impossible had happened before her... Saya was speaking to her again.

"B-but that can't be..." Kurumi cried, soon Saya gave her a serious look.

"Kurumi! I know why I think you're doing this, but you've been deceived, I swear to you! Phantom didn't lie to you... you weren't the one who killed me!" Saya exclaimed, surprising Kurumi.

"W-what... what are you talking about? Yes I did! Phantom gave you your powers but you became a flaming monster! I saw myself kill you in the Spirit Dimension." Kurumi shouted, suddenly angry. "Are you really Saya, now I think your-

Saya slapped her.

"Be glad Chestnut isn't here to see this!" Saya said coldly, making Kurumi just stare. "I learned the truth from Kotori's memories, the Spirit Dimension was destroyed 20 years before we gained our powers. There's no way you could have been there."

"B-but... I know what happened!" Kurumi sweated, her memories had to be right. Saya had to be the one remembering wrong.

Shido and Saya try to think how to properly convince her.

[Kurumi, you swear you know how things happened right? Then tell us how things lead to those moments you remember. How did you reach the Spirit Dimension? What date was it, and what time did you kill Saya at on it?]

"Of course, I got there by... by..." Kurumi began, but the more she tried to think, the more she couldn't bridge the memory to something. "The day you died was... the time was at..."
Kurumi feels her head, why didn't she know? At that moment, she suddenly remembered the day Saya begged to become a Spirit and Phantom decided to allow her, and her not becoming that burning monster.

"No... this doesn't make sense, why am I seeing you request to be a Spirit? Why!?!" Kurumi screamed, holding her head. Suddenly her clock eye came back into view as it glowed.

"[Because the memories you had before were a mere fallacy, they were never real.""] Westcott's voice echoed through the eye. Catching Shido and Kotori, who gained half control back as her right eye became red again, gasped in shock.

"[A pleasure to meet you Nightmare, or should I call you... Material A? I am Sir Isaac Westcott, the ruler of DEM Industries. A pleasure to make your acquaintance. As it is to know you for real... Shido Takamiya.""]

Shido growls at his voice.

"What... what are you talking about?" Kurumi asked, shaking at the revelation before her. Soon the clock she saw appear when she killed someone appeared behind her. "Huh? I didn't call you, why are you here Zafkiel?"

[Master... I remember too, that isn't me! It never has been.]

"[Correct little Angel, I implanted these false memories and made them prominent. This idea that your friend was killed by your hands. Truth is she died saving you, but your power? It was useful, so rather than killing you, I made you my unknowing puppet and pawn.""] Westcott's voice explained.

"[Maintaining a false reality was not easy, so I gave you this clock eye to control you. The sheer work it took to keep the illusion even astounded me, we had to add this clock and force you to black out while I used it to kill nearly 20,000 bastards. Yet I think its funnier to know an innocent was unknowingly letting a murderer kill bastards that would never exceed his evil, you may not have stained your hands with murder, but you've felt it with each drop of blood that hit it."

Saya's eye shook.

"You... Phantom was right about you, you're a sick monster! You're not even human!" Saya roared.

"[Of course not, I lost that when the First Spirit defeated me 30 years ago. Luckily... her defeat only helped me now.""] Westcott's voice cackled.

"...A lie." Kurumi said softly, getting Shido and Saya's attention, Kurumi fell to her knees as her true personality slowly began to come back to her. "Everything these past ten years was a lie! I didn't kill anyone, Phantom never betrayed me... all this time... you just used me to gather power for yourself! I let it happen!"

Westcott began to laugh.

"[Also, I need to thank you Shido. Everything you did helped me realize the truth behind the Inverse Form. See, it turns out strong despair is all it needs. The reason for that? Well... turns out I am the origin for the power!]" Westcott declared.

"What!?" Shido, Kotori and Saya announced.

"[Turns out the Inversion never existed until I got involved, when the First Spirit split her powers, I tried to take them... and my wish to cause despair to the world? It manifested a stain on the ten
Sephira Crystals. I am the essence of the Inverse Form, meaning..." Westcott explained before he began giggling.

"[...I can simply force it."

Kurumi's crying was suddenly interrupted, she suddenly felt her body in pain, holding herself as she screamed.

"What's happening... to... me!?” Kurumi cried, her right eye suddenly becoming a clock as well.

"NO! KURUMI, I'LL SAVE YOU! I'll-" Kotori suddenly stumbled, and noticed her blue eye flickering. Saya gasped in horror as she realized it... the last of her consciousness was finally slipping away, her end was finally here. "N-no... please not now! It can't be the end here! Kurumi... I'm sorry, but this is goodbye. Know that I never blamed-

Kotori felt something strange and felt her head.

"Saya? Saya!?” Kotori called out, and soon gasp and teared up as she realized it. "...No, she's gone!"

"Saya... no! Please! Come back, don't leave me again! I beg of you, to any god that can hear me, I don't care what happens to me! Give her life back, I'll give you anything, you can even kill me for all I care!” Kurumi cried before she suddenly lurched forward, soon lurching her head as her look went blank.

"Please Saya, come back. I'm... sorry for everything."

Kurumi suddenly floated into the air, her Astral Dress fading and leaving her without anything, her eyes two red pools of darkness, soon black spirit energy even black and darker than before suddenly formed from her before it became a hand and grasped her... and then exploded out into the sky!

"KURUMI!” Shido screamed.

Inside the Fraxinus, the warning readings were at the highest levels it ever recorded for a Category E.

"Oh my god..." Maria gasped.

"What is it Maria, how bad is it? Just what kind of Inversion are we dealing with?” Reine asked, suddenly terrified just by seeing the dark spirit energy.

"Commander... by all means she should be a SSS-Rank, but it's gone even higher! An... an X-Rank!” Maria replied, soon gasping as new info came up. "Wait... no that's not impossible, its saying Kurumi's consciousness isn't even there! The one listed here is... Westcott's!"

Everyone gasped.

"Westcott... as an Inverse Spirit, what the hell is happening!?” Reine said, her stoic expression breaking into one of pure fear.

Meanwhile in inside Raizen High, the Spirits all suddenly feel the ominous aura.

"That... that feeling, it's like that time for me, but even worse!” Tohka said, shivering in fear. Right as Origami and Yoshino find her. "Guys, do you..."

"I-I do, i-it's like true evil h-has been born!” Origami stuttered.
Soon the sound of laughter came as Mana, the rest of the AST, and every other Ratatoskr agent in the school heard the laughter.

"What have you done!" Shido demanded.

"The Understanding... it has Inverted!" Westcott's voice declared loudly, cackling madly. "Finally... the power of a Demon King has become mine!"

The black spirit power soon explodes out and Kurumi's form was revealed, but now completely Inverted with both of her eyes as the golden clocks and the big clock now black and spiky, labeled with "DEM: MATERIAL-A" on the top of its rim.

Kurumi was now wearing a somewhat intact yet shredded looking Astral Dress was made out of black and white frills which now looked like it had actual sleeves, the color combination being terrifying due to how primarily black Kurumi had been, and the fact that Westcott had forced her into an inversion. The middle area had been shredded apart to reveal her legs to the world, her stockings unchanged.

Her hair was no longer in twin tails, flowing completely freely, but still showing her hair's uneven length on each side, her clashing against the black and white outfit and both enhancing yet harming the Gothic Lolita image she possessed. She had slightly shredded and torn white and black collar on her neck, and her black boots had become partially white in places. Her entire look was now something of a... a paradox!

This was the code name of the Inverse Spirit before them, a spirit of time whose appearance clashed against even itself, [Paradox].

"Is... is that really Kurumi?" Shido breathed, Kotori hugging Shido's arm as she felt more afraid than she ever had in her life. Kurumi's clock eyes ticked until her left eye struck 3 and her right eye struck 9, and soon she gave a smile like Westcott's before the shocking reveal came from the voice that spoke.

"Now Shido Itsuka... are you ready to start our war!?" Westcott declared, summoning Kurumi's Demon King, Lucifuge. Shido stared in horror at the revelation that Kurumi's body was now under Westcott's command.

"He's... taken Kurumi's body over!" Shido gasped.

"Impossible!" Kotori shrieked loudly, shivering noticeable before she and Shido suddenly felt Kurumi's ghastly hands, now black in color grab them.

"Hmm... actually, that seems to easy and not torturous enough. I know... I'll do what Kurumi didn't do! Time to level this entire city!" Westcott cackled, raising his hand.

[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE!]

"NO! YOU CAN'T!" Shido screamed as his eyes widen, Westcott laughed as everyone tried to evacuate to safety again, but Westcott wouldn't give them that chance.

"Prepare to be purged from every map of this world Tenguu City!" Westcott exclaimed.

Soon multiple black colored Spacequakes began to go off everywhere in the city, everyone staring as it seemed it was too late for them... only for brown colored Spacequakes to suddenly form by each of them, and then simply cancel out each other harmlessly.
All the citizens suddenly murmur about what had just happened, while all of Ratatoskr, Shido, the Spirits and Westcott stared in shock at what had just happened. Westcott especially as his entire moment was ruined.

"What is the meaning of this?" Westcott gasped in disbelief.

"You mean you didn't know? Well, lucky me then. Spacequakes harmlessly cancel out one another if they're of opposing spirit powers like yours and mine. Try that trick again all you want, I'll just keep stopping it." A voice suddenly said.

Everyone turned to see a being emitting silver colored electricity that covered their form, Westcott recognized the voice.

"Material B! How dare you, you'll pay for this!" Westcott growled.

"I'd appreciate if you didn't call me that. That isn't my name, and it never was. I am the spirit code named as [Watcher], however for you Shido?" Watcher said, soon spinning around.

The electricity fades and soon the sight of a young, beautiful girl with golden hair and deep pink eyes was seen. Her Astral Dress took the appearance of a short black dress with a slit in her chest and stomach. She wore black gloves and gold gauntlets on her legs, on her back were a pair angelic wings alongside four large transparent wings. Additionally, she had a smaller pair of wings attached to her ears as extensions.

"You can refer to me by the name Phantom graciously gave me, I am the artificially made spirit... Mayuri Seraphina, but you can just call me the Electric Spirit."

Whoo... I didn't think this chapter would get as long as it did, then again with how much was revealed here I guess I can't blame how big it ended up. If I had fit every reveal in here... yikes! Worst of all, poor Saya... she held on and fought just to see Kurumi one last time before she disappeared, but her life finally faded away at the worst possible moment. I bet Westcott did that one on purpose.

Oh yeah, that's right! Material B was none other than Mayuri! I'll also reveal now due to how she was born, Mayuri will... NOT die in the story! That's right, she's here to stay! In regard to her angel, Kerubiel, it will be a bit different due to how she was born in the story. I can say my decision to give her electricity as her power comes from Kerubiel being called the "Thunder Sanctuary ", so I felt it was required.

That's right, Kurumi was the fabled Material A, the clue was the fact Phantom mentioned an unwilling puppet. Kurumi had her memories changed, the whole arc was named after her both creating a fallacy, and being the victim of another. Ooh... things are getting bad now, Westcott has taken over Kurumi's body and forced an Inversion to use the power for himself. What he meant by creating the Inverse Form? Well, the dude's evil and corrupts people via mind control and memory editing anyways, need I say more?

Now, some of you may feel that Inverse Kurumi's abilities and powers are a bit broken, but I'll say now that the clock eyes and clock face on Kurumi are partially why this is the case. After she's freed, I'll explain this more, just know she's only as powerful as the data sheet states her to be this one time. So the powers being kinda broken is simply for that reason.
Oh, and best part? Next chapter isn't even the final chapter! Kurumi's arc is nowhere near over just yet! Get ready for the next chapter, because everyone's about to throw down! Stay awesome everyone ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 80%
Origami - 68%
Yoshino - 55%
Kotori - 73%
Chapter 21

Alright everyone, before we start I should let you know that at best there's only one more chapter in Kurumi's arc after this one, after a long road this arc is finally going to see its climax. To be truthful there was actually going to be two chapters, but the second is basically an epilogue for the first season and the entire Kurumi that I think will more than likely need to merge rather than be separate. Nothing concrete until I start writing Chapter 9.

Oh yeah, since we're finally approaching the end of Season 1, there are some things I should reveal to everyone now before I forget, the Yamai arc is the first Season 2 arc, but... while Date AST Re:Strike is part of events between Season 1 and 2 while being a different story, and some of Date A Re:Live - Encore's chapters will be either in Season 1 or between the seasons and also another story... the Rinne Utopia movie! (it's not really an arc because it happens between seasons, like how Mauri Judgment is technically pre-Season 3... if we actually get one ^^;) which is between the two seasons of the anime will be in this story itself! In fact, this chapter will help explain some things, so I'll just let you read it then continue this at the end notes.

Also, the conflict with Kurumi will end here, but to those of you who remember, a few chapters ago... I showed that the DEM's Goliath machine was a prototype testing for a different attack machine. I don't think I need to explain what the last battle of this arc is gonna be. At this point, I think it's kinda a theme, at least for Season 1. The DEM plots after this will start involving more people again because the damages Shido left in Tohka's arc will finally get done repairing.

The most important thing I'll bring up? Last chapter, I had Reine expose the revelation that the Spirit Dimension was destroyed by Westcott 30 years ago when he caused the First Spirit to appear and cause the original Spacequake, but Tohka in a dark space during the first chapter and mentioned it herself. So I'll answer that now to curb any confusion, that place was the gate between the dimensions that Westcott used to destroy it in the first place, and this is where the Spirit's go when they end up Lost. This is why they wake up by force, there's Spirit Dimension to go to, so the gate spits them back out on Earth... as Spacequakes ^^;

Alright, now let's get up Mayuri's data sheet since I revealed her last chapter :3

Just as a small heads up, her stats may seem weak, but remember that Phantom had to make a Sephira Crystal for her. Since it wasn't a real crystal, she could only do so much to make it a safe and functional crystal.

-Mayuri Seraphina, Code Name: [Watcher]-

Angel: Kerubiel, the "Thunder Sanctuary" - Kerubiel is an artificial Angel that was created by Phantom when she decided to create a false Sephira Crystal for Mayuri, it takes the form of her Astral Dress' translucent wings shifting into a metallic form. Since the Angel is an artificial machine and Phantom didn't know how to entirely make an angel, it's limited to firing electrical beams or using the electricity to manipulate blades of the wings. Mayuri can combine the two attacks into a third that acts like an electrical saw blade.
- Powers: Mayuri's elemental as a spirit is Electricity and Metal, she gathers electrons to create weak electrical charges that Mayuri emits aren't truly lightning like that of Inverse Kotori. She can only manipulate metal by affecting the charge in their molecules. Because her Sephira Crystal is artificial in nature, Mayuri suffers from constantly burning out her power quicker due to a smaller reservoir to hold her spirit mana in, making her the weakest of the Spirits. As compensation, she has the easiest way to restore her power by simply recharging it by absorbing any form of electricity except lightning, and if she overcharges, she can enhance her strength temporarily while avoiding any danger from the overcharge.

Risk Factors: C, increases to A when overcharged

Spacequake: C, increases to A when overcharged

Spirit's Astral Dress: C, increases to A when overcharged

Angel Rank: C, increases to A when overcharged

Strength: 30, increases to A when overcharged

Consistency: 28, increases to 117 when overcharged

Spiritual Power: 145, increases to 217 when overcharged

Agility: 45, increases to 142 when overcharged

Intelligence: 101, increases to 180 when overcharged

Chapter 21, S1: Kurumi Fallacy, Part 8

"I am the artificially made spirit, Mayuri Seraphina, but you can just call me the Electric Spirit." Mayuri declared, a confident look on her face.

Westcott scowled Shido and Kotori looked shocked at the sight, a new Spirit stood before them.

"Alright, how does this work again? Ah! That's right." Mayuri wondered aloud, soon spinning in the air. "Charge it up, Kerubiel!"

Mayuri's wings spread out, soon transforming into something mechanical in nature. Electricity focused itself from them.

"You said time to begin our war, I say it's time to begin our date."

Mayuri waved her hand in a challenging manner at Westcott, the body snatching man cracked his neck at that, holding Lucifuge at the ready.

"If you think some voltage will end up scaring me, you're wrong." Westcott replied. "Truth is, I quite enjoy pain. Including giving it and taking it, so let's see what you've got Material B! I'll shatter that confidence in your power!"

"If you say so." Mayuri replied, soon sparking before launching forward... and disappearing? Westcott suddenly felt her right hand lobbed off from the wright, and the ground beside him had been noticeably torn through as Shido and Kotori found themselves free. Mayuri reappears by them.
"So you're the Shido that Phantom's told me all about, let me handle this for now. Right now, you and Kotori would probably die instantly. Oh, and if your there Mio, nice to meet you too."

[Ooh! The pleasure's all ours Mayuri, best of luck. Admittedly we don't know how Kurumi fights with her time powers, so the help is appreciated.]

Mayuri nods as Westcott began to chuckle at his cut hand.

"Amazing, you cut through this armor so easily! Well then... it's only fair I show you the same courtesy and go all out myself!" Westcott chuckled, his clock eyes glowing. "Unfortunately, I no longer see use for a defective product with its own free will, so accept the fact that you won't live after. LUCIFUGE!"

The dark clock behind Westcott cackles with power.

"Yottsume!"

Suddenly Westcott's hand reattached like it was never cut off to Shido and Kotori's surprise, while Mayuri raises an eyebrow.

"Strange, I was told you had to fire at yourself to use any time ability."

"Oh no, that's true... when this body wasn't Inverted that is!" Westcott chuckled, cracking the wrist back into place as his look gets even more insane. "So, still think you can win Material B!?"

'Does this man even give a shit about peoples' names?' Mayuri mentally asked herself.

Both get into a fighting position, and soon Westcott disappears, Mayuri feels a change in the air current raises a hand into the air to block Westcott's strike before being knocked back as he swiped Lucifuge at them.

"Is this really the best you can do!? I can say that I'm unimpressed, you can command an angel and manipulate electricity, but all you can do is block? Pathetic!" Westcott cackled, swinging at Mayuri as he attacks her from all sides as she continues to block.

"I'd focus on less talking!" Mayuri declared, soon evading an attack before slapping the colored spots on her wings. "CHARGE GLADIATOR!"

Mayuri's wings open up and spread, discharging a burst of Westcott back a bit, the man chuckled.

"Huh, I think I need to keep you still!" Westcott smirked, aiming Lucifuge at her. "Shichibanme!"

Suddenly Lucifuge fires like a rapid machine gun, Mayuri tries to dodge, but one of the bullets hits her and traps her frozen in time.

"Mayuri!" Kotori shouted.

"Oh no, you've been frozen. Here... let me open your perception back." Westcott rushed closer, soon aiming his guns at her and firing a whole load of dark spirit mana bullets, firing at Mayuri everywhere before firing a shot at her head for good measure. "Bye, bye, Material B."

[He... killed her. No, please wake up Mayuri!]

Shido and Kotori gasped before getting on guard as Westcott cackled as he neared them.
"If you want Shido, you'll have to go through me!" Kotori declared.

"Ah, that sounds scary. Then I'll take-"

Suddenly Westcott feels an electric shot strike him from the back, disorienting him before he turned around to see Mayuri, not shot even once.

"What? That's not possible, you were just shot point black in the head even!" Westcott growled.

"Oh, was I? Look over there and tell me what you see." Mayuri giggled, making Westcott see the body of Mayuri completely shot like Swiss cheese... only for it to fade away in statics particles a few moments after. Westcott's eyes widen.

"You made a fatal mistake, I said I'm the Electrical Spirit. Not the Lightning spirit. I manipulate the electrons in the air and gather the power of the voltage as a result. When I cut your arm off like I did, I managed to mess with your senses. The real me was hiding behind Shido and Kotori so I could trick them as you killed my synapse illusion."

[...Holy shit, that was amazing!]

Westcott growled at that, he had killed a mere fact? That was an insult to him.

"Typical villain monologue trap, the only thing that you've got different from most antagonists is you clearly have no goal but make this world your personal hell zone. Pathetic, isn't it?" Mayuri mocked, making Westcott grit his teeth.

"Alright, you've asked for it." Westcott declared darkly, cracking his knuckles noticeably and making a gruesome sound. Soon holding up Lucifuge at her...

"Hitotsume!"

Suddenly Westcott zipped around the field at supersonic speed, Mayuri barely able to follow him by sensing the electrical currents in Kurumi's body. Soon she realized where she was going.

"Look out!" Mayuri shouted, pushing Shido and Kotori out of the way as she deploys her swings as Westcott nears. "METAL STORM!"

Mayuri spins her body as her wings fly out, shooting out its 'feathers' as blades, Westcott was cut up before Mayuri rushed in front of him.

"MAGNETIC ARC!"

Suddenly Mayuri taps her wings before throwing the metal feathers off and turning them into electrical saw blades as they charge up electricity and spark. Westcott was suddenly hit and cut by them, knocking him across the ground and into the roof entrance's wall.

"Damn it! Yottsume!" Westcott screamed, his winds fading away. "Ooh, you might think you have the lead now. When I'm done, you'll learn how much you should have never mess with me! LUCIFUGE!"

[Destroy her, kill her, make her bleed!]

Mayuri smirks and gets into a new fighting pose.

"Yeah, show me what you got-" Mayuri began, suddenly her face freezes like an uncharged toy
would. Soon collapsing onto her legs to everyone's confusion. Mayuri panics as she notices. "Oh no, not now!"

"Wait, what happened to her?" Kannazuki asked. "Why'd she suddenly just go down like that?"

"Let me see..." Maria replied, analyzing her data. She was surprised to see how low Mayuri's stats were overall. "All C ranks? Wait... of course, her Sephira Crystal isn't a real one! Its synthetic!"

Everyone turned at her confused except Reine.

"I get it, Phantom created one for her. The downside was it faced more limits than a natural one would. Even Phantom isn't a deity." Reine noted, scratching her chin. "My guess is since she uses electricity, she might be like a rechargeable battery. Quick to recharge, but also quick to waste all her power."

"So in other words... she used up all her juice. The closest source of electricity is within the school itself, there's no way she could make it or get back fast enough to keep Kotori and Shido safe."

Kannazuki replied, swearing a bit.

'Come on guys... you beat the odds against the Hydra. You can do this!' Mara thought, making a praying motion with her hologram's hands.

Westcott blinks before suddenly beginning to laugh mockingly.

"You actually have such a pathetic limit? So you have powers, and yet they burn out that quick? You're like one of those lithium batteries that charge quick and die out quickly!" Westcott mocked, Mayuri sweat dropped a bit.

'[Uh oh... this could be bad.]'

'There's no electricity nearby either, I can't recharge my powers! Nor will he let me get the chance without killing me or the two of them!' Mayuri thought.

Westcott rushed at her, prepared to shoot her in the skull when...

*SLASH!* Westcott suddenly stood in place for a moment, soon suddenly begin tossed around in the air like something invisible threw him around before he coughed up blood and slash marks appeared on most of his body.

"Yottsume!" Westcott shouted, undoing the damage. Scowling noticeable he looked around for his attacker. "Who did that!?"

"That would be me."

Westcott looked as Mana landed in front of Mayuri.

"Mana!" Shido exclaimed happily, Mana turning to smile at him.

"Hey big brother, are you ever not in trouble?" mana asked playfully, making Shido face fault slightly. "Sorry I was late, I had a bad feeling when I saw the inversion and went into the school first. Good thing I did, a lot of the infrastructure collapsed as I did. Had I not been there, a lot of people
would have died to this mad man."

Westcott sneered a bit.

"Don't you understand that's the best part of this? Filthy do-gooders, pacifists, peace lovers? This world lives on the Law of the Jungle! Anyone who refuses to eat another to survive is a moron!" Westcott shouted, making the others stare at him.

"This bastard is clinically insane, he has to be!" Mana declared.

Westcott crossed Lucifuge again.

"I am what I am, and I have no qualms! This is what it means to be strong and why you're all weak!" Westcott cackled, soon kneeling a bit. "Hitotsume!"

Mana suddenly sees him disappear, only to reappear besides her, and soon knocked her into the air by firing at her. Mana tried to slash at him, but he kept moving out of the way.

"Sword Style!" Mana shouted, deploying her swords before rushing at Westcott who moved out of the way again. Soon appearing on the other side of the rooftop. He aimed Lucifuge at her.

[Yes, get her now! Kill her!]

"Shichibanme!"

Mana turned and saw Westcott swing Lucifuge as a whole flurry of bullets aimed at her.

"Territory deploy!" Mana exclaimed, right at that moment however she froze in time.

"Mana!" Shido and Kotori screamed, but before he and Kotori could do anything, they were both got frozen was well form the shots that missed the Mana herself. Westcott cackled as he rushed forward and a bunch of black smoke formed as Lucifuge unloaded all every shot it could fire onto Mana's frozen form.

"Eat this! Eat all of it, suffer without mercy before you get a cruel agonizing death!" Westcott cackled loudly.

Soon time resumed for the trio, and the sound of Mana's territory cracking as she saw it break caught her eye before an explosion went off. She fell to the ground and crashed hard.

"Mana?" Shido gasped in fear, but soon noticed Mana get up. Luckily only with a few burns from the explosion. "Oh thank god, you're alive!"

"This Inverse Form... it's a monster controlled by an even greater one!" Mana weakly coughed out, she tried to walk but her leg gave out on her. "No, damn it... not now!"

"Now, it's time I kill-" Westcott began, but his words were cut off when Kotori screamed loudly and distracted him. The madman turned to look at her irritably. "Really, are you still refusing to-"

"MEGIDDO!"

Westcott turned as Kotori charged her fire beam, suddenly feeling a strange feeling screaming to run away from the blast.

"What the?" Westcott questioned at the unknown feeling, unaware Kotori's blast finished.
"Forgive me in advance if this goes wrong Kurumi..." Kotori whispered. "Burn them all to ashes, do it Camael!"

Westcott suddenly widened his eyes as the full beam strikes him, soon blasting him into the rooftop's gates. He stared in shock, Kotori staring at him while Mayuri looked surprised.

[Something feels odd there, he clearly saw it coming... right?]

"He didn't try dodging it?" Shido gasped, it was like he couldn't despite he wanted to. "Wait a second..."

Shido saw the clock eyes flicker, but so barely that you could almost fail to notice if you didn't directly focus at her. His eyes widened and realized.

'Kurumi, you're still in there fighting!' Shido thought.

"Stand up and fight! This fight's not over yet, far from it! If you're the man you claim, then pick up your weapon and fight! Well!?!" Kotori demanded, making Westcott grit his teeth as he stood up.

"Isn't this the destruction you crave!? This is the fight you wanted, this is the war you wanted! If you can't even face the muzzle of my gun, then there's only one thing you are... weak! How you beat the First Spirit is beyond me besides cheating!"

Westcott's eyes shrunk before a vein formed on his head and he grunted loudly.

"I killed that bitch, that's proof of my strength! If you wanna see proof then I'll just prove it here by-"

Westcott roared, nearly about to use a specific swear until he was suddenly shot by a white beam of light. He looked at his chest to see a bleeding wound from it. "...Hachibanme"

Kurumi's body fell to the ground dead.

"Oh no, Kurumi!" Shido yelled, rushing over to it and shaking it. "Come on, don't die!"

"SHIDO!"

Soon Tohka, Yoshino and Origami all ran from the scene, one of Metatron's pillars floating from the sky before he rest of the AST all surround the area around the roof. Origami went pale at the sight of Kurumi.

"Uh oh, did I overcharge my shot!?!" Origami muttered, worried she just killed someone.

Suddenly Westcott's laugh was heard, and everyone saw the sight of a shadow form, ghastly black hands sinking the killed body of 'Kurumi', before Westcott appeared in a new one from behind them.

"Quite the show there [Angel], to think you'd actually catch me off guard. Had you not become a Spirit I'd have wanted you as part of the Adeptus elites. Such a shame." Westcott chuckled, everyone staring in shock.

"Isaac Westcott... you're gonna pay for what you're doing here!" Tohka declared.

"I knew it, that clock eye... it was unnatural to me because it wasn't Kurumi's actual eye! I should have realized it when she kept using our code names. Even fellow Spirits have the respect to call each other by name." Origami added, her hand turning into a fist.

"You're the only one who uses our code names as if demeaning us as nothing more than animals to
slaughter!

Westcott laughs, giving an evil looking smile at them.

"Every living thing is an animal, so what's wrong with murdering when it's a natural part of nature!?" Westcott laughed, making everyone glare at him. Soon he noticed Shido stare at him and look back at where he had 'died' earlier. "Oh, wondering how the girl and I are still alive? Simple, unlike the original..."

Suddenly to everyone's surprise, Westcott's shadow extended as a bunch of Inverse Kurumi clones all start forming and laugh in Kurumi's actual voice. Yoshino hugged Tohka close at the sight before them.

"...The clones made when Nightmare undergoes Inversion can actually act as a backup and transfer. The moment I died, a clone simply became the new true me. There's no way you can kill me without getting rid of me completely. By extension, there's no way to get rid of me completely!"

"We're surrounded!" Mayuri shouted, seeing the onslaught of clones before them. "No, don't give guys. If we can't kill the real one without killing all the clones first, then we can just force him to waste his power!"

Westcott smirked.

"Ooh... sounds like a fun and happy ending based idea, unfortunately I don't wait to read or bother reading that kind of ending. So..." Westcott replied, his voice echoing soon after. "Hitotsume!"

Before anyone could react, the clones all disappeared! Everyone AST member in the sky was suddenly struck or shot down by the clones and knocked to the ground, while the rush all dog pile and constrain the others, more of the ghastly black hands shoot out and hold everyone down.

"With that act alone, I've just smashed your dream out the window and stained it with the blackest ink I could think of, and for good measure... let's make sure none of you can interfere!" Westcott grinned savagely, his clock eyes glowing brightly before each hand struck midnight.

[The clock strikes... midnight! Oh my god, I think that's a sign he's going to kill us here! Quick, someone move right now or we're dead!]

Shido stares in horror as Westcott raised his hands and swung Lucifuge's two guns together.

"ARTEMIS!"

Soon, Lucifuge transformed into something similar to a M134 Minigun, and within it a mixture of tachyon and shadow particles began to gather for a fearsome blast in each chamber. The clock behind him moved to the 'I' position, slowly making way to the 'XII'.

"Time for you... to all die!" Westcott exclaimed, a fierce smile on his face.

Back on the Fraxinus, everyone began hurriedly typing or making calls in response to the situation. Hoping some kind of aid could arrive in time.

"All members at the base state it'll take them about 3 minutes, estimates state that the blast will fire in only one!" Kawagoe stated.

"No one's close enough to be beamed over, that's a negative too!" Minowa exclaimed.
"Mystelltain's power can't be weakened enough to be safe, none of our other weapons will be fast enough!" Shiizaki panicked.

Reine sweated at the situation, shaking in fear.

"No... it's happening again, not again." Reine breathed, nearing a panic attack. "Don't take someone away from me again!"

Maria suddenly noticed something.

"Wait a second... everyone, something's heading towards them!" Maria shouted, getting their attention.

Westcott smirked as the clock finally hit 12, and the charge finished.

"...Time's up, say goodnight." Westcott quietly said, a mocking tone as he screamed excitedly and fired the blast at the group, everyone stares in horror as their most likely last moments neared them closer and closer. Just when all hope seemed lost...

"(SHIDO, LOOK OUT!)

Shido's eyes widened at that before a familiar mosaic rushed into the blast, surprising everyone as Phantom suddenly formed an umbrella like barrier, she held it best she can but it began to crack... and soon she screamed as the blast hit, knocking her and her alone into the wall of the rooftop's entrance. Everyone stared in silent shock.

"...Phantom?" Shido stated worriedly.

"Damn that brat, I nearly was rid of you all!" Westcott sneered, he tried to fire Artemis again, but nothing. "Damn it, a charge lock! I can't even change it back!"

Soon as Phantom slid off the wall, Mayuri stared as she weakly moved towards the group, her mosaic flickering.

"(...Phantom did, good. Right?)" Phantom weakly asked.

Phantom soon fell backwards, crashing back first to the ground. Her mosaic soon failed entirely as she was revealed to be a young girl with long plum hair that reached to her legs. Her hair tied with one single braid and a bow at the top of her head. Her eyes a deep pink, and her Astral Dress was a lavish pinkish-red dress with a gold emblem on the center, containing a large robe that reached her feet.

"...Rio, she saved everyone."

She soon fell unconscious as she laid on the ground, Westcott stared before suddenly laughing madly.

"So all this time, my plans were completely foiled by nothing more than a mere child!? This is funny, it's so funny it's disappointing!" Westcott cackled, everyone either glaring at him angrily or worriedly about what happened to Phantom, or rather Rio going by her last sentence.

"No wonder she was such a slippery bastard, that pink hair? That outfit, her being around since the beginning? I should have known that bitch kept trying to annoy me and delay my plans by sending her own daughter! She must have been a horrible woman if she could only make her child suffer
through that!"

Mayuri stares in horror at Rio's down form.

---Flashback Start---

Mayuri's body slept within the pod for the Material B project, no mind or consciousness existed in her because they didn't intend to give her one... then suddenly she felt herself think, right as the pod opens up, making mist come out. Mayuri felt herself get up as she saw some being made of... something, she couldn't see her, but knew she was there.

"(It's good to meet you.)" Phantom giggled.

"Who are you?" Mayuri asked, looking at herself and then Phantom. 'For that matter, who am I?"

"(I have everyone call me Phantom, but my real name is...)") Phantom began, soon twirling once and dropping the noise around her. Soon showing Rio in a blue and white dress rather than her Astral Dress, and without the bow either.

"Rio, Rio Sonogami!" Rio giggled, making Mayuri blink at the sight. Suddenly... she felt herself laughing. "There you go, you smiled!"

"So you're just a child?" Mayuri asked.

"Mhm! Rio's a child, mama says Rio's a good child, just like big brother and big sister." Rio replied.

"Oh, where is she?" Mayuri asked.

Suddenly, Mayuri saw Rio get sad and tear up, making her gasp.

"Oh, I'm sorry." Mayuri replied.

Rio had since resumed her disguise and talked with Mayuri until the request to join her came.

"(I wonder, was this fate? Those words ring so familiarly to me it's crazy. Alright then, but first...)" Phantom smiled, soon looking at part of the room and revealing some shards. compressing them together, she made a disfigured gem like a Sephira Crystal.

"(I don't have any more Sephira Crystals since I gave the last one to Tohka, so I hope you don't mind this attempt at an artificial one.)" Phantom said, scratching her cheek a bit in embarrassment.

"It's alright, it's more than enough." The female being said, touching it and soon feeling herself transform as it embedded itself in her.

"(Welcome to the Spirit family, glad to have you... oh my god, you don't even have a name. Let's fix that then. The question is, what should I name you?)" Phantom wondered, soon looking around until seeing something that gave her an idea. "(I know! How about the name... Mayuri Seraphina?)"

"Mayuri... Seraphina?" Mayuri asked, blinking before smiling. "I like it. Though if I may ask, how'd you think of it?"

"(The pod has the kanji for 10,000 {万}, and that can be used to make your name. Your name also can mean myriad, since you were made from a combination of people's work coming together as one.)" Phantom explained, getting Mayuri's awe. "(And Seraphina? I just think your gold hair makes
you look like an angel.)"

Mayuri blushes a bit.

"Thank you for the name, I'll treasure it."

Mayuri and Phantom were in the building that Phantom used as her residence while in Tenguu, and soon Phantom undoes the mosaic to turn back into Rio.

"Rio only has the one bed, does Mayuri mind sharing with Rio?" Rio asked.

"I don't mind, it's better than nothing in the end." Mayuri replied, and soon the two get in the bed. She soon notices Rio hugging her arm. "What is it?"

"Rio... Rio wants to be with mama, Shido, Mana forever. Will... Mayuri stay with Rio too?" Rio said, already asleep.

Mayuri's eyes widened in surprise, even if she was asleep, Rio's question touched a heart string within her.

"...Rio, you were so lonely. Weren't you?" Mayuri asked herself.

-End Flashback-

Mayuri teared up at the possibility of Rio possibly dying here with the rest of them.

"RIO!" Mayuri cried out.

'[R-Rio... that name. That name!]

Mio's mind began to race.

"Is even the life of a child worth nothing to you? You bastard!" Shido screamed angrily.

"Anyone who stands in my way deserves death, don't worry... I'll kill you all with her! Then you can all die with her and keep her company!" Westcott cackled, finally getting Lucifuge to change back as the recharge period ended.

"First... I think I'll take away your Spirit power for myself so I can use Artemis to kill you all again! So now... Hyakuman!"

Shido was shoot, and soon felt himself in pain as Lucifuge began leeching away all of his Spirit power. Tohka, Yoshino, Origami and Kotori all felt similar pain as the stealing of his power affecting them as well.

"Victory... is mine!" Westcott cackled.

'...I'm so sorry!'

Shido's eyes briefly widen, and then... feels his mind flash before his eyes as if time suddenly stood still.

Suddenly, Shido finds himself in the same pink realm he was first in when he first spoke to Mio for
the first time, but this time he could feel himself move, and felt a ground he could walk on.

[It's been a long time since you came here, hasn't it?]

"Hey, this is... I remember this place. It's been forever since I was last here." Shido said to himself, but soon he heard crying. He looked around and then soon saw the sight of Kurumi crying on the ground. She was in her normal hairstyle, but her body was just black spirit mana with a white outline showing her shape.

"Kurumi!"

Shido runs over to her, and soon kneels by her, soon hearing a voice as Kurumi keeps crying.

"I'm so sorry! I can't control myself, all my actions... Westcott used me and now he's taken all I had, my entire body is his now. I don't want to hurt you, I never wanted to hurt anyone!" Kurumi's voice echoed as it cried.

"I consider you a friend, maybe I didn't get the chance to know you, but you fought for me... you even let me see Saya again just one last time!"

"Kurumi..." Shido breathed.

[Poor girl. Her heart is in pieces, she's breaking apart...]

"Maybe... maybe I've even grown to like you more than a friend, not just you either Shido... all your friends. They all care about one another, they like to have fun, they're so friendly and warm. It's like your rays of sunshine that never allow a rainy day from one's sadness. Even while under this control, I think I honestly felt I found friends since I lost Saya. Even Phantom refused to hate me for attacking her."

"It's been a long time since you came here, hasn't it?

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"But look at what happened! I wanted to help, and yet all it led to this, people in pain, you and your friends in pain, even Saya. Maybe if I had met you sooner I could have experienced joy... but... but who would wanna be friends with someone like me when all I've brought is misfortune! It would just be better if I died and joined Saya, so please... just do it! Sacrifice me to stop Westcott! I don't have anything left, no hope... all I live in now is despair, I have no reason to keep living! It doesn't matter if I die!"

Suddenly Shido feels rain in the form of tears splash around them, the Kurumi made of Spirit before him ignoring it as it phased through her.

'She's crying... and yet even in all her words of despair, I can still feel the warmth of her tears.' Shido thought, and that's when he suddenly breathed in and shouted.

"DON'T SAY THAT!" Shido shouted, suddenly making the Kurumi made of mana look at him in shock. "Don't say it doesn't matter if you die because of course it does! If you need a reason to live, I'll be that reason! No matter what, your life matters to me Kurumi!"

"W-what? Shido, don't you understand what you're doing here, this means? You'll chain yourself to my mistakes." Kurumi's voice echoed, sniffing heavily.

"I do, but if it makes you happy there's nothing I won't do." Shido replied, and Kurumi gasped. "I know you're a good person! Saya, she told us everything! With what Westcott did to you, none of how you acted when you weren't nice was real, the kindness you showed us was however!"

"I don't deserve happiness, I deserved to be damned! Don't be a fool, I let Saya die and caused so
many problems already. Me rotting is nothing compared to what you've been through!" Kurumi's voice cried again.

"You're wrong, I know that's not true! Do you know how long Saya thought you were dead? She was happy to learn she was wrong, she held on to see you again, to tell you to live. She wants you to live... she was your friend, right? Don't you want to make her last wish a reality? Are you going to leave that dream unfulfilled!?" Shido reasoned.

Kurumi gasped and cries more.

'[Shido?]'

"No, I don't want her dream to die!" Kurumi's voice sobbed.

"Then tell me what will make you happy, and I swear that's what I'll do for you! Even if that means just loving you!" Shido declared, and Kurumi's eyes widened.

-Flashback Start-

Kurumi was sitting on the ledge of a building at night on a say over 5 years after unknowingly being made DEM's Material A, looking at herself in a window's reflection somberly. She soon looked at Zafkiel, remembering one of its particular bullets.

"...Maybe seeing my future would cheer me up." Kurumi sighed, holding up Zafkiel to her.

"Gimmel."

She fired at herself, but when she did, the reaction she had wasn't what she'd ever expected it to be.

['!]

{Tell me what will make you happy, and I swear that's what I'll do for you! Even if that means just loving you}

The somewhat blurry image of a blue haired boy claiming that before offering his hand entered her mind, and she gasped as it fully sunk in.

[Holy... guacamole, we really saw that, right?]

"What... was that? Am I going to fall in love, with him?" Kurumi asked herself, shaking a bit.

"...There's no way, that's impossible."

-End Flashback-

"Shido..." Kurumi's voice cried. "I knew it, I thought I was just crazy, but it wasn't some fake feeling... it was real! This is... this really is love! I... I love you!"

Kurumi cries as the black spirit mana begins to waver slightly.

"I just want to be with you Shido! Your friends! Your family! Your life!" Kurumi screamed at the top of her lungs, her echoing voice losing its echo.

"I want to be with you in this life and the next, I want us to be together now until the end of our lives!"
Shido smiles.

"Good, then come with me! Because I swear I'll save you!" Shido stated as he reached out his hand, and Kurumi's hand grabs his, the black spirit mana shedding to reveal the real Kurumi.

Kurumi cries before she vanishes from the pink realm, and as she does, Shido feels her power slightly surround him.

[What is... i-is...]

Mio screams loudly, and gets Shido's attention as she sounded in severe pain.

"Mio!" Shido asked worriedly.

"Hey, who are you?"

Shido and Mana's Father, Seigo Takamiya, looked up as he slowly regained consciousness. Before him he saw a beautiful girl with pink hair and red eyes, he noticed her pupils were white rather than black unlike a normal human.

"My name is Seigo, Seigo Takamiya. Who are you miss?" Seigo asked, surprising the girl a bit.

"My name is..." The woman answered.

"I love you, so... will you stay with me? From here until the rest of our lives?" Seigo asked, making the pink haired girl before him tear up.

"Seigo..." She breathed.

Everyone nearby watched, wondering what her answer would be, as smiled as her eyes shed tears of happiness.

"...I will, of course I will Seigo!" She answered, making everyone cheer happily.

Seigo held his wife's hands tightly as she screamed loudly, soon panting as the sound of crying was heard. After a bit...

"Look, he's finally here!" Seigo said, tears of joy in his eyes as he held a baby boy in his hand.

"I don't believe it..." Seigo's wife cried, holding her new son. "Our little boy, he's finally here. Welcome to the world... my little Shido."

As the pink haired girl felt her body fade, she held her hand out and used some of the leaking mana of her body to create a being with a similar appearance to her. The Spirit girl that was born soon blinked at her.

"...Mama?" She asked, soon feeling her mother tap her head and share information with the last bit of her strength.

"It's up to you now... please, protect the Sephira Crystals. Protect Shido and Mana, protect... Humanity's future. I know you can, so don't ever give up... Rio." She said, smiling before she disappeared.
"Mama!" Rio cried.

"...I'll be waiting, for the day I return to you all."

"My name is..."

The pink haired woman's face was finally seen as she was revealed to be a girl with long light pink hair, two long braids at a length that was approaching her legs, intense pink eyes that were almost red in color.

Her outfit was a purple empress looking outfit with golden extensions on her shoulders and hips. At the top of her head, there is a decorated headdress with a golden emblem at the center. However, after looking at this man, she decided to change her clothing with a white t-shirt with a sleeveless beige colored sweater, a blue skirt, white socks and brown colored sneakers.

"...Rinne Sonogami, it's a pleasure to meet you Seigo." Rinne smiled, introducing herself.

All of a sudden, Shido saw a brightly shining light in the pink realm as a bunch of energy began amassing together into one spot. Once the brightness faded enough for him to see again... Shido couldn't believe his eyes.

Before him was a pink haired girl who was curled up to hide her body due to a lack of clothing, her eyes opened to reveal the intense pink orbs they held. Soon looking directly at Shido who suddenly wondered if he was seeing what he thought we was.

"Shido."

While it was different without the distortion altering it, Shido only needed to hear that voice once to know who this girl was.

"...Mio?" Shido asked.

"I remember... I remember everything! Now that I have, Westcott's victory will never succeed!"

Suddenly Shido was ejected out of the pink realm as a bright flash went off.

Westcott kept laughing at his supposed victory, but suddenly... Shido's eyes widened to reveal an intense pink-red color in place of the gold eyes he possessed. Suddenly a bunch of energy flared as the other Spirits stopped feeling pain, Rio suddenly began to stir and wake up.

"What's this? Lucifuge, drain him faster! Let's kill him now!" Westcott demanded.

[...No]

"What!? I am your master, you will obey me!" Westcott screamed.

[No, you are not my master! It doesn't matter, right now there is someone before me even I can't refuse under master's orders!]

Westcott growls, and Rio suddenly gasps.

"...Mama!?" Rio asked.
Shido stands up, shouting before ripping Westcott's Hyakuman apart, negating the stolen power he took for being unable to drain it all.

"Westcott, its time you learn firsthand... why your plans are doomed to fall here and now!" Shido exclaimed, holding up his hand as a powerful amount of Spirit power formed... but pink in color. Rio gasped and tear up happily while Westcott's eyes widen in shock.

"What!? No, it can't be... that's impossible!" Westcott gasped, it was a voice he was sure had been silenced 30 years ago.

Shido raised his hand, his entire body shakes as if the molecules and atoms that held it would break apart, but he kept a strong face as light formed in his hand in the shape of a blade.

"To the power of the God in this world sleeping in a madman's prison, shatter the darkness and grant me your divine strength... overcome the possible, go beyond the limits and shatter the foundations of this reality to destroy the evil before me!" Shido shouted, his entire body feeling like it was ripped apart.

"Now lend me your strength... power of the First Spirit! COME TO ME... URIEL!"

Shido's body raised into the air, and a pillar of light formed before turning white, then gray, black, blue, red, yellow, green, orange, indigo, and finally purple. When it disappeared, in Shido's hand was a one-handed sword similar to Sandalphon, but with jagged edges that give the blade the shape of a tree or the branch of a tree and ten gems representing the colors of the other ten Sephira Crystals.

What was most surprising was Shido himself who was now glowing with a rainbow colored aura, the same pink-red eyes, and his hair was now pink in color, and had temporarily grown out much longer.

Meanwhile from the Fraxinus which had flow nearby, Maria zoomed in on the sight of Shido.

"What... what is this?" Maria breathed, the readings were all impossible for her to pick up, it was like trying to measure a deity's power! "Just what is that power, does anyone know?"

The whole crew murmured trying to find out, but stopped as Reine stood up from her seat, getting their attention.

"Commander?" Kannazuki asked, surprised by her reaction.

"It's Uriel. That's the... First Spirit's Angel!" Reine gasped, completely shocked she was seeing it again. "But then that would mean..."

Everyone stared in shock at the sight before them, while Rio stared happily and cried tears of joy.

"Mama!" Rio cried out happily.

Westcott took a few steps back, his face full of... fear? Disbelief? Whatever it was, it was a rarity and a clear sign that he was not confident about the situation.

"No... how can this be? There's no way you can be holding that Angel!" Westcott screamed in a panic, thinking this had to be a nightmare he was in right now. "The First Spirit is dead!"
"Am I Westcott?" Rinne asked, making Westcott's eyes shake in shock. At that moment... any doubt that this wasn't real shattered.

"Wait a minute... isn't that Mio?" Tohka asked, making everyone look at her for confirmation.

"I am, but now I remember my true name, all because of a small gift of hope Kurumi gave me. I knew the fight with Goliath gave me weird memories out of nowhere and Shido helped me find them." Rinne explained, soon flaring her power from Shido.

"My true name is Rinne Sonogami, and I am the First Spirit! I've finally returned to end the nightmare you brought to this world... Isaac Westcott!"

Everyone's eyes widened.

"The... First Spirit..." Mana breathed, in complete awe.

"NO!" Westcott screamed, flaring his power out. "I will not let you ruin everything again! This is my destiny, my dream, I won't let you set me back again!"

All of Westcott's clones fly up and prepare to fire in one united assault using their dark spirit power.

"I'll send you back into the fires you where should have gone!"

Shido smirked and soon flew up, surprising everyone as he was flying in his Spirit Ascension, and in moments, Westcott saw him shred through hundreds of the clones as they exploded into dark spirit mana, as he did, he only swung Uriel and nothing more.

"Incredible, it's a Spirit Ascension that's gone beyond the limits, it's... an Over-Limit Spirit Ascension!" Tohka said in awe.

"No... this isn't real! I won't let you take this from me!" Westcott roared.

"Westcott, you need to learn a big lesson!" Shido declared, surprising the madman as he suddenly saw the remnants of his clones explode and get destroyed in a chain reaction around him, almost like going down a spiraling slide. "If you don't want things taken from you... THEN DON'T TAKE FROM OTHERS!"

Shido screams loudly, and Westcott shrieked as he felt the clock begin to disconnect from Kurumi.

"Now... GO!" Shido screamed one more time, slashing Uriel down.

The sword slashed through Kurumi, but instead of cutting her... the link to the clock was severed, and suddenly Kurumi gasped as the two clocks in her shattered into pieces and changed back to her natural red ones before they closed as she fell to the ground.

- (insert song end) -

Her Inverse Form faded away into her Astral Dress, before that also changed into the Astral Dress she had years ago as Shido caught her in the air. Her true Astral Dress revealed itself to be mainly black like before, but had light blue rather than orange as its secondary color with some of the black areas glowing along with the light blue.

While it had similar traits to her corrupted dress in design, such as her hair's scrunchies (as her hair stayed styled the same as she did normally) which looked like mini-versions of her net bow, her boots and some of her cleavage showing.
It looked less like a Gothic Lolita outfit and more like the casual dress you'd see from a wealthy yet kind girl. Similar to her astral dress, there was a cut that showed her legs, but had small skirt not show as much. Finally, rather than black stockings she wore white ones. (A/N: Sorry, this Astral Dress is kinda hard to describe ^^^; the best references I can give for visual aid are a mix of her canon Astral Dress, Past self's outfit in Vol 11, and some original designs of mine.)

Kurumi soon stirred and her eyes back up, and the first thing she saw after she did was Shido holding her, smiling at her.

"S-Shido?" Kurumi breathed, wondering if this was all real, she felt her left eye and felt her mind clear, anything foreign in it was... gone. "Shido, does... does this mean that you... am I-"

"That's right Kurumi, you're free from Westcott. Now and forever." Shido replied, making Kurumi cry happy tears as she hugged Shido close. "And now, it's time to free you from the burden you've carried for the last ten years."

Kurumi pulled away confused, suddenly seeing a coat fall over Shido's shoulder before Shido suddenly kissed her to her surprise. She blushed as she kissed back.

"I've sealed your powers, so... I'd put the coat on now, there's an unfortunate side effect they have." Shido chuckled before sweat dropping.

"Huh?" Kurumi asked, suddenly she noticed her Astral Dress vanish, and blushed as she realized what the coat was for.

Screaming as she hurried and covered herself with it as Shido landed on the ground. Once she did, all the others quickly ran over to her and hugged her to the Shadow Spirit's surprise.

"W-what? Why are all of you..." Kurumi asked, suddenly hugged close by Tohka.

"Welcome to the family Kurumi, our family." Tohka smiled, making Kurumi smile before she teared up slightly. She wiped her tears as she looked back at her.

"...Thank you, everyone." Kurumi smiled, and everyone smiled back.

However, at that moment things suddenly took a turn for the worst as the entire ground of Tenguu City shakes, everyone looks around for the source.

"What's going on!?" Mana shouted.

Suddenly Westcott's voice laughs as everyone sees the clock attached to Kurumi in its original design, soon morphing its shaped to reveal its true form as a clock based robot, the Cassiopeia, that Westcott spoke through.

"So what if I've lost [Nightmare], there's still 10 years' worth of people I had it devour inside of it! Now, I shall use it alongside my ultimate weapon and force the world to submit! True this will take longer, but we all make sacrifices!" Westcott laughed crazily, and soon from a distance, everyone sees something coming.

"Oh... my... god!" Shido declared, Rinne gave the same reaction silently as she looked through his eyes.

Out in the distance... a gigantic robot that made the Goliath look tiny in comparison was slowly walking at slow speeds towards the city, Spacequake alarms going off everywhere to hide every possible witness in Japan that it could. It had the appearance of what would look angelic but not look
like an actual Angel, and it had black and white parts to show while it looked divine, it was pure evil.

"This is the ultimate DEM weapon, the god of machines in Deus-Ex-Machina Industries! Behold, I give to you..."

Everyone stared in horror as the machine's eyes lit up and its wing like crests unfolded.

"...The Deus!"

WOO! There you have it, Phantom's identity is... Rio Sonogami! And the First Spirit's identity is... Rinne Sonogami! I've been waiting all season to finally reveal these twists and they were worth the wait! This is why the Rinne Utopia movie adaption will take place between the story, because Rinne was important from the very first chapter of the story. Not to mention the reason for Shido and Mana's abilities are because Rinne is their mother!

The reason why Rinne doesn't have the same last name as them? Because in the Spirit Dimension, they didn't have a way to officially marry and take the name, and unfortunately... Seigo, the Takamiya's father, died before they could have it in the real world. Rio has her mother's last name due to how she was born in the one memory flash. This is also why Shido and Mana look like their father to the level they're like clones of him, Rinne had no human genes to pass down.

Now you might ask, why did I choose Rinne and Rio to be the First Spirit and Phantom of this story? For Rinne, it was her code name that made me choose this, [Ruler] felt like a code name that fit for the most powerful Spirit. For Rio, its due to how Rio was born as a remnant of Rinne's power, and Phantom is mysterious, but having the Sephira Crystals initially made her seem like the First Spirit's agent, so... I figured why not? :3

That robot Westcott introduced... the Deus, now that is probably the last time any DEM machine that's bigger than the Jabberwocky will be in the story, they had their role while Westcott's main forces from Tohka's arc needed to heal, and after this... how do I even top the Deus? Exactly. I can't because I made it for the very reason it couldn't be topped. Westcott and his lackeys have to get their hands dirty after this season.

Since we've finally gotten this far, get ready next when next time, this season meets its stunning conclusion or at least the first part of it, and most of all... a twist you will NEVER see coming, and it's one that has nothing to do with Rinne just to help keep you even more in the dark.

So... until next time everyone, stay awesome and thanks for supporting Season 1 as you all have up until this point ^^

-Rio Sonogami, Code Name: [Phantom]-

Angel: Eden - Eden is an Angel that has no physical form, manifesting as a special aura that surrounds Rio. This is due to how Rio was born, giving her no physical object to make as her Angel. Eden's effects don't possess any offensive nature as a consequence, but the spiritual power and defense it has is incredibly near-impregnable as a result.

- Alternate Form: Mosaic - By altering the texture of Eden's aura, Rio can make herself lack a
visible form and hide from view. This is the form that gave made her give herself the code name of Phantom. Using this cloak allows Rio to hide her facial expressions, making it hard to know her emotional state if she's silent. This form's best feature is when she teleports away while wearing it, all spirit sensing technology will mistakenly believe she's become "Lost".

- Powers: Rio's powers are like her mother's, but weaker and defensive based due to having no Angel to properly attack with. Her abilities are also mostly support and disruption based to aid allies and harm enemies. One ability she's been notable for using is the "Spirit Lock" which acts like a temporarily sealing, but allows aging to continue as if the Spirit lacks powers. Rio is also somehow able to detect when a Sephira Crystal's host dies and able to instantly retrieve it before it can be stolen.

Risk Factors: A

Spacequake: A

Spirit's Astral Dress: C

Angel Rank: S

Strength: 43

Consistency: 35

Spiritual Power: 230

Agility: 52

Intelligence: 31

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 80%

Origami - 73%

Yoshino - 68%

Kotori - 77%

Kurumi - 62%
Chapter 22

As you may have noticed, the story's cover has been changed as of the last chapter, to anyone curious as to why this is the case, it's because this was the original cover I intended, but... I had a feeling that I should withhold using it in particular at the time so as not to spoil Mayuri's eventual appearance. This cover's choice is due to Tohka being the first canon spirit to have a major change in her story, while Mayuri is the last non-canon spirit to have this. It's meant to be a representation for the part of the summary that says, "a similar story can take its own path".

Now let's backtrack a bit to the moment where things all went south last chapter. We saw Shido use a new Spirit Ascension, his final and greatest level of it. The "Over-Limit Spirit Ascension" as Tohka decided to name it, and freed Kurumi and finally sealed her... but that clock Westcott had on Kotori was used by him as a speaker to announce he's called a giant killer robot over. The Deus, an extreme robotic weapon named after his own company, it's a literal "Deus Ex Machina", but used for the purpose of what would be a Diabolus Ex Machina.

On the villains' side? Only Westcott using the Cassiopeia through a neural link, and said machine having 10 years' worth of energy from nearly 20,000 scum bag type victims, and Jessica will show up soon. Then there's the Deus itself, which while I didn't say it last chapter, is currently being piloted by the AI: Marina, since it's too big to work autonomously, and wouldn't let its full power be used regardless. The heroes have the Fraxinus, their own AI: Maria, seven spirits when Rio and Mayuri were included, two half-spirits with one using the First Spirit's power, and a bunch of AST members.

Their chances still aren't very good despite that, right now the best example for what their situation is that I can give you is this. Imagine the scene from Attack on Titan when the Colossal Titan first appeared... but without the walls defending the city, or Undefeated Bahamut Chronicle's fight with the Giant Warrior. Yeah, that's how big Deus is compared to everyone. That is the challenge they are facing, and now we'll see just how they face what seems impossible, they have to kill the god of DEM's machines!

Oh yeah, I forgot to mention this earlier, so let me fix that here. While Maria and Marina are both AIs based on Spirits, the recent information Minerva allowed Westcott to get his hands on that detailed a bit on Kotori's Inverse form has allowed Marina's data to become more like an Inverse Spirit's, it's another thing to help differentiate the two since Maria was born from copying some of Marina's data. I'd say the Yamai arc should be the best place to see how it changed her from her AI twin.

The most important thing I'll explain is now that Kurumi's been freed from the manipulations of Westcott, her powers have changed because Westcott's clock eye controller was essentially a nerf to her darkness elemental powers yet a booster to her time manipulating powers, so the former element dominates most of her abilities now while her time powers manifest as much as the few earth based abilities that Tohka seems to have. I need to fully think up the data sheet, so you might not see it for a while.
Alright, now it's time for the data sheet on Shido's final Spirit Ascension level, there's also one for Rinne at the bottom since some stuff mentioned on it has spoilers until you read the whole chapter.

With that done... let's get this chapter started!

-Shido Takamiya, Over-Limit Spirit Ascension State-

- Powers: By wielding the power of the First Spirit, Shido's Spirit Ascension reaches its maximum level, and he's given the power of flight and the automatic mana barrier all other spirits possess. Through Uriel he can even channel the power of every Spirit he's managed to seal so far, but can only use one at a time. Unfortunately, the massive raw power the First Spirit possesses makes it even more dangerous than the Triple Spirit Ascension.

After using it, the stress on Shido's body will be too much and he'll barely be able to move normally, if at all, until he recovers. There's a 30-minute time limit to using this form, and Shido can't dispel it early or risk serious harm to his body, leading Reine to declare he only use it as a last resort. Like the previous three forms of this technique, Tohka also named this one, and chose it over its nature as a last resort.

Like Rinne herself, Shido is also capable of using the Harmonic Convergence, but due to the limits of his body compared to hers, he can only use it one time and it requires an entire day to recharge. Also unlike Rinne, the condition for Shido to use a Spirit's power in the attack is to have sealed their powers away.

Risk Factors: SSS

Spacequake: None

Spirit's Astral Dress: None

Angel Rank: SSS

Strength: 280

Consistency: 240

Spiritual Power: 300

Agility: 250

Intelligence: 260

Chapter 22, S1: Kurumi Fallacy, Part 9

Out in the distance, everyone saw the gigantic robot that made the Goliath look tiny in comparison, known as the Deus, as it slowly walked towards Tenguu City. Aside from all of them, none of Japan saw the behemoth mecha due to Spacequake alarms going off to ensure it wasn't seen by civilians.

"This is the ultimate DEM weapon, the god of machines in Deus-Ex-Machina Industries! Behold, I give to you, the Deus!" Westcott cackled as he unveiled his ultimate weapon, expecting fear.
"That's the most unoriginal name I've ever heard of!" Hiroto called out.

"Wait, what?" Westcott asked, caught off guard.

"You named your company Deus Ex Machina Industries, you named this robot Deus! It's a giant machine you call at the end game! It's a literal Deus Ex Machine!" Hiroto explained, and at that moment... the Cassiopeia sweat dropped.

"Uh..." Westcott responded without success, even he felt his name choice was kinda dumb now that he noticed. The Deus stops for a moment as its pilot groans.

"Wow, really dad? You come up with a bunch of machines based of various creatures that fit their name perfectly, and then our enemy tells you that your best machine trips up because its name references the whole company... by complete accident?" Marina inquired, the Cassiopeia sweat drops further.

"...Who cares about the name, what matters is what it'll do! Destroy this city and the entire area before moving onto the rest of the world!" Westcott declared, the Deus resumes its walk as Marina resumes control. Westcott flies over to it have the Cassiopeia aid the gigantic machine in its soon to be destruction.

Everyone stares at the robot in worry.

"A robot like that might just have enough power to breech the shelters. If we don't stop this thing, everyone will die!" Cecile sweated, the reality finally sinking it.

"Worse is if it even gets to the city, we'll likely still have causalities just by it stepping on the ground. We have to stop it before it reaches the city with just all of what Ratatoskr has and all of us."

Shido looks at the group behind him, the 5 Spirits he sealed, the loyal fighters of the AST, his own younger sister, Rio and Mayuri, not to mention his fellow classmates and members of Ratatoskr. That wasn't all, there was the Ratatoskr members still at their base, Maria and the Fraxinus crew... the odds weren't the best, but they COULD win.

"Don't forget, I'm here too!" Rinne said, making Shido look at Uriel in his hands.

"That's right... we fight together, and we'll win together! Come everyone, let's take this machine down!" Shido declared, making the others raise their hands in agreement before tapping his headset. "Alright, let's gather everything we need and head on out to stop it! Reine, you read that?"

"Loud and clear, we'll be deploying everything we have." Reine nodded, soon connecting with everyone.

"OK, listen up well everyone. This isn't a normal fight. We have to throw the best that we can. To all non-fighters, return to base, we'll give you access to the remote controlled artillery. To all AST, I'm authorizing the highest degree of weapons. This situation is THAT dire. Mana, I have one I believe you alone are the only one who can use. If any of you have piloting skills, get into any of our vehicles. Everyone else, join the Fraxinus as we begin our initial assault."

"Roger!" Everyone shouted.

Everyone scattered while Shido and the Spirits all stayed in place as they readied themselves, Kurumi looked at the others.
"Um... if your powers are sealed, how are you able to still use them?" Kurumi asked.

"We basically turn our feelings into power, it should work for you too." Tohka explained, soon whispering near her ear. "I'd keep the jacket on to be safe though."

Kurumi blushed at that as she held it closer, soon focusing and seeing her Astral Dress reform on her.

"There we go!" Kurumi smiled, soon summoning Zafkiel into her hand.

*[Hey master, glad to have the real you back.]*

Kurumi smiles at that.

"Thanks Zafkiel, sorry I kept you waiting. So, we ready?" Kurumi asked.

"You go on ahead, I need to use some of the school's electricity to recharge and help heal up Rio. We'll meet you there in about two-5 minutes tops." Mayuri replied, piggybacking Rio on her back.

"Alright, we'll see you there. Here we go!" Shido exclaimed.

Shido, Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori and Kurumi all fly off towards the Deus' location. Mayuri and Rio smiling as they see them go on ahead. Mayuri starts walking inside and soon finds some electricity to drain.

"I better overcharge for more time and power." Mayuri noted, drawing in all the electricity she can. "Shido, Mana and the others? You know some pretty great people Rio. Glad it's something we can be a part of as well."


"Yeah, they're..." Mayuri suddenly stops and blinks three times. "Wait, they're your Brother and Sister! Why didn't you tell me that before just now!?"

Rio blinks.

"...Rio forgot!" Rio answered, playfully sticking her tongue out as Mayuri's head suddenly hits the wall. Her face showing an odd chuckle and sweat dropping.

Back inside Ratatoskr, every member was pushing themselves to the limits, all the agents who had no combat or technical experience quickly began rushing to a section of the hallway made specifically for the occasion marked [Room 0]. It quickly opens and lets them inside as everyone sits themselves in the piloting seats.

"This is Ai Yamabuki, linking to Pilot-Fighter 01- Taurus!" Ai called out.

"Mai Hazakura, initiating link to Pilot-Fighter 02 - Scorpio!" Mai called out.

"Mii Fujibakama, requesting Pilot-Fighter 03 - Leo!" Mii called out.

Three doors open to reveal vehicles based on an Ox, Scorpion and a Lion as they have their 'eyes' glow and drive out at top speed. Hiroto soon enters a different room and sits down.

"Hiroto Tonomachi present, request a link to Pilot-Support - 07 Gemini!" Hiroto called out, and a vehicle with two pillars extending from the back drove out. At the same time, Mildred got onto the
Sagittarius while Tamae pumped the gas on the Sleipnir and drove over.

"Mana, follow me. Protect Shiroi is over here." Matthew requested, and Mana followed him as he led her to a door where the sight of a pure white realizer battle suit extension was seen. It was mostly covered with dust like it had barely seen recent use, if any.

"This is the White Licorice, it's an experimental annihilation-type battle suit that we based off stolen blueprints from a similar DEM weapon. It has the power of an entire AST troop in one machine, but it's nearly crippled everyone who's tried to use it. As a consequence, we've never activated it. You might be able to handle it with your Spirit powers. So... are you willing to risk it."

"...I guess we can't afford to not take a risk. Suit me up!" Mana reasoned, and Matthew nods as he activates the machines as Mana turned the attachment area of Murakumo's Wiring Suit.

The White Licorice soon attached itself to the CR-Unit, and Mana screamed as the White Licorice's intense power clashed with hers.

"Oh no, this is bad. I'm going to disconnect it-"

"No!" Mana shouted, grunting a bit. "I can bear it, I can do it! Big brother and everyone is will be giving it their all so I can't just sit down because this hurts!"

Mana stands up and shouts, her spirit powers fluctuating before the White Licorice suddenly glows and gains some blue on it, surprising Matthew as the White Licorice's readings stated Mana's compatibility rating was a 100%.

"She actually tamed it to her, amazing!" Matthews noted, Mana panting as she caught her breath.

"Mana, a few key things to know. The suit is powerful so there's a 30-minute time limit once officially activated. After that it will teleport back here, since we finally got a successful use we don't have the right ways to recharge it for you. In other words, you get one chance, and after that you only have the Murakumo to use. understood."

Mana nods.

"I understand, I'll make sure to use it at the right moment."

Mana soon puts the White Licorice in storage mode before running out, and as she did, the other AST with some more powerful Wiring Suit attachments and weapons followed. Soon all of them take off as Ryouko takes the lead.

"Everyone, assume Delta Formation!" Ryouko ordered.

"Roger!"

They all shift into a 'V' shaped formation and fly towards Deus while the various vehicles fellow behind shortly after.

Meanwhile in the Fraxinus, the crew began typing as they were getting things ready, Kannazuki moves from his spot near Reine to the area to a chair that suddenly raised behind Maria's hologram protector.

"Everyone, all system limiters and regulations are hereby released, prepare the Fraxinus Ex-Celsior for battle! Everyone into position, Kannazuki, monitor all battle information and artillery!" Reine
"Yes commander!" The whole crew declared.

Soon the others' chairs moved positions and Reine moved to a seat that rose in the front. Soon with Maria's hologram projector as the middle, everyone's seats took the corners of a hexagon shape and its middle.

"And Maria?" Reine called, getting the AI's attention. It's time, use the Astral Dress."

"Are you serious, I can finally use it?" Maria gasped, Reine nods and smiles. "OK! Fraxinus Ex-Celsior, full link up authorized! Activating full synchronization with all ship systems... Astral Dress equip!"

Maria's body began to glow, and soon her outfit changed until it took the appearance of the Fraxinus itself if it were a pair of clothes. Compared to the cable wires of Marina's Astral Dress, Maria had Yggdrafolium cords with the crystals that made said realizers at the end.

"Transformation successful, assuming battle mode!" Maria declared.

Soon the Fraxinus' outer haul opened up like it was a closed flower that finally bloomed and increased its speed as it rushed towards the Deus, Maria gave a serious face as she did.

'Marina, be prepared. This time I'm not letting you hurt my family!' Maria thought with determination.

Shido and the Spirits flew closer as the Deus reached a distance that was still about 300 km from Tenguu City, the Cassiopeia soon flies into the Deus' range and attaches itself onto a spot placed in the machine.

"Now Marina! Show them the power we have, a machine with no power supply limitations!" Westcott declared, Marina smirking form inside as she tapped a button. The Deus' body soon made a loud hum as its entire body gave off a golden glow to show the power it had obtained. Once they were nearly in range of the machine, Shido looked at the others.

"We're getting close, everyone ready for this?" Shido asked, and the group nodded.

"Shido, when this fight's over there's something important I need to tell you and Mana. For now, that can wait, and when the right moment comes, I have something that we'll use to deal with Westcott's little clock robot. I can't let him keep any of that power from those he reaped." Rinne replied.

"Got it, that's a promise." Shido nodded, soon hearing electricity.

Soon Mayuri and Rio appear besides the group to their surprise, Mayuri's body cackling with brown lightning that glowed all over her with Rio riding on her back excitedly. She turned to everyone as they made it.

"Sorry for the wait, but I decided to overcharge just to be safe. A lot of excess power leaves with a huge boost in my powers." Mayuri answered, knowing they'd ask about her electric charge.

"Rio's ready too! Rio can't attack, but Rio can shield everyone! Rio will do her best!" Rio smiled.

Shido smiled, and right as they neared... suddenly a bunch of missiles fire at the group that made
them scatter, and it wasn't fired from the Deus. Shido and Tohka gasp as they see Jessica with a red battle suit attached to the Mordred.

Many DEM wizards, including the remaining Adeptus numbers aside from Minerva who was tasked to stay behind due to her eventual mission from Westcott, appeared besides her. All having been waiting on the Deus.

"Remember me? I'd honestly rather try killing that sister of yours, but you'll do for now!" Jessica declared, she readied her battle suit as Shido held out Uriel and prepared to attack... only for a green beam to fly by and strike her. Jessica barely formed a territory in time. "Who did that!!?"

"You called for me?"

Jessica's eyes gained visible veins from her anger as she saw Mana, but gasped at the sight of the White Licorice.

"No way... you reverse engineered my Scarlet Licorice!?" Jessica growled angrily, her fist squeezing so hard it drew blood. "I was the only one who could avoid the crippling from this machine, how can you handle a copy of it you bastard!?"

"Guess you didn't get the memo, I have an upgrade compared to last time." Mana smirked, and Jessica noticed her eyes and growled.

"Take care of the others, only I get to bring this tumor down!" Jessica declared, scaring the other nearby wizards into obeying. Soon Both Mana and Jessica unleash a barrage of missiles at one another while trying to dodge the other's own fire.

"Take down the Spirits now!" Adeptus 4 order, they all prepare their territories to subdue them. Unfortunately...

" Territory Jamming activate!"

Suddenly the territories shattered around them, and the wizards saw Cecile fly before them before the rest of the AST showed up.

"What!? No way, how does Ratatoskr have so many wizards?" Adeptus 4 gasped, horrified at the sudden firepower Ratatoskr brought out. Cecile rushed forward and she barely guarded from the Longma's attacks. Katie fired at some of the others' shots aimed at them.

"Shido, we'll focus on them. Take on the Deus! Please trust us!" Katie reasoned.

Shido nodded.

"Alright guys, let's go!" Shido shouted, soon rushing forward along with the rest of the Spirits. As they neared the giant machine, its eyes move to notice their presence. Inside the Deus, Marina stood by an orb in a circle room of the machine, her Astral Dress' wires attached to maybe drive points while her hands over a control orb.

"No choice, time to rain down instant death on these fools." Marina smirked, soon moving the orb a certain way.

Back outside, Origami suddenly notice the sky suddenly go red in color as Deus' wing shaped crests suddenly have dozens of spots glow and charge beams instantly. The moment they aimed at them, she gasped.
"We're about to be hit from above!" Origami screamed loudly, getting the others' attention. The beams all fire at the group at incredible speed, however at that moment...

"Fire all three Mystletainn cannons!"

Suddenly the Fraxinus loses its invisibility and fires all of its magic cannons, they fly out and shred the incoming beams nearing the Spirits before hitting the crests, suddenly making the entire Deus rumble as it took some slight damage. Marina fell over from the result and growled.

"Who did that!?" Marina demanded, soon seeing the Fraxinus. Her eyes glow as she sees Maria inside the ship, causing her face to contort in anger.

"That program! You... you're the one who copied my data! You damn doppelganger, I'll take care of this quick and easy!" Marina growled, letting her anger remove his focus from who she should to the AI who copied her form. 'I will murder your existence off this plane of reality!'

The Deus' eye focus on the Fraxinus, firing a barrage of beams from slots on its chests while raising one of its four arms to grab and crush the ship in.

"Deus is focused on us, what's your recommended tactic Maria!?” Minowa requested., Maria’s eyes glow as she analyzes the area

"Activate protect territory! Coordinates locked, move to quadrant A-28!” Maria ordered, shocking most of the crew.

"Protect territory at A-28, deploy!" Shiizaki replied.

Soon a glowing circle appeared and every shot that hit the Fraxinus failed to do any damage. The arm was still coming at them though.

"Now, activate territory fields, focus all propulsion on the right side! Push all rotary motors to maximum and disable inertia stabilizers for 6 seconds! After that, restore functions to normal and fire the Mystletainn! Vice-Commander, I think you know where I want you aiming.” Maria replied, Kannazuki smirked as he put his headphones on.

"Now we're talking baby!" Kannazuki shouted.

A few territory fields form, and the Fraxinus spins left, suddenly a roll to avoid the hand. Kannazuki sees the join area in question.

"Target lock confirmed." Reine replied, nodding to him. Kannazuki smirks and fires.

The Fraxinus fires all its side panels to shoot focused beams at the join, and the entire hand suddenly goes limp and sparks to Marina's surprise. Her eyes shaking at the sight.

"This is... how can it..." Marina growled as she saw the ship's schematics and was shocked. "These blueprints, they're... isn't this our tech! How is this possible!?”

As Marina panicked, Marina found a vulnerability in the Deus' systems and she quickly peeked in to see it. Finding a hidden secret only her programming could recognize upon seeing and gasped.

"Reine, Kannazuki, I need you to take over. I found something I need to verify." Maria replied, soon vanishing from the Fraxinus' systems.

"I hope what your checking is good news." Reine told herself, wanting to be hopeful for one.
"Fire blasters! Deploy lock territory!" Jessica shouted as she blasted the Scarlet Licorice's lasers at Mana, who in return quickly shifted out of the way as she avoided the territory fields being used to try trapping her in place. Jessica screamed loudly. "Why... why can't beat a little girl like you!?!"

"Because you're too naive!" Mana shouted, soon noticing her timer was running out. "The White Licorice will vanish any moment now. What can I... wait, maybe I can use that to my advantage. I have to time this just right!"

Mana boosts herself at Jessica using the White Licorice's boosters, making the torturous Adeptus 3 cackle.

"I'm naive? Look in a mirror, you got in a hurry to win and left yourself sloppy!" Jessica declared, soon focusing everything before a combined attack. Mana focused on her timer as it hit the last few seconds and then... the White Licorice vanished and Mana gasped as she was flung at Jessica and wide open. "Now die, Mana Taka-"

Mana suddenly smirked, and Jessica gasped as she coughed up some blood. She saw Mana's sword extend through her spirit power, cutting through her side and causing the Scarlet Licorice to malfunction and fall off.

"No... this isn't possible, it's not." Jessica mumbled before she soon fell to the ground unconscious, her CR-Unit being the only thing keeping herself from dying due to the height as it teleported her back to Arubi Island. Mana panted before she fell back, Ryouko flew over to catch her. The AST captain smiled at her.

"You did a good job soldier." Ryouko praised.

The other Adeptus members all flew for a sneak attack, but at that moment, Mikie turned visible and slashed her dagger claws to surprise them. Katie focused at them and shoot them all, causing them to fall as special lock territories with a heavy amount of weight formed around them.

"Damn you Ratatoskr!" Adeptus 4 screamed as fell to the ground with the other 8 members, teleporting back from the impact of striking the ground as well.

"Nice one Katie!" Mikie cheered, high five the AST's rookie sniper. Cecile, Leonora and Ashley stare at the two and Mana and smirk a bit.

"We might just have competition one day." Cecile joked, making the other two laugh.

"HALVANHELEV!"

Tohka swung the giant sword down heavily, slashing at the Deus' multiple times as she cuts through the machine's near-unbreakable armor, but still doing some damage to it and shaking its focus trying to deal with the Fraxinus, Shido, herself and the other Spirits at the same time.

"Just a little more!" Tohka yelled, seeing the Halvanhelev beginning to flash red, indicating it was nearing its critical state for her plan to discharge it in the spot she had slashed constantly. "We can... we can do this!"

"We've got your back Tohka!" Ai's voice spoke through the Taurus. The bull like vehicle catapulted into the air and rocketed forward, its body and horns spinning as it drills into one side.

"Yeah, bring in on" Mai shouted through the Scorpio.
"We're fighting for our home too!" Mii yelled through the Leo.

The Scorpio fired its tail harpoon soon stabbing a focal point and discharging a sonic frequency into the area, making the one spoke begin to smoke heavily. The Leo soon spun before its 'claws stretched out and slammed into the Deus' leg like a hammer, causing it to stop moving as it tipped back, but barely enough to do anything but briefly stop it.

"MEGIDDO!"
"SIRYON!"

Kotori screamed as she blasted her beam of fire, and Yoshino 'wearing' Zadkiel puts her arms together to fire an ice cyclone. The fire and ice combined pushed Deus back a few feet, and the element left traces that locked into Tohka's and the Scorpio's attacks.

"Kadour - Sword of Light!" Origami screamed, sending the Metatron pillars forward as they rushed at Deus, firing their beams of light at the Deus before stabbing it and leaving more damage. "Keep going, no matter how little the damage... any hit we land is important!"

"That's right! Now, go Zafkiel!" Kurumi shouted, blasting two streams of darkness that swirled and into the chest area again, soon spreading to lock its movements.

Mayuri screamed as she unleashed all her lightning as a beam, striking the Deus' body with it but barely doing anything. Mayuri's aura flickers away as her powers start running lower, soon making her lock as they empty.

"Dang it... I don't have any more power..." Mayuri pants.

"No worries, here's some new juice!" Hiroto called out through the Gemini. Mayuri suddenly felt electricity being zapped at her, and she turned to see the pillars on the Gemini creating and discharging lightning at her. "I'll keep you charged!"

Mayuri smiles as her power comes back and she another beam at the Deus. Tohka struck again and soon saw Halvanhelev go red.

"Yes!" Tohka cheered, soon she noticed the Deus get its attention briefly away from the Fraxinus to look at her.

"Not so fast!" Marina cackled, firing every weapon at her.

Tohka stared in fear, un-moving as the deadly blast neared her, she closed her eyes as she expected to be severely hurt or even killed.

"Utopia Barrier!"

Suddenly an umbrella shaped shield took the attacks and then spun before reflecting them all back. Marina gasped in horror.

"When could she do that?" Marina muttered to herself before the attack hit, making her fall on her back as it struck the Deus' eyes and rendering her visual aid's sight to 20%. She adjusted some settings to restore vision slightly. "Ratatoskr... you're all no different from a swarm of annoying flies!"

Rio smiles at Tohka, and she smiles back.

"Now Tohka, Shido and I will finish the rest afterwards! Rio, cover me!" Rinne ordered, both
"Hallo... discharge!" Tohka screamed loudly, and soon her Angel's form explodes in the crack it embedded itself in. Tohka was flung back with Halvanhelev reverted back into Sandalphon.

[Master, I think it worked! Look!]

Tohka did, and gasped as she saw the chest area of the Deus with some noticeable holes and smoke coming out.

"Alright, now it's time to-" Shido began, soon hearing Westcott laugh loudly.

"You think you've won! Well, that's where you've made a grave mistake! The Cassiopeia's link is complete, and now... Marina!" Westcott shouted.

Marina soon noticed a spot on the orb she was standing before glow, and taps it with an evil grin. Suddenly... the Deus glows a bright golden color as all of the damage done to it was negated instantly to everyone's horror.

Moments after, a huge wave of energy pushes everyone back, knocking them to the ground or tripping the vehicles, the Sagittarius and Sleipnir escape, catching everyone who fell, while Mayuri and Rio combined their power to make a shield to protect those they couldn't reach in time.

" Hang on everyone!" Tamae shouted as she caught people in the car.

"Dang it... Isaac Westcott, what is he doing exactly?" Mildred wondered, now terrified as she saw the power the machine emitted.

Shido looked up weakly, Rinne soon feeling intense rage at the sight.

"No! You bastard, all those scum bags you killed... it was a mockery to the fact what seemed like an act to better the world was giving you the power to ruin it like this!" Rinne declared, Shido feeling her anger in him.

"Best of all is Marina will let it recycle endlessly! Ten years of power, and not once will I waste any of it!" Westcott cackled victoriously, everyone staring in horror. "Marina... do it now, show them true despair."

"Of course father." Marina said as she grinned wickedly. In a matter of seconds, the Deus' face shifted and its optical units stretched out, glowing an intense dark red as a powerful beam charges... aimed at Tenguu City! "10 seconds until Tenguu City's destruction by the Diabolus Cannon."

"NO!" Shido screamed in horror, everyone's eyes widened at what might just be the end of the city.

"It's too late, this is the power of survival of the fittest! I am at the top of this law of the jungle!" Westcott declared, his ugly mug smirking wickedly through the clock face. "And now, the world will submit to me forever!"

Inside the Deus, Marina was about to finished the countdown.

"Three, two, one." Marina was suddenly cut off as she heard the sound of something being cut, she stared to see that it was... her control orb before her. Maria suddenly smiled as she waved, Marina having not even seen her as she gloated with Westcott at their 'assured' victory. "No! How, how did you know!?
"You told me, not a good idea to get so angry you leave an opening. Especially one that shows the entire Deus' support for its full powers, maximized controls and connection to Cassiopeia are stored in the crystal I just broke." Maria giggled, Marina's eyes shook before she growled.

"You stupid defective little-" Marina began, however she suddenly felt odd. "Wait... no, don't disconnect me-"

Marina was ejected from the Deus' systems as it could no longer contain her, Maria smiled and vanished shortly afterwards as she was qualified for the forced ejection.

Back in the Fraxinus, everyone sees Maria return to her hologram projector.

"Maria, what you were doing... did you get the result you were looking for?" Reine asked, her hand shaking at the possible news. Maria turned and then smiled.

"It did, I just crippled the Deus." Maria replied and giggled, surprising the whole crew. "Take care of the rest Shido."

Right as the Deus was about to fire, its optical units suddenly explode, to everyone's surprise yet joy and Westcott's complete horror. Not just that, but suddenly all the healed damage returned as the Deus suddenly exploded in multiple places.

"No, how is this possible! Explain this Marina!" Westcott demanded, but soon got no response to his surprise. "Marina? Wait... no, she's been disconnected. That's not possible! She was in the systems, there's no way anyone could have gotten in unless they had some kind of twin-"

Westcott suddenly felt a burst of energy force the Cassiopeia to disconnect from the Deus.

"No... no, no, no! Why... this isn't supposed to happen!" Westcott growled, soon making the Cassiopeia glow brightly. "If that's the case, then I'll kill all of you damn Spirits! Even if I have to waste an entire year of the power I gained using [Nightmare]! That way I have a victory, that means you die again [Ruler]!"

Cassiopeia changed into its battle form, soon rushing forward and preparing to attack Shido. Right as it tried, Tohka parried his blow and knocked him away with a mighty swing of Sandalphon.

"Your time is over, before it ever began!" Tohka declared loudly, the other Spirits minus Rio and Mayuri gathering around Shido.

"Alright Shido, let's steal the power of the Cassiopeia! If he'll only use it for evil, then I'll use it for the most noble cause I can with the amount of power stored within that machine!" Rinne declared, and Shido nodded.

"You've got it! Shido exclaimed in agreement, soon looking at his girls who all look back at him.

"Now let's end this, the power of our unity! Of our bond!"

"Law of the jungle? He razed them into mere forests when he caused the first Spacequake and shredded that law! Survival of the fittest? He still needs minions to do his jobs, he's not even fit or surviving! He's running!" Rinne said, mocking Westcott heavily.

"And now... right now, the seven of us are gonna show him that fighting alone under his condition its dog eats dog is what has made him turn into the weak one!"
"HERE WE GO!" Shido and the Spirits said in unison.

Westcott roars in retaliation, rushing at the group, Tohka rushes ahead to his surprise and slashes into the Cassiopeia's machine body. He was flung far away, and Tohka rushed after him and kept slashing over and over. Soon she stopped and pulled the sword back.

"This is for separating me and Shido and costing me my memories!" Tohka screamed as she thrust forward and pierced into the clock's skin.

"Augh!" Westcott screamed, feeling the pain transfer to his real body.

Soon, the Cassiopeia was fired at by a beam of light right where Tohka hit, and soon he was flung around like a pinball as Origami angrily shouted, making Metatron's pillars fire and mover around viciously before she moves one pillar by her arm as Westcott neared her.

"This is for the chain of events your actions caused that took my parents' lives away!" Origami screamed, throwing her first forward as the pillar of Metatron near it fired at the same time, Origami's fist smashing the Cassiopeia's left arm hard before the beam breaks it off.

"The pain... it burns!" Westcott shouted, for once not able to enjoy pain he felt inflicted on him.

Soon Zadkiel blasts a stream of ice at the Cassiopeia, smashing it into the Deus' body with extreme force, Yoshino showing a rare occurrence of an angry face from her. Yoshinon herself having her one eye glow for emphasis.

"This is for making unable to trust people, for making me always feel scared!" Yoshino screamed, albeit in a softer quieter tone than the others. "And for making me attack innocent people I kept thinking would hurt Yoshinon whenever she cried!"

Zadkiel soon blasts pressured water that tosses Cassiopeia up into the air as if it was flung like a rag doll. Soon Zadkiel shakes before blasting steam, causing the Cassiopeia's armor to chip while melting through it.

"It's... too much!" Westcott yelled, barely able to move the Cassiopeia now.

Kotori roars loudly before spinning Camael so fast, the Cassiopeia was struck and simply spun as well rather than being flung away, each strike stronger and quicker than the previous had been.

"This is for killing Saya just for her powers, and for all the suffering you made her lingering consciousness feel!" Kotori screamed, raising Camael before slamming it down, the spinning Cassiopeia stopping its spin as its right arm was broken right off.

"This... won't..." Westcott grunted, trying to not give the satisfaction of showing them he was in pain.

Kurumi aimed Zafkiel and fired as many bullets as fast as she possibly could, the shots denting into the Cassiopeia and slightly juggling it as they it. Kurumi flying closer every second.

"This is for using me and filling my head with lies for the past decade, and for enjoying every second of the cruelty!" Kurumi screamed, soon slamming both guns of Zafkiel together before firing at point blank range, and shattering the Cassiopeia's legs, leaving only its torso and head left.

"I won't be defeated... you can't stop me!" Westcott exclaimed, now denying he had any chance to lose at all.
"Wrong, because we're about to right now!" Shido declared loudly, soon raising Uriel. "Now!"

Uriel charged a pink beam at its tip, soon aiming it at Westcott. Westcott saw it and simply laughed at Shido's actions.

"That attack? You're a fool boy, I survived it in flash and skin, there's no way metal would die to it! So go ahead, I'll survive the First Spirit's strongest attack again!" Westcott cackled, but Shido smirked. "Huh? Why are you smiling!?"

"My strongest? Oh no... I think you're mistaken. Shido, let's do this together." Rinne replied, smiling alongside Shido as he nods.

"SPIRIT POWER... UNITE!" Shido exclaimed.

Suddenly aside from Rio and Mayuri, the other Spirits all saw their Astral Dresses glow so brightly, they became their Sephira Crystals associated color.

"What is this?" Tohka asked, surprised yet in awe. Soon, purple spirit mana shot from her, and the others' glows did the same but in their respective colors, all of which rushed towards Uriel.

Once they did, Uriel's blade grew as five of the jagged edges stretched out, glowing with their colors. Soon the pink beam became a mix of the six colors and grew large, exponentially increasing its power for each Spirit! Westcott senses the power surge in the Angel's attack.

"W-what is this!?!" Westcott said, feeling true genuine fear he couldn't deny for the first time he could remember in his life.

"You didn't take my strongest attack, you took my weakest! See, I didn't create the Crystals from my power, they were stored within me from the start! I couldn't free them, and if I could, the Spirits born from them?" Rinne began, looking at the others.

"Each would unit with Uriel to increase its greatest ability's hidden power and achieve its true level! Don't you get it, by allowing me to free them and create more Spirits... you only made me stronger! That's why I made the gamble I did today, survival of the kindness has always overcome you Westcott!"

Westcott's eyes shake in horror, his efforts... aided the First Spirit!?

"No... this isn't possible!" Westcott gasped, the Cassiopeia's eyes shaking to represent his impossible levels of shock. Soon Shido grabs Uriel in both hands, looking at the girls, they all move to him.

"I told you Westcott, don't take from others if you don't want things taken! Now, you'll pay the price for it!" Rinne started before Shido finished it, the Spirit and him glowing as they pulled Uriel back.

"HARMONIC... CONVERGENCE!" They all shouted as one.

Westcott voice crackled as the strongest Angel slammed down on him, and pushing him into the Deus' body. After a few seconds, Uriel's attack finally cut the Cassiopeia in half, right through the head and eyes before the same happened to the Deus! As it did, Rinne's aura rushed and quickly took all the power he stole over the years.

'I regret I can't use it on the level I want, but with the power that is here... I can at least give it to those who worked so hard for us to get to this point.' Rinne thought, soon dispersing the energy throughout
the skies. 'This is my gift to you all.'

"NOOOOOO!" Westcott screamed as both the Deus and the Cassiopeia exploded! Everyone stared at the result before them, and Shido himself panted at the sight with his harem still holding Uriel with him.

"We... won, WE WON!" Tohka cheered, and soon everyone joined alongside with her as all the members of Ratatoskr celebrated their combined efforts as they achieved victory. Shido and his harem hugged each other close, right before Shido screamed and collapsed a bit.

"Shido, are you OK!?!" Tohka asked worriedly.

"Y-yeah... I'm fine, but I can barely even move my finger right now!" Shido smiled, making the girls all sigh in relief before resuming their group hug.

Back at the Arubi Island base, Ellen suddenly hears Westcott scream, and soon rushes to the room he was in as he suddenly falls off the link chair.

"Ike!?" Ellen said worried, soon Westcott looks at her, his eyes hidden.

"Get the medical realizer, my body, my eyes, everything... they all burn!" Westcott screamed, looking up to show Ellen his eyes were stained red and he had cuts almost everywhere.

She gasped before running out, leaving a shaking Westcott where he was.

"That... Shido Takamiya, ruined everything!" Westcott growled, but then suddenly realized something about him wielding Uriel. "Wait a second..."

Westcott gasped as he remembered it, the First Spirit said his and Mana's names after he defeated her. The way she spoke was like...

"A mother! Of course, that woman is his damn mother, he can do what he does because he's half Spirit!" Westcott said, cackling with new vigor. "I shouldn't focus on the Spirits he's already quelled anymore, I think I need a test... because I think he's the one I should pay attention to for my plans."

Westcott laughs again, a new plan being born in his mind.

Back at the Ratatoskr base, everyone was getting healed or treated from the battle with even Rio and Mayuri present this time, and as usual... the whole city was unaware of what really happened. Shido was resting on a bed as Reine examined him, Shido finally being able to move a bit again.

"Good news, nothing serious. It seems that Rinne's power just overloads your body. I recommend only using this as a last resort in the future." Reine suggested, and Shido nodded while chuckling a bit. "To think all along, Mio and Rinne were one and the same... I'm shocked, but glad she's alive."

Maria soon appears by a hologram.

"Rinne, I've set up a hologram frequency that you can use to talk to us through your mana. I think everyone would like to be introduced to you." Maria replied.

"Thank you Maria." Rinne replied, giving an unseen smile.

Soon on the screen, everyone turns to see Rinne' face and they show surprise as the beauty it had.
"Hello everyone. I am Rinne Sonogami, the First Spirit, or [Ruler] by your code name system. I thank you all for the help you gave me during my time as Mio, and to Kurumi who helped me remember who I was." Rinne smiled, making the Shadow Spirit blush.

"Most of all... Shido, Mana. You don't know how long I've waited for this day. I waited, waited so long for it."

Everyone saw Rinne cry to their sudden surprise.

"Huh? What do you mean, why are you crying like that? What day?" Mana asked, Rinne looked at her.

"Shido, Mana... I'm crying because I finally got to reunite with my children. Your mother, has finally come home!" Rinne answered, still crying tears.

At that sudden claim, everyone but Rio stared in shock and went silent, Shido and Mana all opened their mouths in shock... and Mana suddenly cries.

"You're... our mom?"

Rio suddenly hugs Mana, surprising her.

"Mama, big brother, big sis! All of you are reunited, all of you and Rio are family again!" Rio smiled, and Reine suddenly sits on a chair.

"T-they're your... oh my god! Their powers and all their genes coming from my brother, it's no wonder! They're Half-Spirit!" Reine breathed, holding her head in shock.

Shido's eyes shook before he teared up.

"...I believe you, I can feel it. Your power, it was like it was protecting me like a mother's embrace... Mom!" Shido cried, and soon everyone began tearing up a bit.

"Shido, I'm..." Tohka sniffled, wiping her eyes. "I'm so happy for you."

Rinne smiled and clears her tears.

"I may have no physical form right now, but... when you can save all the Spirits, I can finally return. So don't give up. You have a reason now to. For now..." Reine stated, soon suddenly looking drowsy. "I need to take a nap."

Soon everyone face faulted to Rinne's surprise.

"Well, that's a way to ruin the moment and end the conversation by accident." Maria chuckled while sweat dropping. Right after that, Kannazuki suddenly ran into the room, looking in a panic.

"C-Commander! Something's happened, I was looking at some readings a-and..."

"Kannazuki. Please stop, then breath, then continue." Reine asked.

Kannazuki nods and does just that.

"A bunch of spirit readings came up before suddenly changing into normal humans! Dozens of them, one's even near here!" Kannazuki claimed, surprising everyone.

"Wow, it worked faster than I thought." Rinne answered, confusing everyone as a result.
"That power I stole from the Cassiopeia? I used it to create a miracle, it wasn't enough to be at the level I truly want, nothing eve will be, but... I gave a few brave people a second chance."

After hearing that, Kurumi suddenly feels something familiar. She gasps as she turned, and soon got up and began running outside.

"Kurumi?" Shido called out, soon going after him as most of the others followed. Outside the city, Kurumi ran to a certain park and didn't slow down at all.

'This feeling, I know it! Can it really be?' Kurumi thought.

Soon Kurumi made it, and the others who had followed her all stopped alongside her, and then they saw it... a glowing mass of light soon formed into a girl with long brown hair that had three braids tied together around the back, and wearing a robe while fully barefoot. As she got up, everyone asked. Kurumi smiled and shed happy tears.

"Miracles do happen, my prayer was heard!" Kurumi cried, and soon the brown haired girl who stood up opened her eyes to reveal... blue orbs! Kotori gasped at the sight. "You came back... Saya!"

Everyone gasped as they realized who the girl was, the girl staring at herself.

"Wait a second... Kurumi? Kotori? Shido?" Saya stated to herself, gasping. "Wait, but if I'm seeing you, then does that mean I'm..."

Saya began to shed tears.

"I'm alive!" Saya cried, Kurumi ran at her and hugged her. Saya soon hugged back.

"I can't believe it... it really is a happy ending, incredible!" Shido shouted, tears in his eyes. Soon everyone gathered together into a group hug.

"That's right, I brought her and every past Sephira Crystal holder back to life. I don't think I'll ever be able to do this again. The Cassiopeia took nearly 20,000 lives... I can't revive the dead without too big a sacrifice." Rinne revealed, soon giving an unseen smile.

"But now, everyone who took the burden of a Spirit and lost their can now live them again."

Unknown to everyone, others around the world felt this energy.

In the skies above the ocean, two orange haired twins were fighting suddenly felt the ripple of Rinne's energy pass them, ending said fight suddenly.

"What the... this strange witchcraft, what necromancy is upon us!?" The first twin asked.

"Unease. This strange feeling, it overwhelms me, both in fear yet warmth." The second twin commented.

In a fancy looking mansion, a girl in a Rindouji uniform with indigo hair sipped tea, and soon she feels the ripple of Rinne's energy phase through her.

"Huh? What... what was that?" The indigo haired girl wondered.

She opened the window, looking outside for some explanation, but never found one.
A green haired girl with a witch hat on her head slept in some creepy Halloween themed location, the ripple of Rinne's energy suddenly woke her up as it neared her and caught her by surprise.

"Holy... that wasn't from my dream, it was real. What was it?" The girl wondered.

A silver-gray haired girl was in a studio, trying to draw a picture with no luck, as she tapped her pencil on her head... the ripple of Rinne's energy went by and nearly made her fall. She gasped.

"I don't believe it, that sign... she finally woke up." The silver-gray haired girl smiled.

She got up and looked out the window to see the shining blue sky.

"A future of hope's coming, now the hard part is all that's left in the way." The girl smiled, still staring at the sky.

Deep in outer space, a blonde haired girl was floating with closed eyes while curled in place, and soon the ripple of Rinne's energy reached her and made her open her eyes.

"...What was that power?" The blonde haired girl wondered.

Soon she just went back to her position and closed her eyes once more, not caring that much.

After learning of Saya's revival, the members of Ratatoskr welcomed her, and soon had the two go and meet their parents who gave them a happy reunion. While that was happening, Shido, Mana and the other Spirits handed Rio and Mayuri bags as they prepared to head off from the viewpoint area.

"You sure you need to go?" Shido asked, and saw Rio nod.

"Rio still has a mission for Mama to complete. When Rio completes that mission, Rio will come back and we can be family again." Rio said with a smile.

Mayuri puts her fist out.

"I'll make sure to keep an eye on her, we'll make sure the remaining five Spirits out there stay safe until you find them. Good luck you guys." Mayuri replied, Shido returned the fist... and then suddenly the others gasped as Mayuri and Rio both give him a quick kiss. It didn't seal their powers though, so they both seemed to just do it for no reason.

"By everyone!" Rio waved as she and Mayuri began flying off.

Everyone waved goodbye as Mayuri and Rio soon vanished as a pink and brown comet of light. As they did, Mana looks at her brother and giggles at his reaction to their double kiss.

"Our little sister huh? She's pretty amazing, so... what's next?" Mana asked.

"I don't know, but whatever it is, we'll be ready to go!" Shido smiled, soon the other Spirits all get close to him.

"I think this is what's next Shido, you owe us you know." Tohka replied, and suddenly Shido sweated as all five leaned to kiss him, and soon he falls back down the nearby stares as everyone watches and then run after him.
This is far from the ending, but... I know Shido and mana are in good hands. Together... we'll all prevail and stop Westcott for good.' Rinne thought, her unseen ethereal form smiling at the sky.

Shido watched the night sky along with Tohka, holding her hand as they stood on the viewpoint together.

"Tohka, I didn't get a chance to say this before now, but... I'm glad you're finally back in my life. Even if I didn't remember at first, it felt so empty not having you by my side for all those years we were apart." Shido replied, making Tohka turn to him.

"I'm the one who should be thanking you for that, I had fallen to despair but you saved me twice, no... three times over. Me, Yoshino, Kurumi, Kotori and Origami, we all responded to your feelings. I hope the other five Spirit will do the same the day you save them too." Tohka smiled, making Shido smile in return.

"Though for this moment, let me be selfish and keep you to myself. Even if we share you I'd like to have a moment were you're mine alone."

Shido blinks before chuckling a bit, hugging her close.

"Sure thing, there's nothing wrong with being a little selfish every once in a while." Shido replied.

The two stared at each other, and soon prepared to kiss each other... only for Yoshinon to suddenly pop up between them, without Yoshino somehow, and make them kiss the puppet to Shido's surprise and Tohka's horror.

"Aw, that's sweet. But I'm not into girls Tohka. Yoshinon giggled, while Tohka shook a bit in response.

"NO FAIR! YOSHINON, GIVE ME BACK THAT KISS!" Tohka shouted.

Yoshino shrieked in fear as Tohka began chasing her, while Yoshinon simply laughed at what she caused.

DATE A RE:LIVE, SEASON 1 - END

That's right! The major twist I mentioned was... I had ALWAYS planned to revive Saya at the end of the season! I didn't hint it, but I was gonna do it! Also, what Rinne said about her revival trick being a one-time thing? She's telling the truth, she revived lives in the double digits with energy made from Westcott absorbing people in the 5-digit zone. The cost to revive the dead is too big.

Congrats Ratatoskr! You just took down something like a God in a sense, and Shido and Mana finally learn that Rinne is their mother, after not knowing their family for so long it's nice to finally meet her and learn she can be brought back. I hope you like the cameo the remaining Spirits made, and for Westcott? Well, seems like he's interested in Shido now, not good... 0_0

Also, Marina's learned about Maria finally, and now that she knows that program she messed with a long time ago has become an AI that ruined the entire plan at the end... well, Maria can't be Ratatoskr's secret weapon any more. At the very least, she's the reason everyone
made it out alive by spotting the fatal weakness of the Deus that no one else saw.

Well... I can't believe I'm finally saying this, but Season 1 is over! Thank you all for the wonderful journey, and this journey will continue when Season 2 finally starts. For now, the story will take a short break, I have a few other stories projects I need to start up on, one being Date AST Re:Strike. Oh yeah, just remember that when Ch 23 comes, it will be an adaption of Rinne's route in Rinne Utopia, Season 2 doesn't start until after that ends.

Thanks for reading all of Season 1 everybody, stay awesome out there! ^^

-Rinne Sonogami, Code Name: [Ruler]-

Angel: Uriel - Uriel is a one-handed sword similar to Sandalphon, but with jagged edges that give the blade the shape of a tree or the branch of a tree and ten gems representing the colors of the other ten Sephira Crystals, reflecting its connection with or even being the physical representation of the Sephiroth. According to Rinne, Uriel isn't that different from Sandalphon, the only major alteration between them is the type of swords they are and the Uriel's ability to borrow the elemental powers of the other ten angels by lighting up the respective colored gem on the blade.

- Alternate Form: Harmonic Convergence - The ultimate attack of Rinne Sonogami, by combining the power of the other Spirits, Uriel's jagged blade edges extend and using the other Spirits' power, amplify one another exponentially. After using it however, Rinne can't use it again until an hour passes by. When used against Westcott 30 years ago, he believed he survived the attack at its strongest, but Rinne states that it was actually at its weakest because the Sephira Crystals were inside her at the time.

- Powers: As the original Spirit, Rinne's powers compared to any other Spirit are unmatched. A testament to her strength is that if Rinne has enough power, she can actually revive someone who's died no matter how long ago they were killed, Rinne does state the cost to revive a live is equal to many more and that makes such a power have little use. For reasons unknown, Rinne formed the Sephira Crystals within her not of her own powers, creating a bond between her and them that strengthens them all. Rinne's main weakness is her powers are all offensive based, and she admits to only have her Astral Dress for defense due to that overwhelming strength.

Risk Factors: SSS

Spacequake: SSS

Spirit's Astral Dress: SSS

Angel Rank: SSS

Strength: 280

Consistency: 240

Spiritual Power: 300
Agility: 250
Intelligence: 260

-Spirit Bond Levels-
Tohka - 84%
Origami - 78%
Yoshino - 71%
Kotori - 79%
Kurumi - 67%
Man! It's good to be back in this story, admittedly the hiatus didn't go the way I had planned, I wanted to get some of my side stories, such as the Kotori story in the Date Another Origin series. *shrugs* Eh, I guess I'll just start it when it finally comes to me. Guess a writer's just gotta know when their ready, it did take me a bit longer than I expected to get Date A Re:Live - Encore's first story done.

Well, I hope you like things big, because now it's time for one of the biggest parts of this story. The Rinne arc, or more specifically... the first "movie" of Date A Re:Live's story line! Unlike most of the arcs, I'm keeping true to the name because Utopia actually works to a degree, that and I really don't feel like using a different word in this case because it's a "movie". Why am I calling it that? Well, if you've known me long enough, I like being a little bit dramatic with my fanfic definitions, freedom to a writer after all :3

Rinne's arc is special, while we get another big event that involves Rinne, you'll finally get to see something I've been wanting to have the fanfic show for a while now... we're going to get to see the Spirit Dimension! That's right, this is also gonna show everyone the story of how Rinne met and fell in love with Shido and Mana's father, Seigo Takamiya! Also, it's going to answer how Shido can seal spirits, but why Mana doesn't have this same ability. The most important thing you should all know for this this part of the story? Simple... grab your tissues.

I think anyone who's seen Rinne's path in the Rinne Utopia game know this arc is gonna bring a few tears, as for how it's actually gonna end? That's a secret until it happens, but you'll probably see it quickly, Kurumi's arc likely won't face any competition lengthwise unless it's a two volume arc adaption, or the movie versions of Rio Reincarnation and the Mayuri Judgment movie, this movie's only based on the Rinne route rather than the entire game after all.

I can say as this arc will be treated like a movie, the chapters will be a lot longer than usual to give that movie feel. In all the arcs before now, I only told a story, but this movie? It's going to clear every secret the first season has left lingering, while I've given you the answers, you haven't truly seen the roots to everything.

Most of all? This arc has a very powerful feeling behind it, because the emotion of this arc is... Loneliness, and it will show because unlike the upbeat feeling the rest of Season 1 had, this arc is going to have a depressing atmosphere. This time, I'm writing a story arc with the intent of making you feel that atmosphere and truly understanding the power behind it.

Also, as a quick reminder. Once the movie chapters are done, the story will be on pause, but not as a hiatus. It's simply because the next chronological part of the series will be in a different story, the fabled Date AST Re:Strike story that'll finish the bridge between Seasons 1 and 2.

Phew! Man, I said a lot, so now that I'm done... let me show you all Kurumi's data sheet for her purified form and then we can get started! ^^
- Kurumi Tokisaki (Purified State), Code Name: [Nightmare] -

Angel: Zafkiel, the "Emperor of Shadowed Time" - In its purified form, Zafkiel is a pair of black guns with a more otherworldly appearance like its fellow Angels, one being longer and the other shorter with the addition of small spherical gems on the sides that show clocks. Zafkiel's time manipulation powers all have a maximum of a one hour effect range. While Zafkiel does have some alternate forms, some of them are just its special attacks.

- Alternate Form: Andromeda - By activating the clocks on both Zafkiel guns, Kurumi can manipulate the 4th dimension and bend time. Unlike her corrupted state, Kurumi's only able to accelerate, slow, stop and rewind time, recreate a fallen clone and link her mind to it, get a vision of the future, and see past memories. These abilities are assigned to all the numbers on Zafkiel's clock gems except III, VI, IX and XII in the mentioned order.

- Alternate Form: Bahamut - By combining both guns together, Kurumi transforms Zafkiel into a sniper rifle which she can use to fire what she claims are fragmentation of her shadow as silhouettes to attack a specific area. These fragments of her shadows aren't her clones as they disappear upon making collision with anything, or evaporating after a while of hitting nothing.

- Alternate Form: Carnwennan - Zafkiel's body shifts out and light blue energy comes out, taking a spiked form of sorts. As a result, Zafkiel transforms into something like a pair of daggers for close combat situations (A/N: Think of Cross Mirrage's Dagger mode from Nanoha StrikerS). Kurumi states this is her least used form of Zafkiel, due to her powers' nature preferring to avoid such kind of combat.

- Alternate Form: Nibellcole - Summons one to four powerful clones of Kurumi assigned to the remaining four numbers not used by Andromeda. Each clone has its own personality, and to Kurumi's embarrassment they all take the form of a time Kurumi was a big anime fan and cosplayed as such (These are the Kurumi clones showcased on the Kurumi Valentine SS illustration). The clones are named Shincho, Masayoshi (Yoshi for short), Kinshu and Yuuki after the Four Cardinal virtues' kanji.

- Alternate Form: Astra - Kurumi's shadow takes the form of a spiky black sun, and soon a light blue arrow forms, beginning a countdown like a clock until it "reaches midnight" for a supercharged gunshot. Kurumi is left vulnerable while using this attack and if attacked, will have to redo the entire countdown from the start. As such, she often calls out the Nibellcole clones or has others aid her while she charges it.

- Powers: With her powers purified, Kurumi's shadow element finally actually acts as her primary element with her time powers being the more obscure, Kurumi even admitted she'd rather only use them when necessary because she doesn't like having to shoot herself to use most of them. Her City of Devouring Time is changed into the City of Silenced Shadow, which simply knocks out people under the same conditions but without sapping their life force. Some of Kurumi's new shadow abilities allow her to spy on multiple areas at once, hiding within another's shadow, making shadow tendrils to bind someone and turning herself invisible.

Risk Factors: S

Spacequake: C
Chapter 23, Movie Chapter: Rinne Utopia, Part 1

Rinne Sonogami's astral form sat on top of the Takamiya household, staring at the horizon as the sunrise began to come into view of Tenguu City as Rinne's mouth quivered and she becomes misty eyed.

"...It's beautiful, just like you told me. I just wish I had gotten to see one with you." Rinne said, a tear streaming down her face.

[They say a story's basis comes from the origin that it all begins, not necessarily the start, but what walls its intro to even be set into motion. Destiny and fate, dreams and reality, hope and despair, fear and courage... so many things opposing one another in combination to a chain of events that allow a story to begin. This isn't just fiction this applies to, but the story of life. I know the story of one man who became part of my story, a man I loved and I met by chance. His name was...]

~40 Years ago

On the grassy edge of a large cliff face that faced itself towards a large and deep cannon, a man with blue hair, brown eyes, a beauty mark under his right eye, and a muscular physique as he wore travelling clothes with a large backpack full of exploration gear on his back. He gave a smile as he held a hand by his eyes to look ahead at the scenery without the sunlight impeding his view.

[...Seigo Takamiya!]

"So, this is it, the Valley of Enigmas. I can't believe I've finally made it here. A land full of uncharted mysteries." Seigo told himself, feeling really excited at the area he would be exploring. "Kinda surprising though, based on what the boss told me, I expected to have noticed something odd or scary here."

Seigo looks behind him at the sky, remembering the event that brought him here.

-Flashback Start-

Seigo walked into a small office that belonged to the boss of the agency he worked for, once he came in he stood in place and waited. The boss in question soon noticed he had come in, and smirked at the fact he chose to wait for him to speak on his terms rather than force the conversation to start.
"You're quite interesting Seigo Takamiya, have I ever told you that?" The man replied, soon turning to reveal a tall man wearing a formal jet black suit. His hair a vivid brown color, and his eyes being blue in color. With the familiarity of his suit, you might think he was a certain man, but he couldn't be... could he?

"Not really sir, but considering this is professional work I don't really mind. We're all just doing our jobs Mr. Westcott." Seigo replied, making Westcott chuckle.

...It was, while he was younger and lacking the whitened hair and lifeless eyes he was known for in the present, this brown haired man was the same madman who ran the DEM in the present.

"So why did you need me exactly boss? It seems like this is a serious job if you needed me directly, or at least something not exactly meant to be public." Seigo chuckled, sweat dropping oddly at his latter suggestion. Westcott quickly stood up and walked near one of his picture frames, getting Seigo's attention.

"Tell me something Seigo, if you defined how much we've seen if the world by the smallest of areas that can even slip between the cracks of maps. Just how much of it do you believe we've honestly explored as of only the 21st century's second decade?" Westcott inquired.

"Well... if I were to be honest, including ancient civilizations and other mysteries we don't fully understand yet. I'd say it would range between 60 to 70 percent?" Seigo guessed, and Westcott clapped at that at that. "So that's a good estimate?"

Westcott chuckled.

"Quite, most are too generous and have told me 80% in the past. That is far from correct for many reasons. However... this is the one that I believe matters most." Westcott answered, soon moving the picture frame like opening a door. Behind it, Westcott revealed a section of a map deep in Seigo's home region of Japan.

"This Seigo is a spot of land that has been hidden from the public. Over a decade, at the beginning of this century, we found this spot of land due to the new technology we had created at the time. However, when there were people sent to explore it... nothing, the people who fell in never returned."

Seigo's eyes widened.

"There's something about this place we don't know anything about, it's the Bermuda Triangle all over again. The difference is none of the conditions or oddities are the issue we have here. Some of the latter disappearances have shown the ones we've lost are still present. We just lack the internet or connections to reach them." Westcott replied, soon walking up to Seigo directly.

"That is why I've called you here, we've considered sending another to try checking out with the best gear we have. Hopefully this time we'll get the answers we seek. One that may change the course of history for the better. Would you like to be the adventurer who's willing to risk it? You have every right to say no, I just need you to swear that you won't expose this to the public."

Seigo thought for a bit, looking at the uncharted land shown on the map before him.

'It's a whole area of this world no one understands, so many have vanished... yet this is what I wanted to see when I became an explorer. I'm gonna go see what this mystery is and when I do, I can't wait to tell Reine what I found when I have my next chance to visit.' Seigo thought, soon making a determined look on his face.
"Mr. Westcott, I'll accept your offer! I'll find out just what's hiding within that hidden land!"

"Very well then, you'll be flying there tomorrow, so get your things ready. After all... we'd like to try guaranteeing you as the first one to make it back." Westcott replied, smirking as he walked out of his office. 'That optimistic fool, he's annoying... but he might just be the one who gets the result I want.'

-End Flashback-

Seigo breathes and turns back with a wide open grin on his face.

"No time to consider that now, let's go take a look at this hidden land!" Seigo declared with vigor, soon readying his climb down as he hangs on tightly to the rope and slowly jumps down. "Let's see, so far I see..."

Right as he makes a certain step, suddenly the part of the rocky surface he touched suddenly collapsed, as did the area where his rope was connected. Making him suddenly gasp at the suddenly rock slide he got caught in.

"No!" Seigo shouted, he began falling towards the unseen chasm of the canyon before him. He twisted and turned as he dodged the rocks before him. "Damn it, I can't let it end like this! I have to make it back!"

The sight of his little sister, a young teenage girl with silvery hair that had a slight blue tint that she wore in a side ponytail entered his view, the illusion turning towards him with a smile on her face.

"Reine..."

Seigo soon began to black out, unaware of the flash that soon encompassed his entire body as he fell through a certain area of the chasm below. He had no idea what was about to happen to him, or how much it was going to change his life.

The sight of a sky that seemed like a permanent aurora filled the sky of a world that had energy suddenly flowing everywhere, at the slime shining clear water that glowed a bright pale blue, vibrant green fields and beautiful flowers that actually lit up filled the area.

Within this beautiful world, the sight of human like beings existed, only two things about them kept them from being identical to humans, their eyes which had whitened pupils compared to a Human's usual black, and the fact the clothing they wore all had physical light making them, and it shined brightly.

In one section of this world were the color purple was more prominent, the sight of a beautiful girl with long light pink hair, two long braids at a length that was approaching her legs, intense pink eyes that were almost red in color wearing a purple empress-like outfit with golden extensions on her shoulders and hips, and a decorated headdress with a golden emblem at the center resting on top of her head was seen playing some kind of instrument that wasn't human in origin.

"...And you'll always be in my heart." The girl sang, soon finishing her melody before standing up. As she did, a normal human woman carrying a basket of food walked by.

"Wow, that song was beautiful Rinne. Is that the one Robert taught you?" The woman asked, Rinne give a smile, though her eyes gave a saddened look so it was hard to tell which emotion she was genuinely showing.
"Oh, it wasn't anything special. It was just a song." Rinne replied, honestly not feeling she deserved the praise she got. Suddenly at that moment, the two noticed something glowing in the air. "That light, isn't it..."

"No way, did someone else visit that forsaken land!?!?" The woman gasped.

They both got their answer as that light spiraled wide and soon moved forward before twirling and changing into the falling form of Seigo, the man still completely unconscious as he began aiming towards the ground.

"Oh no, he's gonna smash head first!" The woman gasped.

At that moment Rinne took action and with inhumane speed, burst forward towards the area where Seigo was falling. What would seem like a vain effort to reach him by a human's view was shown to be no issue to this woman who managed to reach him large enough of an opening to spare.

"Oh thank god!" The woman sighed in relief, soon getting a bit closer to Rinne as she poked Seigo's cheek slightly, trying to nudge him away.

"Come one. You need to wake up already, show us your still alive." Rinne pleaded, hoping for a reaction.

Seigo soon grunted a bit, and he looked up as he slowly regained consciousness. Before him he saw a beautiful girl with pink hair and red eyes, he noticed her pupils were white rather than black unlike a normal human. Beside her he noticed an actual human woman.

"You woke up, thank goodness." The woman smiled, feeling relieved.

"Hey, who are you?" Rinne asked, Seigo looked around him and noticed the strange world he was in. You might have expected him to freak out, but Seigo's actual reaction?

"My name is Seigo, Seigo Takamiya. Who are you miss?" Seigo asked, surprising the girl a bit. He clearly noticed he wasn't in the world he had come to know, but he didn't even freak out. He answered her question without any hesitation whatsoever.

"My name is..." Rinne began, but once she took a good look at her outfit compared to his, she suddenly decided to help him to his feet briefly before she raised her hand.

Seigo gasped a bit as for a brief moment her outfit vanished into sparkles of light, but quickly reforming into a white t-shirt with a sleeveless beige colored sweater, a blue skirt, white socks and brown colored sneakers.

"...Rinne Sonogami, it's a pleasure to meet you Seigo." Rinne smiled, introducing herself, and one that clearly showed her being happy without any doubt. Rinne's human friend showed shock, she had never seen Rinne show such a... what was the word, definite expression before.

"Same to you Rinne." Seigo smiled, giving her a handshake to Rinne's surprise. She blushed a bit before pulling it away. Seigo blinked and then chuckled oddly. "Oops, guess that was a bit too much. Now that I've cleared that up, time for the elephant in the room... where am I?"

"You're in another world entirely. A land that exists in a plane beyond the one Humanity's always set foot on, this land is..." The woman began, and as she did, Seigo's attention extended to the rest of the realm he saw before him. A place just like Earth but even more beautiful. "...The Spirit Dimension!"

Seigo stared in silent shock, the truth of this mysterious disappearance to all who came to that
uncharted land. It was somehow connected to what ended up being a brand new world, and now he was here, a place that few humans had ever gotten to see.

"The Spirit Dimension... incredible!" Seigo gasped.

[And that was our first meeting, one that would forever change my life for both better and for worse.]

*Date A Utopia plays*

(Guitar strings strumming) The sight of Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori and Kurumi pass by before their Inverse Form appearances do the same.

Soon the sight of Earth comes into view before a fluctuation of spirit energy appears and opens a tunnel to another world. Various Spirits look forward and smile, the Sephira Crystals sparkling at ten various points in this world, the Spirit Dimension. Rinne herself smiling in the area where the Sandalphon Crystal was nearest as she hugs Seigo's arm close, making him smile back.

(Guitar solo wailing) The words "デート・ア・ライブ - DATE A RE:LIVE - Rinne Utopia" appear on the blackened screen, and soon a brief pause comes up before the colors invert showing a white screen with the same text now black.

(In a time where everything's spiraling back around... it's [Dead or Alive]!) Seigo Takamiya walked across a world of blue, each step causing a ripple as a brown haired Westcott grinned wickedly from behind before changing into his current appearance.

(An impending is lurking, and it overwhelms my eyes.) Rinne Sonogami stared at a cliff face on Earth, making a pray motion with her hands before looking up and giving a somber look to the side.

(This repeating pain we see across the horizon... it's [Dead or Alive]!) Shido and Mana are both seen running through the same blue world as children before tumbling into somersaults and appearing on Earth as teenagers. Suddenly stopping to look back and seeing neither Seigo or Rinne present.

(As I search for my earthly paradise!) A mosaic flies by, soon spinning before showing Rio landing near a tree with a blooming samsara she takes and holds close. Soon looking behind her as the wind blows, hinting a lock of pink hair.

(What is it I wish for from the bottom of my heart? Is it your happiness, or maybe... a repeat of my truth and lies?) A teenage Reine Murasame runs around until she notices Seigo before her, and soon sprints over towards him.

(If it is, then this endless twisted Utopia... never let it repeat itself again!) Reine's form ages until its current self as Seigo somberly reaches out, his body moving away and slowly disappearing as it does. Making Reine shed tears as he did.

(Distorted glass breaking sound) Soon the entire Spirit Dimension explodes, annihilating it and everything within it from the world. Rinne's eyes staring at the homeland's destruction as a bunch of power flows into her, and she falls towards Earth before dozens Spacequakes go off across its surface.

(We live in a false Eden! So as we encounter, let our emotions collide and fight!) A group of DEM wizards fly into view as Tohka standing in a crater holds Sandalphon tight and gives a mighty swing, creating a slash wave at them. At the same time, Origami flies through the incoming fire before using Metatron to fire beams of light at the ones firing at her.

(Let us make a foolish wish born of our ideals or dreams, and then... we'll save the
world!) Yoshino while riding on Zadkiel rushes by the DEM wizards as the area around her freezes, followed by Kotori who was riding on its back before jumping and swinging down Camael, sending waves of fire across the ground. Kurumi and her Nibellcole clones all rise out from the shadows and manipulating shadows at those who avoided the ice.

(Our glances look and the cross intentions! Facing it's dead or alive to reject walls blocking the prohibited Garden!) Shido joins in using Kurumi's powers in his Spirit Ascension, while Mana flies by wearing the Murakumo. Mayuri and Rio soon land to the sides of them, and all of them gasp as a large metal tree forms in the city's center.

(For you to be happy forever, that's my-) The nine of them all ready themselves as the tree's guardians all form and begin flying out to attack them and the DEM wizards in the area, while within the tree itself, an unconscious Rinne say before looking up with saddened eyes.

DATE A LIVE!

(Guitar instrumental) A green, two orange, indigo, silver gray and golden yellow silhouette all pass by the area, with Maria and Marina standing across the two sides, giving a kind smile and a wicked grin respectively.

(Heavy and fast guitar instrumental) Shido gives a determined look before his gold eyes close, opening to an intense pink red as he holds his hand up and summons Uriel and his hair grows longer and takes a pink tone as he takes on his Over-Limit Spirit Ascension and swings the strongest Angel forward, cutting into the tree from a distance.

Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori, Kurumi, Mana, Rio, Mayuri and Maria all free fall from the sky and towards the ground. Shido turned to see them, and soon reached out to grab Tohka's hand before the others grabbed hers in a chain link, and Shido flies forward with all of them rushing towards the tree, preparing for the scar eyed wizard before them as she gives a deranged smile.

It had been a few months since Seigo had found himself in the Spirit Dimension, and he had learned a few details about the realm since he had been dropped into it. First and most important, the world was made completely from energy and inhabited by a race of all female energy beings known as Spirits. Beings in Human myths such as Undines, Sylphs, and any similar being existed in this world in the form of Spirits who matched their abilities easily.

The world was also divided into ten sections, each one was a region that was influenced by the world's sacred treasures, the Sephira Crystals, gems that were stated to hold the souls of Angels that helped create the entire Spirit Dimension long ago. Each one represented the elements that made up that part of the world. The one he first came to the world in, and the one he had come to form a residence at.

The Spirits themselves also seemed to be linked towards their birth region, as most of those in the "Sandalphon" region had a small link to nature. Rinne herself was born in the Sandalphon region, but she was one of the occasional rarity that had powers not related to any of the Sephira Crystal influenced regions. Luckily, it didn't seem this lead to discrimination, it just made such Spirits feel like third wheels to their kind, but the few humans who had become trapped and set a life up in the world were much easier for them to relate to.

The humans themselves had been accepted into the Spirit's world, their kind being understanding over the fact they didn't intentionally come to their world, nor did they know how to return to their own. Currently, in the Metatron region, Seigo was writing down notes of what he was seeing and experiencing. He figured if he ever got home, he wanted his sister to know everything he saw, just how truly magnificent of a world he saw and wanted her to one day see for herself if she ever could.
"Hmm... I wonder how she's doing? Maybe Isamu are finally actually accepting their feelings, shared grieving would do that." Seigo chuckled, soon sighing a bit as he remembered his sister and best friend were the one thing this world was lacking in. "...I miss them, I just wish I had a way to go back there, but still visit here."

"...You're home, what's it like?"

Seigo blinked to see Rinne behind him, wearing her Astral Dress, apparently what the clothing that all Spirits wore was called. It was quite useful in Seigo's opinion, especially the ability to alter their appearance from its true form to suit any given situation. The Spirits were interesting creatures, they were powerful, but their kind was also fairly peaceful and hated conflict. It was what many Humans wished their society could one day be.

"Oh, hey Rinne. What do you want to know?" Seigo asked.

"Well... everything you can think of, the Humans who've come here tend to ignore their world because they don't want to think about what they can't return to until the day they hear there's a way back." Rinne replied, scratching her cheek a bit. Seigo blinks and then giggles, making Rinne blush. "W-why are you laughing!"

"I'm sorry, you just looked really cute when you asked me like that." Seigo replied, calming down a bit as Rinne blushed more.

"Well, let's see... there's all kinds of people, so many forms of life. Humans are ultimately small and weak creatures, especially compared to you all, but we work together and accomplish some big things. Some are good, some are bad, but we don't give up. I myself became an explorer to experience all these hidden wonders no matter the risk I'd face. To me, this world is a hidden wonder I was lucky to find."

Rinne's eyes sparkled a bit, the little bit she was hearing, just hearing a little bit about Humans had made her want to know even more. A lot of nearby spirits all looked, having never seen Rinne show such a powerful interest.

"Please, tell me more!" Rinne begged, and Seigo blinked before smiling and nodding. Continuing his stories.

[Just one story and the next thing I knew it, there was almost no moment I didn't want to know just what Humans were like. Seigo told me of their culture, their lives, their history and so much more. While Humanity wasn't perfect, not even us Spirits were, and in the end, it wasn't just the good in them that made me so interested... it was the potential that I could just sense from Seigo's words. I wanted nothing more to go and see his world. Maybe in the end, that's how that fateful day happened.]

Around a year and a half after coming to the Spirit Dimension, Seigo was seen sweating bullets as he tried to gather his courage for something. This wasn't like his world, he didn't have any of the things a guy like him would normally be in possession of by this moment... most of all by all means, the girl in question may look human, and may not be from a different planet... but she was technically an alien by human definition.

'Come on Seigo, you can do it! At least be man enough to do it and never regret you had a chance but blew it!' Seigo thought, soon gaining a focused and determined look before he walked up to a field area as Rinne had finished playing a song on her unknown instrument. As she finished, she noticed Seigo come up and blushed a bit before standing up and clearing her throat.
"Oh hey Seigo, do you need something?" Rinne asked, she noticed Seigo staring at her unusually silent to her worry. "...Seigo?"

"Can I get everyone's attention please!" Seigo shouted, getting every nearby human and Spirit's attention. Rinne's eyes widen as she noticed everyone's attention suddenly focus on the two of them. Seigo breathed before lightly punching himself in the face.

"...Rinne, you and I first met in a circumstance most wouldn't believe. I had fallen into this world from my own. I didn't know anything about it, or about you, nor did you about mine or myself, and you still saved me without questioning the choice. I got to know you, and you got to know me in all of that time."

"Seigo?" Rinne questioned, a bit confused at his words. To the humans spectating, they suddenly began to realize what Seigo was doing.

"No way, he's actually going to say it? And to a Spirit no less?" A human man questioned.

"A Spirit and a Human... is it possible? The only thing standing in the way of this is if she'll say no or yes." A human woman replied, making Rinne turn her head confused.

Seigo felt his entire body shake and his hand twitch, but he wouldn't falter here.

"Before I knew it, we've reached the here and now. I've gotten to know you so much that I've gotten to know something that neither us ever could have, I don't know how much you'll accept it, but I refuse to just think it can't happen. Even if it hurts me I'm going to say it!" Seigo said, blushing as he takes Rinne's hands close.

"...Rinne Sonogami, I love you! So... will you stay with me? Will you follow the journey I'll be walking, from here until the rest of our lives?"

Rinne's eyes suddenly widened at that declaration, did Seigo just say... he loved her?

"Seigo..." Rinne breathed.

All the spectators all gasped as they heard Seigo's confession, they were truly seeing what may be a once in a life time thing, to see a Human had his heart won by a Spirit. Rinne just stood there, thinking of all the time they had spent together, every story he heard from her, and all the times he had been there and the two of them helped each other out... the pink haired girl before him began tear up.

'Can it really be, do I... is it really possible that I've fallen in love with him after all this time?' Rinne thought, her misty eyes still having yet to shed their tears. It took her a moment until she recalled how they first met, at that moment... her answer became clear. 'It is, I don't know how... but he's made me fall in love with him!'

Everyone nearby continued to watch, wondering just what her answer would be, would she say no and keep the status quo everyone had come to know... or would everything change with the simple words of yes? The wait was short as Rinne smiled, her eyes finally shedding her tears, having now becoming those of happiness.

"...I will, of course I will Seigo!" Rinne answered, making everyone cheer happily. Seigo gasped before smiling. He soon hugged Rinne close and kissed her deeply, surprising the pink haired spirit as her face ends up becoming the same color, but soon kissing back as her tears kept flowing out.

[It was the happiest day of my life, this one woman had stolen my heart, and wouldn't have wanted it
any other way. After all... what happened next was a risk I chose to bear because it was the proof of your love. Not just that, it was a miracle born of both our worlds.]

It had been three years since Seigo had fallen into the Spirit Dimension, and based on what his phone (which somehow the Spirit Dimension at least had a way to restore the battery power of to his confusion) said, it was currently March 5th.

Right now, the date itself wasn't important, but what was happening on this day, inside a certain house, Rinne was seen screaming in pain as she laid on the ground and held Seigo's hand tightly. A human woman with some experience as a mid-wife was present as Rinne was about give birth to a baby boy, or a baby girl, the first Human/Spirit hybrid in the world.

"Hang on Rinne, don't give up!" Seigo shouted, terrified but trying to stay strong for his wife's sake.

And he had every reason to be scared to death right now, because Spirits were an all female race, the way they reproduced was quite different and represented their nature as energy beings. Rinne however? Even though no human who had fallen into the Spirit Dimension could officially have her and Seigo married, she wanted have proof of their love with a child.

However, she was told this could be very dangerous, Humans and Spirits were fundamentally different life forms, and there's a chance that trying to have the child might end up killing her... and she still chose to take the risk. After carrying the child for nine months, her body was finally starting to feel the clash of the two species' physiologies threatened to rip her apart, her own spirit power already violently flooding out of her.

Luckily for everyone, in a moment the signs it would work came.

"I see the head, your gonna do it Rinne! Push a little more!" The midwife shouted, and Rinne nodded as she screamed again, Seigo holding her hand tighter.

She soon gave an even mightier scream afterwards, and at that very moment... the aurora like sky glowed brighter than ever! Around the ten regions, the Spirits who guarded the Sephira Crystals all saw their region's respective gems shine brightly as if responding to the birth of this child.

"What is this feeling? It's as if... the horizon itself is welcoming a strange power!" The guardian of the Zafkiel region gasped, noticing the shadows gaining a gentle dim glow.

"This is incredible, I've never seen the Sephira Crystal resonate to anything before since the times of legend and myth!" The guardian of the Metatron region breathed, seeing the orbs of light spin around everyone like happy fireflies.

"Is it truly possible? Today is the day that child is being born, is this strange nostalgia connected to it!?!" The guardian of the Michael region questioned, seeing spatial fluxes that flung into the air like shooting stars.

Meanwhile across the other realms, children both Human and Spirit alike all show joy at the beautiful sights the world was suddenly experiencing. The guardian of the Haniel region soon laughed happily as she held the Haniel Crystal close.

"This is amazing, the child of the two worlds... to think it would have so much potential! We're witnessing a miracle, one that may just bring a new future for this world." The Haniel guardian smiled.

Soon back at the house, the aurora sky took on a lighter color, signifying it was daytime in the Spirit
Dimension, and after one last scream... Rinne's screams were silenced, she panted as the sound of crying was heard. Seigo smiled and began to tear up, the midwife gave him a smile.

"Congratulations, you have a healthy baby boy!" The midwife announced, handing the blue haired baby to his father. Seigo finally shed his tears as he looked at his son, he was still crying but seem calmer now that he was in the arms of one of his parents.

"Rinne... Look, he's finally here!" Seigo said, tears of joy in his eyes as he held a baby boy in his hand. Rinne's tired form turned to look, and a smile came as she shed her own tears and raised her hand, her fingers touching her son's hand before he grabs it, soon calming down as his cries quieted into small whimpers. "This is our son."

"I don't believe it..." Rinne cried happily, soon holding her new son as Seigo passed him over to her. "Our little boy, he's finally here. We all made it."

Seigo nodded happily.

"Now all he needs is a name, one that will carry all the hopes and dreams he's been born to carry out." Seigo replied, and after looking at him a bit longer. Rinne decided on the perfect name, one that represented his future dedication in the present.

"Welcome to the world... my little Shido." Rinne smiled, and the now newly christened Shido stopped crying and babbled a bit before opening his brown eyes and seeing his mother, he smiled happily as he reached out for her.

[It was such a happy time, falling in love with Seigo... the birth of my children Shido and Mana, even if we hadn't been officially married, even if our time was short... I can't ever make myself wish for it to change no matter how much I'd beg for it. I may not know what it means to actually be human like them, but... I know what it means to have a family through them. I intend to at least amend that, and heal the damage to the world, in honor of the one I came from.]

---Present Day---

Rinne takes another look at the sunset before standing up, she breathes before smiling.

"But that will change soon Seigo, any day now you and I will be reunited. I just need to wait for the confirmation I'm seeking. Then we can be a family again." Rinne replied, soon flying up high before diving into the ground and phasing through it as she landed into the Ratatoskr base. She looked to see Reine explaining to Shido what she had told Mana and Kotori, the other Spirits all listening.

"...and that's how eventually you were left in custody of Kotori's parents. While Mana may have forgiven me, if you don't have it in your heart to trust me after this, I won't blame you." Reine finished, making Rinne look as she waited to hear Shido's answer. Shido breathed before looking at her.

"...I get it." Shido replied, making Reine look at her in surprise. "Plus, you were doing what you thought was right based on the situation and conditions before you. What happened to 30 years affected so many, and you still stayed strong. Most of all, you still ended up looking out for us here, right?"

Reine gasped before tearing up and crying a bit.

"I'll never know what I did to deserve such a forgiving nephew and niece, but... thank you." Reine sniffled, smiling a bit. Saya blinked as she looked at Reine's closer having just noticed something.
"Uh... not to be off topic or drop a dead horse anywhere, but your dark spots are disappearing. Didn't you say you couldn't sleep? You finally fixing that or something?" Saya asked, making Reine suddenly blush a bit. "I already figured out that Rinne and Seigo never got to marry for that whole last name thing, but... your case is something else."

"Uh... my dark spots weren't caused by my inability to sleep." Reine replied, trying to dodge the question a bit. 'I can't admit that, it's too embarrassing!'

Rinne smirked, deciding to be a bit playful.

"She's right, it was due to constantly crying every night until Mana gave her some closure with what she told Reine." Rinne giggled, causing the Ratatoskr Commander to blush in embarrassment.

"RINNE!" Reine yelled, the First Spirit only giggled at her unofficial sister-in-law's reaction.

"Oh hey mom, where have you been?" Mana asked.

"Oh me? I was just watching the sunrise, been a while since I could actually feel the sun on my skin... well, at least the best an intangible body can." Rinne commented, sweat dropping a bit. "Hope that ends sooner than later."

Saya nodded.

'I agree because I want you to stop talking about your lack of a body. Its freaking annoying!' Saya thought, Kurumi sweat dropped as she noticed the vein that suddenly appeared on her forehead.

"Oh yeah, I got a question for you sis." Rinne said, suddenly freaking Reine out as she suddenly appeared beside her. "Have you heard anything about Isamu or Seigo's whereabouts yet? You've had to have heard something by now."

Everyone's eyes widened at the latter name, and while not knowing the former, it didn't take too much guessing to guess that was the name of Reine's deceased husband. Reine stared at her as if she was crazy.

"What? I used the revival wave on them too, I had two revives left by the time I brought Saya and all of the ex-Sephiroth host back to life so I used it on them. It was only fair, and you've had to get records on them anyways." Rinne explained, with Reine still fairly silent. "So, where's Kannazuki? He's the one who pretty much told us Saya came back."

"Then that means we'll get to meet Shido's father, I'm excited." Yoshino replied. Yoshino, who's body looked a bit wrinkly and withered since the hot spring trip, gave a shaky thumb's up. "Y-yeah, it... sounds like... it'll be exciting..."

Reine stayed silent before contacting Kannazuki.

'If this is true, then... I'll see Isamu again.' Reine thought before beginning her words. "Kannazuki, we need you to bring the records of all the people who suddenly revived due to Rinne's powers. There's something we need to check."

"I'm on my way now." Kannazuki replied.

Kannazuki soon comes in from a hallway with all of the holo-records to Saya's surprise.

"That took him just a few seconds!" Saya exclaimed, Kannazuki laying all the records across the nearest table.
Alright, here they are Commander. So, what do you need-

"Let me look!" Rinne shouted, surprising the Vice-Commander as Rinne's eyes darted across every holo-record the point if anyone had seen her looking from the opposite side of the table, you'd think her eyes were just shaking in place rather than actually moving.

After about two minutes of looking, and even seeing Saya's data, Rinne noticed something wrong...

"What? How can... this can't be right, why aren't either of them here?" Reine wondered worriedly, getting everyone's attention. Rinne sweated a bit. "Kannazuki, please tell me you may have been so fast in common you might have forgotten one or two by mistake, right?"

"No, that's everyone. Are you looking for someone specific?" Kannazuki asked.

"Yeah, Seigo and Isamu! You should know them both. After all they're Rinne's-"

Kannazuki suddenly slammed his hand on the table, making Rinne suddenly shut up from the sudden act. Her eyes shook, begging reality to not have Kannazuki mention or even imply anything of the sort to what she expected he might say.

"...That's impossible, every one that was revived was registered as a female. Not a single man could be present in this information. If you did try to revive such people, even if you're truly considered a god or not with your powers, they didn't come back. I'm sorry, but those are the facts." Kannazuki bluntly answered.

The top of Rinne's face suddenly went dark as the cruel hammer of reality smashed into her. She briefly took a few steps back and looked at her shaking hands. Kannazuki had just said the last thing she wanted to hear... Seigo didn't come back to life, even though she had targeted him for revival.

"No..." Rinne breathed, breathing heavily in shock. "That can't be possible, everyone else who revived were more powerful than humans at their deaths, how could it fail to work on two normal humans? The gender can't be the reason... you're lying to me."

Kannazuki tried to speak up but soon Rinne rushed in front of him, a piercing gaze keeping him completely silent.

"Don't you even dare tell me something about reality or some other kind of bullshit! You, you're just a normal human who's never even brought the dead back to life! You don't have the right to claim anything like that! I don't care how intangible I am, even begin that sentence and I'll find a way to make you feel my wrath physically!" Reine roared.

Tears were streaming down the First Spirit's face before she flew up and went somewhere without warning, the sudden burst blinding everyone in the room. Once everyone's vision cleared up, everyone just stared sadly. Reine's hair covered her eye, she tried not getting her hopes up but the truth stung her just as badly.

"Hey wait, she suddenly just felt despair, right? What if she has an Inversion! What if that Inversion lets her body be restored and destroy the world!?!" Kannazuki suddenly panicked.

"No worries there Kannazuki, she can't even if she wanted to." Shido replied, confusing the Vice-Commander.

"When Westcott forced me to Invert, he mentioned that the Inverse Form was indirectly created by him the moment Rinne scattered the Sephira Crystals. He tainted them, that's how he even forced it most likely, it was his own essence and the Cassiopeia had the right means to exploit it." Kurumi
explained.

"Since this happened when Rinne ejected her powers, the only thing that could have been hit were the Sephira Crystals. So only Spirits who were born from them have it. Rinne, Mayuri and Rio? The three of them are all Spirits too, but I guarantee with full certainty not a single one of them can undergo an Inversion."

Everyone sighs in relief, if there was any Spirit that no one wanted to Inverse, Rinne was easily that spirit for the obvious reason of what happened 30 years ago on an even larger scale.

"Come on Mana, we should go find her. Even if not as bad... I think we're the only people that close enough to her to help her grieve and find some closure to accept this." Shido stated, looking at his little sister.

"...Yeah, hearing that hurt us too. So let's be hurt with her so she doesn't have to take that pain alone." Mana nodded, and the two soon took one of the base's secret entrances to head outside and find their mother.

After they left, Kannazuki looked at Reine.

"Commander... I'm sorry that-"

"Don't apologize Kannazuki, I had actually suspected as such. If either of them had been revived, I'm pretty sure I'd have gotten a call by now, we had all that time between Saya returning and today, I didn't set the chance they'd be back too high." Reine sighed, she was sad... but at least knew it may not end the way she wanted.

"...It's awful, it's just so awful, to lose someone you love. Family, friends, lovers or anything similar. It can feel like you've died alongside the one you lost." Kurumi replied, getting everyone's attention. "When Saya died, right in front of me no less, I felt so hollow... it was no wonder the DEM caught me."

-Flashback Start-

Kurumi stared in horror at the sight before her, a bit of blood on her cheek as she shook in fear at the sight of Saya's dead form. Ellen raised Caledfwlch as the Camael Crystal soon bouncing away from its now deceased host.

"Saya!" Kurumi cried, soon grabbing Zafkiel and preparing to shoot Ellen. As much as she was against killing, she couldn't let Ellen live after what she had just done, setting her aim in sights she prepared to fire. "BAHA-"

Suddenly a laser blast shot through Kurumi's abdomen, making her eyes widen and freeze up, their light vanishing.

[No... Master!]

Kurumi fell forward onto the ground, a whispering light gasp as she landed on her back, she motioned her eyes as they blurred to see Artemisia giving her a somber stare ash she held a smoking Masamune in her hand.

"I knew it... there was no way for us to win." Kurumi breathed, soon blacking out as she fully collapsed on the ground.
Artemisia grimaced as she prepared to finish Kurumi off...

"Drop your sword Adeptus 2." Ellen suddenly said, surprising Artemisia. "Ike wants to take a closer look at this one first, she is considered a lot more dangerous than the rest right now. Besides, we've already got one of the prizes now that the Phantom's distracted."

Ellen rushed to grab the Camael Crystal, however moments before reaching it, a barrier suddenly knocked her back as Rio, currently in her Phantom disguise, suddenly drops into view and grabs the Camael Crystal before hiding it where she kept the others.

"(You killed her... you killed my friend, she was innocent and you killed her just because she had something you so greedy you'd go to unjust murder! I'll never forgive you, but first I'll save Kurumi from you murderers!)" Phantom roared, rushing at them.

'Killed a... innocent? M-murderers?' Artemisia thought, feeling her head in pain. Ellen gritted her teeth and grabbed her other weapon.

"Rhongomiant!" Ellen shouted.

Phantom was blinded as the blast, and Ellen retreated with Artemisia and Kurumi in tow. Phantom weakly got up, reaching out to Kurumi in vain.

"(No... Kurumi, I wasn't strong enough. I'm so... sorry...)" Phantom cried, soon blacking out.

-End Flashback-

"And in the end... I was lucky, Saya came back by nothing less than a miracle that Shido made possible. That doesn't mean I've forgotten the pain. Even if heal from a scar, the memory of it can't fade away as much as a traumatic nightmare." Kurumi finished, soon shaking a bit as Saya hugged her.

"Kurumi... it's OK now, don't cry." Saya soothed, Kurumi turned to rest her head on her shoulder. "Hey Reine, you experienced what that's like for three decades... how'd you get... I don't know, used to it?"

Reine looked to the left for a bit, giving some thought before turning back.

"To be honest with you, I didn't get used to it... or rather I myself didn't try to get used to it. Time can heal pain, it can be the cruelest monster, but also the kindest maiden. Separation from someone across the world can hurt, but losing a loved one can slowly dull over time." Reine answered, making everyone look at her.

"I kept crying every night, I had to if I wanted to stay sane, know I was humane enough to do it. Yet be strong when everyone watched... so I'd cry myself to sleep. Over time, it still hurt, but what began as unbearable became manageable. I'd wager that's what Yoshino went through."

Yoshino blinked in surprise at that.

"You didn't always have Yoshinon, right? You somehow gave that little puppet its own life. You made yourself a friend after years of loneliness so you wouldn't be." Reine explained, making Yoshino gasp. "Exactly Yoshino, for me I guess I realized I knew he existed, and I remembered... so I chose to keep them alive in memory."

Reine sighed before smiling a bit.
"But I think most of all, I knew that even if I was responsible for what caused them to die... I had to make sure Westcott couldn't take others away. I let what happened to them motivate me to prevent it for others. You need to know how to stand even after you fall."

"Um..." Tohka hummed, suddenly raising her hand. "You've mentioned you were responsible for sending them to what got them dead before, but what exactly was it that killed them? I think that's something we might wanna know."

Reine stares at the group, and that alone gave them a bad feeling at her answer. She soon tapped part of her phone. Maria appeared and she nodded, and soon gasped as she nodded back.

"Understood, allowing all Ratatoskr members of Tenguu City to listen... are you sure about this though?" Maria asked, and Reine nodded. "...Very well Commander Reine."

Reine soon breathes and clasped her hands, soon everyone began listening as Maria opened the link.

"...I knew I'd share this eventually, and it's one that you won't like hearing. I guess it's better Shido and Mana left for it." Reine answered, gulping as her hands gripped the eat she was in tightly. "The mission... was to save you, Shido and Mana from the DEM. It was their attempt to rescue them that ended with them killed."

Everyone gasped.

"Also, I should explain everything about how Westcott caused what he did, and how you were even captured. So forgive me for this Tohka... I'm afraid now you'll be learning a truth you'll hate hearing." Reine answered, making Tohka's eyes show worry while Kotori grimaced, knowing what that truth was.

"It all began after we managed to finally get my brother home. At first, everything was fine, Seigo said that his wife would be coming soon and we heard mentions one of the Spirit Dimension's inhabitants wanted to see the world. However, during their travel through the gate... Westcott did something that makes the Eurasian Sky Disaster and the fire wave of quakes seem like a joke. Using some strange weapon, he fired into another part of the gate he had for himself... and destroyed the entire Spirit Dimension, everything and everyone there was killed."

Everyone stared silently, even Kotori despite already haring it as she didn't know how he did it just yet.

"How did he do it you might ask? It's simple, but to truly explain it... Origami, what makes matter and energy different from each other when it comes to their structure?" Reine asked, making Origami panic a bit at the sudden question.

"U-Uh... well, if I recall correctly it's that matter is focused more on atoms, but energy is focused more on molecules. That makes energy slightly less stable because molecules are atoms bonded together." Origami answered, sweating a bit. Reine nodded.

"That's right, and that's how he did it. True spirits like Rinne and the entire Spirit Dimension are made of energy, not matter and mass like our own world." Reine continued, surprising everyone listening.

"Because of that, it's much more unstable, Westcott used a device that created an opposing wavelength to the Spirit World, the frequency and the energy behind it collided and clashed like matter and antimatter. It was mere moments before the world and its people were annihilated, a true genocide of an entire world. Rinne was traveling the gate and survived, but I bet she felt it, especially
since all the power that made the Spirit Dimension and its people only had one part of it left to go."

"Wait a second, are you saying that it all went into..." Yoshinon asked, shaking heavily. Reine nodded.

"Rinne was forced to take all that power, or in another sense of words... a mortal was forced to become a god. My brother stated the Sephira Crystals were treasures of Rinne's world, so that included them. However all that power, it was just too much, so the moment she finally arrived in our world..." Reine answered.

Everyone's minds suddenly remembered the video feeds of the first wave of space quakes, and suddenly now that disaster felt all the more tragic... it was no accident, because a single man had destroyed one world and damaged another.

"That... bastard!" Saya growled, his fist shaking.

"And worse is how little Westcott's truly known, a true dirty politician, mastermind, and worst of all... the one thing I did found out why the man's bat shit insane in that law of the jungle belief. When he was a child, he was in a war zone, tell me... what do you think that did to him?" Reine asked, but in a manner that clearly said don't reply.

"You might think 'was he traumatized into this way?', or maybe 'does he want power to get revenge on this world and make it suffer?', no... none of those. It's worse. Westcott saw all of that, and fell in love with it. He knows the cruelest parts of human nature because to him, that's what humans are supposed to be. How one child grew into such a monster, it just shows what he plans and what sacrifices he'll make. Including the one he made to take Shido, Mana and Tohka as prisoners."

Reine hung her head down, letting her hair obscure her view.

"Due to the danger, Tohka's parents took Shido and Mana to watch them, keep them safe. We didn't think he'd know about you and you'd be safe until it ended... we were so wrong. In fact, we didn't even realize their existence was how he did it, not until Rinne said she was your mom. Children born of a Human and a Spirit's union... his hole plan was to keep sending people until a Spirit fell in love with a human. Hoping their children could somehow allow a gate between the worlds. Around that same time, the DEM came and Tohka's parents tried to defend you all... only to be killed."

Tohka's eyes suddenly shook in horror, suddenly recalling seeing her parents on the ground as she, Shido and Mana got taken from her house by strange people.

"Tohka was probably taken by a mere accident, Westcott likely didn't bother to check how many children were actually Seigo's. You never even realized it because you didn't see them deal the killing blow." Reine continued, barely holding her emotions back as she tried to finish.

"That's when I had no choice... I sent Seigo and Isamu over to rescue you three and they attacked, giving you a chance to escape. I was so dumb, the DEM's technology was too great, the earliest Realizers slaughtered them. Shido and Mana managed to get out, and Tohka was recaptured, and Tohka... I think its time you learned how you got away. Around that same time, you managed to escape because someone else freed you."

Tohka was covering her head, she tried to block the info out but it couldn't work, it was as if her mind told he she must hear it all.

"Apparently as you escaped into the elements, she got injured badly, enough she started dying. Rio managed to find you and tried her best to save your life, putting you in a time stasis like Mana and
Shido, but yours still let you age slowly. Rio knew you could inherit Sandalphon but refused and tried everything else, it wasn't until 3 months before you met Shido again she realized you would die if you didn't become a Spirit."

Reine stands up.

"And that's it, you wanted answers. Well now I've nothing left to say... if there's any other truths, I don't know the answers." Reine said, looking away out of respect.

Tohka's hands move to her face, digging into her skin as the cold reality sinks into her mind. She had told it to Origami, she was always aware of it, in fact neither of them being here in Ratatoskr even implied it. No matter what, she wanted to believe they weren't died. Now she couldn't say otherwise...

...Her parents had already been dead since long ago.

"NOOOOO!" Tohka screamed, soon getting up and crying as she left the base as well.

"Wait, where are you going Tohka-" Origami called out, but Reine stopped her. "...Reine? What are you doing, we need to-"

"No, she needs to be alone. That girl just got told her parents are confirmed dead. Like Rinne... she needs to be alone. She needs to process it, needs to properly grieve. Everyone connected to 30 years ago has some form of loss." Reine answered, and Origami’s eye widened before she slumped and nodded.

"Don't forget, Shido and Mana are there. I'm sure if she needs it then Shido will give her the comfort she needs. Just be patient for now." Reine replied, rubbing her head. As she did, she looked up. 'We all share this burden, so we need to find the strength to face it. It's not an easy path.'

Back on the surface, Shido and Mana kept looking around for their mother without any luck, soon after splitting up to cover more ground they both meet back up near the park entrance as they both pant.

"And luck big brother?" Mana asked.

"No, if I had then I'd have come here before we both planned to." Shido sighed.

"Yeah, good point." Mana reasoned.

Right at that moment, the two caught their breaths and finally managed to hear crying that their panting had kept them from hearing. Shido quickly realized who's cries they were, he knew it by instinct at this point.

"Tohka?" Shido gasped.

Shido ran into the park, making a tired Mana groan as she ran after him. Soon Shido saw her on a park branch, crying her eyes out as she kept wiping her tears the whole time as she did, soon hiccupping a bit as she sniffles.

"Tohka?"

Tohka's eyes widen as she turned to see Shido and Mana, tearing up more, she runs up to him and hugs him close.
"What's wrong Tohka?" Shido asked, clearly telling something had really upset her.

"Reine... she told us a bit more about everything, and... and..." Tohka hiccupped a bit, crying more. "I wanted to believe, but it was a doomed effort... my mom, and my dad... they've been dead since 30 years ago!"

Shido soon simply hugged her and let her cry, Mana walked behind her and put a hand on her back.

"Your... your father died trying to get us free from them. Worse is I nearly didn't make it, Rio saved me and even tried to not make me a Spirit until she had no choice." Tohka whimpered, her sobs become labored with her shaky breathing in her current hysteric state. Shido tightens his hug, and soon she calms down. "I feel so alone right now Shido..."

"You're not alone Tohka, that's a burden we'll take on together. So don't be afraid to cry." Shido replied, tearing up slightly himself. Tohka nods and sniffles as Mana gets a little misty eyed herself.

Sitting on top of Tenguu Tower, Rinne was seen curled up crying her eyes out and whimpering loudly as she did. Her tears turning into sparkles as they phased through the metal surface she was seated on.

"Damn it... all that hope, all that waiting, all that anticipation... and it wasn't worth a single thing!" Rinne cried.

As Rinne kept crying, she suddenly felt a strange bit of energy suddenly fly by and soon she felt herself locked to the walls of Tenguu Tower's tip.

"Huh, what the heck? What's happening?" Rinne wondered, suddenly she noticed her hand shake before becoming slightly physical for a moment. "M-my arm... it was just for a moment, but did it just become tangible!?"

Rinne gasped.

"...I need to contact Shido." Rinne breathed, soon closing her eyes and focusing.

Suddenly back at the park, Shido and Tohka both feel some kind of power resonating with their own, Mana didn't sense resonating feeling like them, but could clearly notice something was reacting to them through their auras.

"What are you sensing guys? I don't feel it, but I don't think this is small either!" Mana asked.

"I'm not sure, but it feels so... overwhelming!" Tohka gasped.

"[Shido, you read me?]" Rinne asked.

"Mom? What is it, what's going on?" Shido asked, both Tohka and Mana listening close to Rinne's words.

"[I feel something strange. I'm not sure what, but something's locking me onto Tenguu Tower, I can't move from it... but I think my arm regained tangibility for a brief moment!]" Rinne replied, surprising the three. "[Go see Reine and tell her, I get the feeling this is connect to me in some manner!]

The three nodded and rushed back to the base.
Reine typed on a computer while Maria analyzed all the data she could, and then... Maria gasped as an image representing the revival wave energy appeared on a global map, with two streams of energy missing their targets and slamming Tenguu Tower... at the moment Rinne was on it!

"No way, this is..." Reine gasped.

"The last two surges of the revival wave meant for Seigo and Isamu, there's only one explanation I can think of. Because of Rinne's current incorporeal state she's not fully alive at the moment, so since the revival waves didn't revive who she had them intend to..." Maria wondered.

"Rinne was the target they both chose, I think right now they're trying to revive Rinne!" Reine finished, surprising everyone. "Kids, this might just be the chance we need. Think about it, if we have Rinne's physical form restored, we have all her power with us. This might just be what we need to turn the tides against Westcott."

Maria nods.

"Of course, her powers so overwhelming that even with half of us we could destroy the DEM for good. That means we'd just need to find the other five Spirits to seal them and nothing more!" Kotori exclaimed, pumping her fists confidently.

"Yeah, this is a one time chance, if it works then we can end this all here!" Origami replied, her usual shyness disappearing for the moment.

"Quick, everyone get to Tenguu Tower. We have to let this work." Reine replied, and everyone nods. Shido, Mana and all the Spirits run off. Saya prepares to follow them as well until...

"...Oh wait, I can't really help them since Camael's not mine anymore, can I?" Saya blushed, sweat dropping a bit. Maria and Reine chuckle embarrassingly at that.

Back at the DEM's Arubi Island base, Minerva walked into a room that Westcott used as his office building. Once she walked in...

"So this mean I'm finally being deployed on that mission you wanted me on?" Minerva smirked, hoping for some excitement.

"Unfortunately no, but it is a mission. One that I created as of only moments ago." Westcott replied, showing a computer screen with Marina's face at the corner. "Take a look at this."

The screen shows the revival wave energy.

"This is some kind of special energy wave that's reacting to the wavelength of the First Spirit, or rather the Spirit known as [Ruler] if you wanna go technical. She's currently in a broken state, her essence is alive but no body to use it. Intangible in a sense." Marina explained, showing Rinne's picture.

"That's changing however, this energy's making her wavelength more like her fellow Spirits. So, using the Goetia and the DEM's board of director who will be piloting you over. We need you to make it fail, possibly kill her off if needed. We'd send Ellen and Jessica to aid you, but the former's CR-Unit was postponed on completion due to the Deus' construction and Jessica's recovering. Besides, you're ruthless enough."

Minerva gives a wide smirk.
"Tenguu City eh? Good, I have a little bitch there that I promised to murder, two birds with one stone I say. Send me over right now, I'm hungry for some death." Minerva cackled, her eyes glowing with blood lust. "And my appetite's pretty large today."

Westcott smirked at that.

"Then give them your best blood bath."

Well there you have it. How the Spirit Dimension got destroyed, how the DEM kidnapped Shido, Mana and Tohka when they were children, what mission killed Seigo and Reine's husband (or Isamu as just revealed), how Rinne gained the power she has now, what led to Tohka's escape from the DEM and transformation into a Spirit and avoided aging so long, and most of all... Seigo used to work under Westcott without knowing the madman's true colors.

I even expanded a bit on Seigo and Rinne's backstory, showing a bit more and expanding those brief scenes from her memories in Chapter 21. Before I go any further, I'm just gonna confirm this now due to what happened with Saya... no matter what happens, Seigo and Isamu will never come back to life. Their role in the story of being deceased is too important, and I can't let everything go the heroes' way, this is one of them. The reason Rinne couldn't revive them? That's next chapter with any remaining answers.

The things mentioned about Westcott's backstory? I figured that since Rinne believes and saw Humanity's best, Westcott fell in love with the worst aspects of it, he's a complete foil to Seigo and the evil counterpart to Rinne in every way, plus I felt I'd never stay true to canon if I made him one of those affected by war trauma types. Now falling in love with the war you live in? I don't see that backstory too often nowadays, and it fits Westcott perfectly.

Now comes the big part, what's going to happen next? Get ready for the last few secrets of Season 1 to be exposed as the Rinne Utopia movie hits its grand finale!

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 84%

Origami - 78%

Yoshino - 73%

Kotori - 79%

Kurumi - 69%
Chapter 24

This is it everyone, time to end this movie chapter for good with its final half. If the first half failed to make you reach for that tissue box, or you just forgot it, I insist... get that box right now because there is a very high chance after reading this that you're going to need them. I said it before, this part of the story isn't intended to be upbeat like the others, this time I'm writing to truly show powerful emotions, and ones that will likely bring you to tears.

Will Rinne be revived? Is her time in this world done, leaving Shido to inherit what remains of her power? Will the revive simply fail and the bittersweet end be that the last a golden chance? That answer will be revealed soon enough. Even more, you'll see why Seigo and Isamu can't be revived no matter how many times someone tries and that itself is already going to be heartbreaking.

I won't lie to you, I had to stop writing around about... at least 7 points because I myself got brought to tears with what I had managed to create. That makes me confident at the very least that I managed to get the mood, feeling and atmosphere that I had intended for the chapter. This chapter will have a few surprises in it, and with it... every secret in Season 1 will finally get its closure. All that will be left is regaining Artemisia's stolen memories and that's for a different story. *coughs* Date AST Re:Strike*coughs*

That's all I have to say, so now... let's begin.

Chapter 24, Movie Chapter: Rinne Utopia, Part 2

Shido, Mana and all of the Spirits began flying towards Tenguu Tower, with Mana doing the job of flying Shido over. After some time passed they made it and saw Rinne's form fluctuating as the revival process was slowly bringing her physical form back.

"Hey guys, glad you came by." Rinne smiled.

"Are you really stuck to the wall right now?" Kotori asked.

"Believe me, if I could move I'd have left this spot already. It's almost as if this tower needs me here for the revival to work, like it's become a focal point of the process." Rinne answered, sweat dropping as she tried to get off again. "I'm starting to get cramps now... very painful."

The group landed around the tower's top half, getting into battle positions as they readied themselves to protect Rinne from any possible threat or DEM attack that would come.

"Don't worry mom, we'll keep you safe. We just got you back... we can't lose you, we won't!" Mana declared, making Rinne stare at her before smiling.

'You've grown up into a strong woman Mana, and you've become an equally strong man Shido.' Rinne thought, proud of how her children had grown up without her and Seigo's presence.

Tohka and Kurumi raised their hands, causing alarms to blare off.

[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE!]
"Alright, that should keep anyone from noticing what's going on. Now let's make this work." Shido stated, his sister and the Spirits all nodded in agreement.

Minerva walked through the halls until she came to a room with a ship on it, this ship was platinum in color and was mainly aerodynamic in shape. As Minerva got on, she noticed the three DEM board of directors that had come to pilot it.

The first of them was an old looking man named Russell, the second was a rotund man who went by the name Simpson. The last of the trio was a black haired man with an empty and cold look, he was probably the most notable and the one who knew Westcott the longest during his time in the director's board, Roger Murdock. The man was a tactical genius, second only to Westcott.

"Alright, so we getting this show on the road." Minerva smirked, Roger glared at her. "Wow, sour much?"

"Shut up." Roger said, Minerva's eyes widen at how he didn't even hesitate to tell her off. She smirked at that.

"I see why the big boss has got you here, we both get results. Then let me see that magic in action if I get a chance." Minerva smirked, irking Roger who grunted as she walked by. 'Still sour, aren't we?'

Roger, Simpson and Russell soon get everything checked out.

"All systems green, take off will be at maximum capacity." Simpson replied.

"All weapons stocked and readied, battle potential at full throttle." Russel added.

Roger grabbed a lever.

"...Go time." Roger replied.

The Goetia's engines kick off, and soon the Goetia shows how fast it was as it quickly flew off into the air and then zoomed towards Tenguu City.

Back at the Ratatoskr base, a warning signal goes off as Maria senses something and appears by Reine on the screen.

"Commander! We've got trouble, a DEM affiliated ship is reaching the city at incredible speeds! It's the Goetia!" Maria replied, making Reine sweat a bit while Saya looked confused.

"What's the Goetia?" Saya asked.

"It's an incredibly fast DEM ship, we know its schematics since Maria managed to once get them as a basis for some of the upgraded Fraxinus' abilities." Reine answered, trying to bring up more info. "The Arbitel has similar tech in that area. The Goetia's danger is it's purely speed and much faster than both."

Saya sweats a bit.

"I think you're getting it, and I'm afraid so... that kind of ship would be a big problem when your concerned about a time limit. It's the worst ship that could show up right now depending on what's inside of it, and who's inside it." Maria replied, looking worried.

"I don't see who that could be though-" Saya began, suddenly remembering who had killed her. "Oh
god, you mean Ellen might be on there?"

"She hasn't fought for a while because Shido destroyed her CR-Unit when she was caught off guard. She's already likely healed, meaning if she's got a new CR-Unit..." Maria answered, making everyone sweat. "All I can say is right now, things aren't looking so hot."

As Shido's group stays with Rinne, Mana suddenly gets some kind of alert on her CR-Unit's wrist device.

"Hey guys, Murakumo's noticed something, but... I can't properly detect what it is." Mana replied, a bit worried she wasn't getting any information. Kurumi looks before holding Zafkiel out.

"Allow me Mana, I'll do some recon." Kurumi replied, getting everyone's attention. "Come my sisters of the darkness, I summon the children of the shadows... Nibellcole!"

Zafkiel's clock gems hit the III, VI, IX and XII hours before Kurumi's shadow extended out. From it came four clones of herself.

The first possessed a goth look with bandages wrapped on parts of her arm, her hair in twin tails with bows that had skull charms attached to them. Her outfit being red and sleeveless and showing noticeable cleavage while she had a necklace with a cross charm on it. This clone's name was Masayoshi, or just Yoshi for short.

The second wore a blue colored Japanese kimono with floral designs and having her hair tied up in a mix of a ponytail and an up do that was tied with a string-like ribbon. This clone's name was Shincho.

The third had a white poofy dress that resembled an outfit you'd associate to Little Bo Peep, her hair was resting over the front of her left shoulder with a small scrunchy tying it up near the end. She also carried an umbrella with her. This clone's name was Kinshu.

Finally, the fourth and final clone wore a black Gothic Lolita outfit with some red and white on it, her hair wasn't tied in any manner and flowed out freely, but did have a small rose tucked by her left ear. This clone's name was Yuuki.

"Woo! Finally, it's been forever since you called us out." Yoshi said, picking her ear a bit.

"I'm so glad you're OK, we were worried after what we sensed. Sorry we couldn't help." Kinshu apologized.

"We're here now though, and we're staying." Shincho smirked.

"Need anything from us and we're here." Yuuki smiled.

The others all stared at them.

"These are my true clones, the Nibellcole. Their names are Masayoshi or Yoshi for short, Shincho, Kinshu and Yuuki. While not as numerous as my corrupted powers' clones, they're a lot stronger and can be revived. I can have them search out what you can't detect Mana." Kurumi explained.

"That's great, just one question... why are they all dressed like that?" Mana asked, sweat dropping a bit as Kurumi blushed at the question.

"Uh... I may have been really into anime and cosplay at the time I made them?" Kurumi bashfully
admitted, Yoshi snorts a bit. "Hey, that's not funny Yoshi!"

"Sounds like it to me!" Yoshi laughed, making Yuuki flick her ear to her irritation.

"So, I'm guessing we need to detect something, anything specific?" Yuuki asked.

"Hmm... it's likely flying, and should probably be DEM related." Kurumi explained, the four clones nod and dive into the shadow as they head off to the North, East, South and West of the area. They all kept looking around, and soon Yoshi hears something.

"Wait, is that-"

Suddenly something shot Yoshi and destroyed the clone, making the real Kurumi feel it as she grabbed her arm.

"It's coming from the West!" Kurumi shouted.

Soon another shot suddenly hits Shincho.

"Ah! No, from the East! Wait... is it everywhere!?" Kurumi gasped as she soon felt Kinshu shot down, however luck came as Yuuki managed to turn and see what was attacking her fellow clones before firing. Soon letting Kurumi see the ship before it moves. "It's a DEM airship, and it's really fast! It's like it's everywhere!"

Rinne turns and gasped.

"Like right beside us?" Rinne asked, making everyone turn as the Goetia comes into view. It opens up as multiple Bandersnatch units fly out in their flight mode and surround the area. "We're surrounded!"

"Well if it isn't the bitch that cut my other eye!"

Mana gasped before something launched out of the ship and landed within the swarm of Bandersnatch, aside from Kurumi, everyone recognized the insane wizard who had nearly killed Kotori once before. Mana glared at Minerva, seeing her scar wound having finally left a scar.

"Minerva, I should have known you'd come back to trouble us!" Mana roared, putting Murakumo into sword mode.

"Nice to see you too weakling, but things are different this time. So you should call me by my new code name, Adeptus 2!" Minerva cackled, cracking her knuckles to properly show of the Basilisk CR-Unit.

"So she's the one who's replaced Artemisia? Considering Ellen and Jessica, that says volumes on how bad she'll end up." Kurumi sweated, readying Zafkiel's guns. "Not to mention these Bandersnatch... we've gotta fight and defend Rinne at the same time."

The Goetia soon moves into another position, preparing to attack Rinne from that side. Rinne gasped as this happened.

"Fire." Roger declared flatly.

The Goetia fires, and Rinne closes her eyes, only for the shot to never hit as Shido jumped in the way using Yoshino's Spirit Ascension and blocked it with a barrier of spirit power. He panted from the sudden rush he made to race over and reach his mother in time.
"Pick on someone who can actually fight back!" Shido said, brandishing Sandalphon in full view as he swapped to a Triple Spirit Ascension using Tohka, Kurumi and Origami's powers.

Mana and Minerva clash blades, Mana screaming as she increases her slash speed using her spirit power, but Minerva manages to block each slash effortlessly as if she wasn't even trying, possibly predicting every move right before it was made.

"I'll make you pay for what the DEM did to Artemisia! Her friends have cried over what you've done, I'm going to be their justice for today!" Mana shouted, Minerva cackling as she kicked her in the gut and readied her sword while drawing another.

"Well I'm getting justice for how you scarred me for life!" Minerva cackled, both swords glowing a dark purple and making a hissing like sound. "Now slice her to bloody ribbons! Hrunting, and Naegling!"

Minerva rocked forward and shot at Mana, swinging both swords with extreme ferocity, during one brief moment... Mana recognized her sword stance. It was the one she recognized Artemisia using with the Masamune.

'Wait a second, that CR-Unit!' Mana thought before she screamed as she was stabbed in the gut and tumbled across the ground. She weakly got up as her spirit powers slowly began healing the wound slower than she'd like it to. "You... does Westcott's sick mind no know bounds!?"

"Oh, so you've noticed? The answer is it doesn't! Thanks to him, I've surpassed Artemisia, her power and skill is mine!" Minerva declared, giving a disturbing smirk as she rammed into Mana again. "I'll be adored, and every scum bag who screwed me over is going to regret it!"

Mana and Minerva's force soon sent the two of them flying, and Mana grunted a bit.

"Come, White Licorice!" Mana shouted, the sealed mode of the equipment flew down before attaching to Murakumo and unfolding into its true form. "You aren't the only one with a new bag of tricks, get ready to die!"

"Oh, you're gonna kill me? I thought Ratatoskr's methods were peaceful resolutions for humans and Spirits?" Minerva mocked, only for her to feel a neck on her cheek as she barely dodged the Murakumo's shoulder blasters.

"Your right, that's why I won't stain my hands with human blood if I kill you. You stopped being human the day Artemisia gave you that first scar." Mana said coldly, clearly showing she had no hesitation to kill against a person like her or Westcott. "So either fight or kick the bucket!"

Minerva cackled as she flew at Mana.

"So Minerva is the new Adeptus 2!? Damn it, I hate that woman!" Saya growled, seeing the video feed.

"This is getting serious, we need to send in aid." Reine replied, soon broadcasting to the entire base. "All AST members deploy, I'm calling a Code Black! I repeat, a Code Black! Spirit No. 00, code name [Ruler] is at risk of death! Save Rinne Sonogami at all costs!"

All of the AST went wide eyed at that announcement, and soon began running to assist the others as they headed up to the surface and equipped their CR-Units.

"Alright troops, make way to Tenguu Tower ASAP!" Ryouko ordered.
"ROGER!"

Before any of them could get close however, a few Alice units suddenly surrounded all their deployment spots and unfolded their dresses. In unison, they create power territory barriers that suddenly trap everyone inside them.

"What, no way!?!" Mikie shouted. Katie aims her rifle and tries to shoot through to hit them, but luck.

"Oh no, they were probably intended to force us to rush out all at once. We've gotten caught right in their trap." Katie reasoned, making her fellow AST sweat in worry. At that moment, a bunch of Bandersnatch fly by. "Huh, what are those Bandersnatch?"

Everyone was surprised to see the Bandersnatch created a special red territory that let them phase through the Alice units combined territory field and land within. They all brandished their claws as they surrounded each AST group.

"We're not just locked out from the others, we're caged in!" Hannah gasped.

Meanwhile back in the Ratatoskr base, Reine sweat a bit.

"Maria, can we deploy the Fraxinus?" Reine asked, but Maria shook her head.

"They've got it and the other vehicles blocked there too. We can only send more people through one of the few secret passages in too narrow of spots. Problem is no one we send that way could help." Maria replied, grabbing her hair in frustration. "If only we had one more Wizard!"

Saya grunted too, but then realized something, she suddenly rushed into the developmental room to the surprise of Reine.

"Wait, Saya!?" Reine called out.

Saya rushed in and looked around to find some experimental CR-Units, soon coming to a spot where a few CR-Units not ready to be used by others were listed. One of which stood before her labeled the "Salamandra".

"...I was once a Spirit, so I can handle this too!" Saya said, grabbing it as Reine ran in.

"Don't Saya, that thing could kill you! No one can handle it!" Reine shouted, trying to stop her. "You just got back your life, don't throw it away again!"

"I won't die... because that no one who can use this? It's me!" Saya shouted, slamming the CR-Unit's standby form onto her chest. Saya suddenly screamed from the pain, making Reine and Maria look in horror... however soon she stands up wearing a pink and red CR-Unit with orange designs. "Yeah, how's that for no one!?"

[CR-Unit Salamandra, ID Lock registered: Saya Yamada.]

"She... she actually managed to equip it?" Reine breathed, and Maria soon gasped as she realized something. "What is it?"

"She used to be a Spirit, even if she's not one anymore, I bet the experience made her body strong enough to use this CR-Unit. Almost like this one was meant for her." Maria answered, making Reine gasp. "We wanted one more wizard and we got one. Go give them a taste of the former Efreet Saya!"
Saya gives a smirk as she flew towards one of the secret passages not caught in the barrier and headed to the surface.

"EAT THIS!"

Kotori screamed as she swung Camael at all of the Bandersnatch units, their sheer number making her pant as she flew through and tried to burn through everyone she could... but it was clear she was on her fumes.

"Damn it... as bad as they are, I kinda wish I could Inverse right now if it helped us save Rinne!" Kotori shouted, panting heavily. 'I can't fail here, Shido... I can't bare you to see you cry like I did during my failed confessions. You lost your mom once, I'm not making that happen twice!'

Kotori flew up and sung again. Meanwhile with Yoshino, she had Zadkiel blast out streams of water at the Bandersnatch. They kept trying to swarm her while Zadkiel shook off each one that did.

"I-I need the Hraesvelgr... come on Yoshinon, please try to switch with me." Yoshino asked, bopping her on her head... but just as she had been unable to since the Goliath fight, her Inversion failed. "No, why's this happening?"

Yoshino soon gasped as Yoshinon gained an even more withered look.

"Yoshinon... what's happening to you, it keeps getting worse." Yoshino teared up, it was almost as if Yoshinon was actually starting to die at this point. She hugged her close while Zadkiel kept trying to hold them back.

"You... really don't... remember... d-do you?" Yoshinon weakly replied, making Yoshino gasp.

"No Yoshinon, save your strength. I'll make sure you get-"

"You can't... it won't... work. It's what you... wished for when... Rio gave you Zadkiel, it's... what you didn't have... when you created me." Yoshinon weakly replied, making Yoshino cry as Yoshinon's wrinkles worsened. Rinne looks at the sight.

'Something's off here, I don't sense a change in Yoshino's powers. Why is Yoshinon withering away like that? Now that I think of it, why did her inversion... wait, maybe...' Rinne thought, soon closing her eyes focusing her powers to try and see if she can find out what was causing this.

Rinne soon opened up her eyes within the flow of power that came from the Zadkiel crystal and soon walked around.

"I made it, now where's the clue I'm looking for?" Rinne wondered.

She walked around until she found the sphere representing the Zadkiel Crystal, soon gasping as she walked towards it. As she did, she noticed a glimpse of Rio, being able to see through her mosaic she used under her guise as the Phantom, as she gave Yoshino her Sephira Crystal. However, there was something strange... the silhouette of the one she was giving it to, the girl who clearly had to be Yoshinon, didn't look as young as she currently did.

"Huh?" Rinne blinked, confused by what she was seeing. "That's not right, Yoshino is... I'm just seeing things, aren't I?"

Rinne kept looking, only for the same silhouette to glow at a different point, the Astral Dress she had
shifting into a new form as Yoshino, looking more like she did in the present appeared with Yoshinon on her hand.

"Wait a second... that was-" Rinne gasped as she finally realized it.

Rinne's eyes opened as she gasped in the real world.

'Yoshinon's withering away because... the thing she was born to be, Yoshino finally found it. She's part of Yoshino, and she's going back to where she's always belonged.' Rinne thought as her eyes shook. 'That's why she can't freely Inverse, they're slowly becoming one being again! You can't switch places if you're sharing the same space.'

A few Bandersnatch suddenly near Yoshino, preparing to slash at her... only for Metatron to thrust through them like blades, Origami floated down and shouted as Metatron's pillars fire off at all of the automatons that neared the Water Spirit.

"I won't let you hurt my friends! I won't let you hurt Shido, and most of all I won't let you take away the chance for Rinne to take back her life!" Origami screamed, moving the pillars together for one giant blast to blast through a whole fleet of them. More Bandersnatch soon take their places. "...Bring it."

Kurumi dodges around and shoots shadow bullets at the Bandersnatch' heads as they neared her, panting a bit.

"Can't bring back the Nibellcole yet, and I'll be wide open if I try Astra. Guess I'll need to try my big shot." Kurumi stated to herself, soon groaning as she readied to shoot herself. She does and fast forwards around the area before getting into position from the top of Tenguu Tower.

"BAHAMUT!"

Kurumi slams bot guns of Zafkiel together to make them link and morph into a sniper rifle. She kneels a bit as her shadow extends into the cartridge zone and she aims at the Bandersnatch warm that tried to fly after her.

"Take this!" Kurumi shouted, firing her shot, and soon enough she fires a blast of her shadow that fragmented into silhouettes of herself. These silhouettes soon crash into the Bandersnatch, causing the shadows to explode and take them out in a chain reaction, with the few that missed eventually evaporating. "That's how you do it."

Kurumi soon gasped as more Bandersnatch appear immediately after.

"...You're kidding me." Kurumi paled.

Tohka flew through and slashed through multiple Bandersnatch, panting as she quickly feels herself being overwhelmed.

"No... not yet, I'm not anywhere close to being finished!" Tohka shouted, swinging a few more times at the automaton swarm before her. As she did, Sandalphon suddenly shook and got Tohka's attention.

[Master, I... I'm starting to have trouble focusing. Please, try to give me a moment to recover or we might be in trouble.]

"No, we're fine Sandalphon! Don't give up!" Tohka shouted, giving a determined look.
Alright, if you're sure about it then I trust you master.

Soon a group of the Bandersnatch all jumped at her at once, swinging their claws back before throwing them forward, clasped together as they prepare to smash them on Tohka's body. Tohka held up Sandalphon to parry the attack...

Master... I... I'm sorry I let you down.

Tohka saw Sandalphon shatter apart, making her gasp as her faithful weapon's shards flew around her, and at that moment she was struck by the Bandersnatch as they slashed at her, knocking her across the tower's top half, getting Shido's attention.

"TOHKA!" Shido screamed, but he couldn't go to help her as he had to parry another attack from the Goetia. "Damn it, you bastards!"

He soon heard a small explosion, and soon knocked Origami and Yoshino knocked into the tower walls as well, their Angels didn't get broken like Tohka's, but they were both knocked to the side, lying dormant due to their master's being near incapacitated.

"ORIGAMI! YOSHINO!"

Soon Shido heard another scream as Kotori and Kurumi were both struck back, knocking into each other before falling and collapsing onto the tower rooftop as well as their Angels tumbled off the building and fell to the ground.

Meanwhile with Mana, Minerva dodged some of the White Licorice's barrage... only for Mana to feel a slightly shock as the White Licorice teleported back to Ratatoskr, showing her 30-minute limit had expired.

"No... not now~"

Mana was soon slashed across the stomach by Minerva, she gasped before her Murakumo's damaged state forced it to dispel, and Mana collapsed onto the ground unconscious.

"KOTORI! KURUMI! MANA!" Shido screamed, Rinne giving the same look of horror.

"Bandersnatch, knock all of the Spirits unconscious and after that... kill all of them." Roger stated monotonously.

Right on cue, the Bandersnatch grab each of them aside from Mana who Minerva slowly neared as she held both her swords to deal the final blow, they began twisting each of their limbs... causing them to scream in pain. Shido's eyes shook with rage as he heard it, grabbing the copies of the angels he had and merging them together.

"YOU LEAVE THEM ALONE!" Shido roared.

Metatron's pillars gathered around Sandalphon's blade, both of Zadkiel's guns attached to the side, making them morph into a sword like bazooka with a flower motif. Shido soon pointed it at the Goetia.

"TWILIGHT STRIKER!"

Shido thrust forward and the Angel bursts forward, blasting out beams as it prepares to pierce the Goetia's territory... but unfortunately the ship used its speed to dodge and avoid the attack entirely. Shido grunts before reverting to normal, facing the drawback of the Angel fusion. Now he need to
wait 5 minutes before he could Spirit Ascend again.

"N-no... everyone!" Shido grunted, barely able to move as he could only stare at the mistake of letting his anger get the best of him possibly take everyone he cared for away from him.

As the Bandersnatch kept pulling and twisting her body, Tohka screamed out in pain, she could barely keep her eyes open.

'Again... it's happening again! Just like every other time!'

---Flashback Start---

Tohka was surprised as she felt Paverschlev being pushed back, soon exploding apart from the force of the Arbitel's collision, causing her to gasp as the recoil flings her backwards. She screams as she crashes into a building, Nahemah reverts to normal, now a bit cracked.

Right as she was able to get off the building, a sudden territory surrounds her and forces her to the bottom of its barrier, slowly rising towards the building top. Tohka screams at the pain, she had never been in a territory like this one before.

"When I was faced with the DEM forces in my Inverse Form, I was crushed so easily just by their willingness to try a risky move that worked for them. In the end Shido had to save me after I had kept him away for his own safety!" Tohka thought.

Shido raised his hand up and grabbed the air before Sandalphon appeared in his grasp. Following this, hair and eyes soon took the same color as Tohka's as her spirit power settled into his being. At that moment, with Tohka still in his arms, Shido rushed forward at the Cheshires and swung Sandalphon... and suddenly a Cheshire was cut in half!

"I couldn't recall my powers when Shido went to save Origami, I was just there in his arms the whole time! Only able to show him how to use Halvanhelev, and that wasn't even me using it despite we did it together. It was still his power!" Tohka thought.

Tohka and Origami pushed Shido out of the way, and Shido turned at that moment as the attack hit them. Shocking everyone, Shido's sudden shriek at the whole thing caused Yoshinon to briefly regain her focus and look. When she did... everyone saw Tohka and Origami frozen in a block of thick ice.

"When we went to save Yoshino, I was frozen in ice and nearly caused Shido to have a breakdown. It wasn't until the end when all of us were fighting together we even actually did anything!" Tohka thought.

Saya's eyes flashed, and then she screams as she slams one of her hands onto Tohka, making the purple haired Spirit scream as she was burned and electrocuted simultaneously. The Inverse Flame Spirit soon swung Camael down and knocked her towards the others, unaware one of her ribbons had been shredded by her actions.

"Not to mention when Kotori was in danger of being consumed by Saya, I wasn't even able to get through or help reach her! Worse is I only made the fight with the Hydra worse and worse with how I fought against it!" Tohka thought.
Before anyone could react, the clones all disappeared! Everyone AST member in the sky was suddenly struck or shot down by the clones and knocked to the ground, while the rush all dog pile and constrain the others, more of the ghastly black hands shoot out and hold everyone down.

"And I couldn't even help Shido at the most important moment when Westcott possessed Kurumi and tried to kill us!" Tohka thought one last time. "Each time, I've barely done anything if even anything at all! Origami, Kotori, Yoshino and Kurumi, even Rio and Mayuri... they've all done more than I have!"

The sight of all six spirits in their Astral Dresses as they flew towards the Deus rang through her head before vanishing from Tohka's mind.

-End Flashback-

Tohka slowly felt herself begin to black out.

'I can't do anything, not even keep my promise to protect Shido... I'm pathetic, useless, nothing I'm...'

'Tohka thought, her eyes tearing up.

'...I'm weak!'

Rinne could only stare at the sight before her with horror. Shido, Mana, Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori and Kurumi... they were all about to be killed and she could only stare and do nothing. Her eyes go blank and lifeless at the sight of the chaos.

"No... no... no!" Rinne growled.

Rinne's emotions begin to go through a chaotic influx, and soon the revival wave energy within her begins to flare erratically. Rinne's growls soon become distorted as if a machine had changed it into something more inhumane.

"YOU DEM BASTARDS DON'T DESERVE TO LIVE, YOU MUST DIE! NO, YOU MUST BE ERASED, YOUR EXISTENCES MUST BE PURGED TO THE POINT YOU WEREN'T EVER BORN!" Rinne said with such rage, there was no word that would fit enough to describe her response if someone wrote it in story form.

Rinne roared loudly causing the entire city to shake before her eyes begin to glow, becoming fully rainbow colored like her spirit mana aura which soon exploded out, the force so great that all the Bandersnatch were suddenly thrown away from the tower, the ones grabbing the Spirits all having been forced off before they exploded!

The Goetia itself was also hit by this, being knocked back, and while surviving... the entire ship's systems and outer haul exploded from severe damage that made the fact it was still able to fly a surprise. Minerva herself as tossed away, just missing the moment to give Mana the fatal blow. All the nearby buildings' windows broke, the weaker and damaged ones even collapsing.

The AST group with Ryouko trapped by the Alice units' barriers got ready as the Bandersnatch began their next wave of attacks, but right as they did...

"Dyrwyn!"

Suddenly the Alice units were shot by a blaze of fire, exploding as the nearby Bandersnatch suddenly turned, only for someone to rush by and cut through them.
"Tyrfing!"

The remaining members were all cut up, and soon Saya was seen holding a flaming sword in her right hand while a burning rifle in her left hand. She smirks as she twirls them and sheathes both of them.

"Saya!?!" Ryouko gasped.

"Surprised? Should be considering this is the dangerous Salamandra suit according to Reine, but never mind that. The AST's no longer on lock down." Saya smiled, though at that moment... everyone suddenly get knocked onto their feet or butts as Reine's power flared out. "What the what!?!"

Suddenly familiar alarms blare out.

"Oh no..." Mikie breathed.

Meanwhile inside the Ratatoskr base, everyone was hurriedly typing at the readings they were getting, even Maria was feeling her processing being pushed to its limits and overwhelming her.

[W-W-W-WARNING! TH-HER-RE- *buzzing*]

Suddenly the Spacequake alarms all got heavy static as only the warning sound could be registered. Looking at the screen before her, Minowa gasped at the sight.

"Commander, based on these readings all of Kanto prefecture's already experiencing Spacequake alarms!" Minowa replied, getting Reine's attention.

"No, it's not just Kanto... I'm getting alerts from..." Shiizaki began, soon gasping. "Oh, my god... Commander, all of Japan is registered Spacequake alarms! The entire country is at risk!"

Reine gasped.

"The entire country... a Spacequake of that level hasn't happened since 30 years ago, and that's still nothing compared to the first Spacequake. Is it Shido?" Reine asked.

"No... it isn't, based on the readings I'm registering the one risking this Spacequake is Rinne! Something's gone horribly wrong! In fact, I think I'm detecting more spirit mana gathered at Tenguu Tower than any recording reading we've ever had!" Maria replied, making Reine's face trickle some sweat in worry.

Back at Tenguu Tower itself, everyone watches as Rinne's screams only get louder and more violent, soon causing every color of spirit mana in Rinne's rainbow colored mana to suddenly surge out into the sky before streaming around and smashing into Tenguu Tower, knocking everyone currently on onto the ground! However, it didn't break the tower... it began to change it.

In moments, Tenguu Tower suddenly changed into something else, red organic wires looking like tree routes began to sprout out as Rinne's Astral Dress shredded apart, only for the red roots to cover the tower entirely. Following that, various metal structures rose from the ground, entangling and twisting itself as they soon took the shape of a metallic tree of sorts.

"What... the hell... is this!?!" Shido gasped, terrified at what he was seeing. The metal tree gaining its finishing touches as it gained orbs representing each Sephira's color, with a rainbow one taking the
spot associated to the Da'at circle and forming all the connecting lines.

"I-It looks like a representation of t-the Sephirot, I-I think Rinne created this somehow!" Origami stuttered, her entire body going nearly as pale as a ghost from the fear she was experiencing. Soon everyone has their headsets ring. "Hello?"

"Oh thank goodness we weren't cut off because of this." Reine sighed in relief, appearing on the headset screens. Maria appears right after. "Guys, we're in serious trouble right now. I don't know what you're seeing right now, but I can tell you whatever's effecting Rinne right now is causing a massive amount of Spirit power to surge out."

"How bad is it?" Shido asked.

Rinne took a moment to think before answering, so Maria decided to say it for her.

"If you don't stop Rinne's power surge and successfully calm her down, we're talking a Spacequake so powerful... it will turn Japan into the non-fictional version of Atlantis! The entire country's at the brink of annihilation right now!" Maria said in a panic, making everyone gasp.

"Please, hurry! We're sending the Sleipnir to pick up Mana, and unfortunately right now it seems only those with the power of a Spirit, possibly some of the DEM's technology in the worst-case scenario, can stop this! You're the only things that can save us all."

Maria was suddenly cut off as the spirit power creates too much noise to allow any signals to get through.

"...Well, this is fun. We've got to stop a cataclysm that will destroy all of Japan... I'm totally not scared for my life right now!" Kotori said, soon crying tears of fear as the reality sunk into her.

In response to the growing power surge, parts of the tree shift as suddenly robed figures with wings that came in either red, white or black suddenly began spawning in mass. Shido and the other Spirits all feel their powers burning into their skin as if reacting to Rinne's increasing emotional fluctuations.

"Guys, do you feel that? It's like a Spacequake's trying to escape my body!" Tohka cried, feeling pain from the burning sensation.

"Some of my mom's powers are in me, and since yours are two we're all feeling it! This could be part of what might wipe out Japan! If we don't hurry we won't be able to move to even stop this!" Shido shouted, trying to fight the pain himself.

The newly formed Guardians began to fly out and began attacking all the DEM's remaining automaton units, the Goetia, Minerva... but unfortunately, they also aimed at Shido's group! Some were even heading towards the AST!

"Look out!" Shido screamed, everyone moved out of the way as the Guardians kept continuously firing at them. Knowing the serious of the danger... Shido raised up his hand.

"To the power of the God in this world sleeping in a madman's prison, shatter the darkness and grant me your divine strength... overcome the possible, go beyond the limits and shatter the foundations of this reality to destroy the evil before me! Now lend me your strength... power of the First Spirit! Come to me... Uriel!"

Shido screamed as his Over-Limit Spirit Ascension activated, the feeling magnified by Rinne's steadily increasing power, making him feel like every muscle of his was burning before she shouted
and lashed Uriel through all the closest Guardians.

"Come on guys, we've... gotta get in there! We have to... save Rinne!" Shido shouted, fighting off the pain. The others nod despite the similar pain they all felt.

In the outskirts of China, both Rio and Mayuri were attempting to locate the current location of the Spirit [Zodiac] who had been off the radar for a while now, Rio having not seen her since shortly after making her a Spirit.

"You sure this is the right place to be looking?" Mayuri asked.

"Rio's sure, Rio feels she's-" Rio began, until suddenly she began holding her hand and crying as she felt pain in it. Making Mayuri rush over and hold her. "Mayuri... Rio feels pain, Rio... Rio feels mama suffering!"

Mayuri's eyes widen.

"What's happening to Rinne? Try to tell me what you can, don't force it, you're hurting right now." Mayuri asked.

"R-Rio feels her... angry, mama's power is... hurting herself, mama can't stop it. Mama's lost herself..." Rio breathed, Mayuri using some of her electricity to relieve the stress by numbing some of her muscles of the pain. "R-Rio wants to help, but... Rio was born from Mama's power. Rio... is in too much pain to teleport."

"Oh man..." Mayuri replied, trying to think of something. Soon she manages to get an idea and gasped. "Rio, maybe through being born from her powers, we might be able to link to her consciousness. It may not work, but maybe using my electricity and your powers can help us connect."

Rio nods.

"R-Rio wants to help mama, Rio will try..." Rio panted, still feeling the stress echoing from Rinne into her body.

"OK, here goes..." Mayuri replied, putting her hands on Rio's chest and head, soon generating a light amount of voltage onto both as she tried to focus.

Shido and the others rush towards the tree, dealing with the endless swarm of Guardians as they tried to see any kind of entrance to get inside from, the Sleipnir had since driven over, Kannazuki grabbing the unconscious Mana before heading back to the Ratatoskr base.

Everyone attacked the Guardians swarming them with their Angels, the exception being Tohka who still didn't have enough power to reform Sandalphon and could only fire energy blasts from her finger.

"D-Does anyone see an opening yet?" Yoshino asked, dodging some of the Guardians as they attempted to ram into Zadkiel.

"No, I'm afraid not... wait, I think I know how to find it. Origami, lend me a Metatron barrier!" Kurumi requested.

Origami nods and sends them over.
"Zohar - Holy Gate!"

Metatron's pillars connected their ends and spin to form a barrier around Kurumi, the Guardians slowly charging blasts to break through. Kurumi sees the barrier crack and quickly closes her eyes as she aims Zafkiel at herself and shoots, her eyes widen as she gets a vision.

_The sight of an opening around the upper part of the rainbow circle on the metal tree showed an entrance leading to Rinne, who was currently hanging by the red roots with her eyes closed, the tree itself now acting on its own without restraint._

"Shido! The rainbow spot on the tree, the upper part has the way in! Get in there!" Kurumi replied, soon screaming as the barrier broke and a shot knocked her through the air a bit.

"B-But what about you guys!?" Shido asked worriedly.

"We'll be fine Shido! Now go, save your mom! We'll keep them off you!" Kotori coughed out, panting as she swung at a few more Guardians. "Go!"

Shido teared up before nodding, soon flying towards the arrow as he saw a whole pool of Guardians blocking his path. He screams as he charges up his greatest attack and readies it.

"Harmony Convergence!"

Shido swings forward, firing the multiple beams from Uriel as the destroy all the Guardians, Shido rushes forward and flies through, reaching the entrance and breaking inside before the Guardians could block him, all of them refusing to actually enter the tree for some strange reason.

"Mom!" Shido yelled, rushing forward as he cut through any roots that tried to flail themselves at him. After getting through a swarm of the roots, he finds himself at the tree's center core where his mother was currently at, immobile and unconscious while also unclothed, only the few vines holding her covering her in any manner. "Mom, it's me!"

Rinne's face suddenly twitched a bit before she woke up and looked at him.

"S...Shido?" Rinne mumbled, noticing him.

"Don't worry mom, I'm gonna save-"

Suddenly Shido feels himself slashed at the back, Rinne gasped as she saw some blood drip to the floor. Shido panted as he turned, seeing Minerva smirking cruelly while holding Hrunting and Naegling in her hands.

"Minerva... damn it!" Shido growled, he grabs Uriel and swings at her. Minerva quickly dodges the slash waves as she gives a fearsome stare, still smirking as she did. "Get out of my way-"

"Silent Eye." Minerva declared.

Suddenly before Shido could even prepare himself, Minerva had appeared behind him like she had teleported without any trace of it... and suddenly multiple slash marks slash across his body, causing Shido to shake and drop to the ground as slash marks appear across him, mana pulsating in place of bleeding to have Shido in agonizing pain and stop his movements.

"This CR-Unit is called the Basilisk, sometimes they kill with a glance, though sometimes they can also just freeze you like a stone. I'd prefer the former, but the latter's good too. Especially when I want someone to suffer from seeing their loved one murdered!" Minerva cackled, making Shido
growl as he tried to move.

"You feel like your burning, aren't you? How ironic, your mother's little freak out is the very reason you're too weak to break free of that bind and save her! Don't worry, you'll die with her soon enough and then I'll find and kill that sister of yours. A family reunion in the realm of the dead sounds nice, doesn't it?"

Minerva cackles as she readies her swords, and soon begins slashing at Rinne crazily, no damage being dealt as Rinne's spirit barrier blocks every slash, though Minerva had every intention to keep doing so until it broke. As she did, Rinne stared at her son's injured form, and remembering what Mana looked like outside, and then the moment she saw Seigo's death... she gave a distorted angry scream once again, and Minerva was hit hard in the gut, holding it as she was knocked back.

"What the hell? How does she keep getting stronger the angrier she gets!" Minerva growled, soon getting an alert. "What is it!?

"Leave now, we've got readings of a Spacequake so huge if we don't leave now, we're all dead. If I know you the kind of death you'd want is one from fighting, not an explosion eating you alive."

Simpson said in a panic, getting Minerva to grit her teeth. She soon grabbed her swords and walked away.

"You two can stay here and die together with the rest of Japan. We'll fish out your girlfriends' Sephira Crystals from the ocean later." Minerva sneered.

Shido grunts, and suddenly feels the 'curse' Minerva left on him break off from Rinne's power influx, he crawls towards his mother, desperately to reach her with the little power he still had within him.

Minerva soon flies back to the Goetia, which was barely keeping itself stable to prepare an escape trip.

"Just how big is this quake that it'll kill us. Tell me it's an exaggeration?" Minerva said annoyed.

"Tell me, does a Spacequake that could sink Japan and take out half of Australia and a portion of East Asia seem like it's an exaggeration?" Russel asked rhetorically, making Minerva's eyes widen. She looked at the readings to see the radius... and it was growing.

'Shit, it's still expanding!' Minerva thought. "Then get us moving already!"

Without needing any reminder, the Goetia quickly zooms away, making its way out of Tenguu City and beginning its flight back to Arubi Island before the quake swallowed everyone else still stationed there. Unfortunately, the ship blares its warning alarms as some glowing guardians were seen on the ship's outer shell.

"They're on the ship, what are they gonna do!?!" Simpson panicked.

Their answer was given when each of the Guardians exploded, the Goetia main engines all burst and exploded, the people inside barely surviving the flames before the ship's flight finally failed, and it tumbled across the landscape, crashing as it met its finally flight and crashed into a nearby mountain.

"W-we're stranded... the Spacequake's gonna kill us now, there's no escape!" Russel gasped.

Rinne kept screaming, but as Shido neared her, she suddenly gasped and began regaining her senses, but the tree had already been overloaded with her power, it was going to continue to rampage with
all the power she had flooded into it.

'This is my fault, why... why did I let my rage consume me?' Rinne thought, recalling the times Seigo would calm her when she got mad. '...I get it, this is my punishment for not truly understanding Humans. You told me some were bad, and I knew that... but I never understood how to compare myself to those people.'

Rinne shed a tear.

'It's time I actually reaped what I sowed, and take responsibility... if I'm going to endanger this world, I need to be the one that saves it from myself. Shido, Mana... I'm leaving a strong burden to you and Rio. If you see her soon, apologize to her for me.'

Shido soon crawled up to Rinne, pulling himself up to look at her directly.

"Mom... don't worry, no matter what it takes, I... will save you!" Shido declared, Rinne looks at him before crying with a smile and shaking her head.

"...Sorry Shido, that's not possible this time. Promise me you'll tell Mana and Rio, I'm afraid that this time, our goodbye... is for good." Rinne replied, confusing Shido before Rinne moves her head forward and kisses her. Shido's eyes widen in horror at that. "My little Shido, I'm sorry... but I can't let you choose me over the world."

Suddenly in reaction to the kiss, Shido's mind is flooded with information as he finally feels it... all of his lost memories were beginning to return. He didn't even realize at the same time, Mana's eyes opened up as she began to remember as well, even Rinne saw some answers she was missing.

- (*insert song playing during the last scene of Assassination Classroom Season 2's 16th Episode [A/N: Sorry, I don't know what the OST is called ^^;]*) -

"Hey kids, Seigo!" Rinne said happily, getting the attention of her family.

They looked to see her appearance was a bit different than usual. She currently had short, light pink hair, with a part of it tied up in a braid and her eyes became a light pink color, almost light brown due to the tint. Her Astral Dress took the form of her casual outfit she changed into when she first met Seigo.

"This is the human form I've decided on, what do you all think?" Rinne asked, after a bit she didn't hear anything and frowned a bit. "No good?"

"No, just the opposite. It's cute and it suits you. I think you'd look great no matter how you'd look." Seigo replied happily, making Rinne smile. She looked at her kids for their opinions.

"I like it mama!" Shido replied.

"Yeah, you're really pretty and young looking now." Mana replied as well, making Rinne pick the two up as Mana giggled. "Higher mama!"

Rinne smiles and laughs happily, Seigo smiling as well. She soon looks at Seigo.

"Don't worry, when I finish everything I need to do here, I'll come and join you. Then we'll make things official and get married." Rinne said, smiling brightly.
Seigo held Mana and Shido close as they traversed through a wild and dangerous area of the Spirit Dimension, trying to find the gate between the two worlds that would finally get him and his children to Earth after nearly a decade of disappearing from it. He held his phone as Reine kept contact with him.

"Seigo, it's getting crazy, we can't find the gate point! It's like the Spirit Dimension's readings change despite the location doesn't, we can't give you an accurate location!" Reine panicked, and Seigo sweat a bit.

'I've gotta do something, or we'll all get swallowed up by this place!' Seigo sweated, suddenly he felt Shido tug on his shirt and getting his attention.

"Papa, this way." Shido stated, shocking Seigo a bit as he looked at it.

"Yeah Papa, just keep going forward, straight ahead." Mana added, and Seigo gasped as the thought they could somehow sense the gate came to his mind.

Seigo held them closer and walked forward, as the elements began to fly at them, he kept going and eventually, a ripple revealing a portal appeared before them. Seigo soon fell in with his children, and before the three of them knew... they were standing in front of Reine who gasped.

"Big brother... you're finally home!" Reine cried, hugging Seigo close. Seigo blinked and looked around before smiling as everyone cheered. They had finally gotten Seigo back to Earth and connected both words. Soon he picked up his children, making Reine see her nephew and niece for the first time in the flesh.

Rinne smiled as she walked up to the gate between the two worlds.

"Alright, finally time to join Seigo and the others. I'm coming you guys!" Rinne said excitedly as she jumped through the gate, and began traveling to Earth. However while she was doing that, back on Earth... Westcott prepared a private gate before moving a weapon in front of it.

"And now, time to raise the curtain I've been waiting for!" Westcott cackled.

Westcott fired the weapon, and soon Rinne noticed something fly by her to her surprise, making her blink.

"Huh? What was that?" Rinne asked.

Soon the energy smashed into the ground of Rinne's world... and in mere moments the energy that made up the Spirit World began to rupture, getting everyone's attention as the Sephira Crystals all glow in a blinking manner, warning about a threat. .. unfortunately, that warning wouldn't matter.

At that instant, the entire Spirit Dimension suddenly began attacking and devouring at itself, ripping everything in it apart, all the Spirits ran away in vain and screamed as the entire world collapsed and their voices were silenced as the entire realm of energy was annihilated in a massive explosion. Rinne felt the echo as she traveled to Earth and gasped as she turned around.

"No... that was, that was my world!" Rinne gasped, soon images flash as she saw everyone's voices and face as they met their end, soon a mere void had replaced her former home. "No... no!"

It didn't stop there, while her world and kind was now gone... the energy that made them wasn't. Rinne suddenly felt it all thrust into her body and slingshot her towards Earth, she screamed as all of it forced itself into her, including the Sephira Crystals.
"W-what's happening!" Rinne asked in a scream, soon once she landed on Earth... all that intense power and the speed she arrived on Earth with it discharged in the worst possible way, and a giant pink explosion enveloped an entire section of the world, followed by many more.

Everyone in the research facility suddenly watched in horror at the disastrous damage the Spacequakes were all beginning to cause throughout the world once Rinne finally arrived, Seigo suffering the worst at the pain she was feeling and the fact she had unwillingly caused this. Realizing who wasn't present, he suddenly rushed into a room to see a second gate device with Westcott standing by a smoking weapon he fired into it.

"Mr. Westcott, what have you done? Why would you try such an experiment on a world of Energy like that!?" Seigo demanded, leading Westcott to turn to him... and reveal his true sadistic looking face.

"Simple, to destroy it." Westcott bluntly revealed, causing Seigo to stare in shock. "Since you were such a gullible feel like me spell it out for you. Truth is I knew exactly what this place had been long before I sent you there. I even knew you'd end up being trapped there. The reason I sent you was a gamble."

Westcott chuckled as Seigo took a few steps back, soon tapping the wall as he backed into it.

"I needed to create a way that would allow a path back to this world, a gate that existed between them. I hate a feeling that your stupid pacifistic and idealistic nature might just do the trick. It worked and you gave me the method to connect our worlds! So understand now, I used you Seigo, you were just the right pawn I needed."

"How... how could you do this!? Kill all those innocent people!?" Seigo roared angrily, and Westcott cackled.

"Because that's what humans do! I saw that truth back in my home country, I lived in a war and guess what... I loved what I saw! It was the very proof of Human nature. Humans fight and use each other, the don't hesitate to sacrifice one another. I will prove I stand at the Law of the Jungle's top." Westcott smiled, making Seigo's eyes shake.

"Might makes right after all, and soon I'll take the Spirit Dimension's full power! Nothing can stop me, not when you alone know... and I plan to end you."

Seigo's eyes were shadowed, before he moved to reveal his hand was on the loud speaker button to Westcott's shock.

"You think Humans are that way? You only know a fraction of us, and now everyone knows what you've done... we'll make sure your crazy plans never see the light of day! I know what Humanity truly is and I'll prove it to you, so get ready! I may normally be nice, but I'm not a pushover!" Seigo declared.

Tohka's mother and father suddenly heard a crash at their door, and looked to see DEM goons break in with weapons.

"You, stay away from us!" Tohka's father said, grabbing a flash to throw as a weapon, but before he could, one of the man rushes at him and Tohka's mother could only gasp and turn around, not seeing her husband as he screamed his last breath.

"Children! Run, get outside and don't stop!" Tohka's mother screamed at the top of her lungs,
getting their attention. Tohka felt Shido grab her hand as he and Mana begin moving. They left so quickly, none of them heard a slash sound as Tohka's mother gave her last breath.

"Shido, what's happening!" Tohka asked, incredibly scared.

"I'll tell you later, just run!" Shido replied.

As they got to a door outside, they were suddenly all knocked down as a net fired at them and trapped them in place. A DEM goon walks up to them and cracks his knuckles as he grabs the net and picks them up.

"Gotcha." The man grinned.

Isamu runs through DEM's halls, grabbing his taser to shock a few guards that neared him, suddenly he saw Shido who was carrying a limping Mana.

"Shido! Mana!" Isamu called out, getting their attention as he ran to them. "You managed to escape? Yes, that means my sabotaging worked, think you two can you make it outside?"

"Mana's twisted her leg, we need help getting there." Shido replied, and Isamu nodded. "Oh wait! Tohka, she got recaptured, when Mana twisted her leg she had to go back but got caught as a result. Please save her!"

Isamu gasped.

"OK, I'll go let your father know. I'll help you out first-" Isamu suddenly saw something come at them. "LOOK OUT!"

Isamu moved in front of the two and was suddenly struck hard by some laser blast, his eyes widened as fell to his legs and held his chest from the burning pain he felt. In fact, he was sure he had heard some of his ribs crack. He saw none other than Jessica who was seen with a laser rifle in hand, and a realizer attached to it.

"Sorry, but you're not getting out of here." Jessica smirked, Mana stared in horror at what she had done to her uncle.

"How dare you!" Mana cried out, but Isamu held out his hand. Giving her a fierce look. "Uncle Isamu?"

"Get outside now! I'll take care of her, don't look back!" Isamu ordered, Mana tried to say something but felt Shido adjust his grip and ran out with her. Mana looked in horror as Isamu rushed at her, getting shot again before tackling her and trying to disarm her.

Isamu yelled as he kept going, soon having Jessica kick him in the abdomen and sending him flying into the wall. The act caused him to crash through into a room where a few experimental vials were present. One in particular being labeled, it fell on him... and soon Isamu screamed as he felt his skin crack, part of his very being cracked and broken.

"Damn it, that was supposed to be saved for Westcott. Guess we won't need it once we get the Sephira Crystals anyways." Jessica groaned, soon preparing to strike him down again with her laser rifle, Isamu screamed and suddenly shot forward and rammed her hard enough she was knocked out.

Outside, Seigo was getting ready to make his way in to aid Isamu after seeing his children safe.
However, he soon saw Isamu rush out and stare din horror at what was happening to him.

"Isamu! What's going on, who did this to you?" Seigo asked, his best friend looked at him before part of his skin cracked, making it like his eye was just painted and chipped off. He reached out to grab his hand.

"...Seigo, I was struck into a room of chemicals, one of them did this to me. I feel it... my soul, it's been fractured." Isamu said, soon coughing heavily, Seigo held him as it became clear to him that Isamu wasn't able to breathe oxygen anymore.

"I felt something, some woman said she needed it in relation to Sephira Crystals, but there's another half it needs. Find it while you go save Tohka, I don't know why, but my body's screaming to me we need it to stop Westcott and save humanity! Also, make sure Reine knows... I love her, and that I'm sorry I couldn't make it back alive."

Seigo cries and nods, holding Isamu close before Isamu grasped him tightly, and soon his body crumbled to dust before some essence within him transferred into Seigo's body. With a heavy heart, Seigo stood up as he clutched his chest.

"My best friend... he's gone, Westcott's done the ultimate sin! Reine, I'm going to make him pay for taking Isamu from us!" Seigo declared, rushing inside.

As he rushed in, Tohka whimpered as she was about to be experimented on, but suddenly Seigo smashed the door down to the surprise of everyone inside, he soon punched everyone unconscious before freeing Tohka.

"Run Tohka, I'll draw everyone's attention! Go and don't look back!" Seigo shouted, Tohka teared up and nodded before she ran out. Seigo shouted loudly after and ran out a different way, drawing the alarms towards him as a bunch of soldiers went after him. He smashed through before reaching a room and finding a certain experimental medication.

"I feel it this is-" Seigo suddenly felt a slam on the head and turned around to see Ellen.

"You've been causing a lot of problems for Ike, I can't let you leave here alive." Ellen declared, making Seigo growl. "So I'll have to kill you."

Seigo ignored her and grabbed the medication's container.

"No need... I know I won't live through this anyways. I can at least ruin you to the peak though!" Seigo shouted, putting the medicine container in his mouth and slamming his jaws as he bit it to Ellen's shock. Seigo roared in pain before Ellen suddenly was hit by some power and a flash blinded her.

"Papa!" Shido shouted, he and Mana both got close as they saw their father, clearly on his final leg as he collapsed to the ground. He looked at his children, raising a hand to the both of them as they both cried at the sight of his current state.

"Shido, Mana... I'm sorry, no child should ever have to learn this at your age, much less see it!" Seigo chuckled, though in a sad tone to show he was taking his coming demise seriously.

"Unfortunately, your uncle and I are having it worse, we aren't just losing our lives. Our souls... they've been destroyed, once we leave this world... we're gone for good. I can feel it, something in me is telling me that even if I was to be revived by someone I wouldn't be able to come back. Sorry you had such an idiot for a father."
The two both cried.

"Don't say that Papa! Y-You're the best daddy in the whole world, nothing will ever change that! It's not your fault, y-you said you'd save Tohka and you did! So we won't blame you for dying, just... just don't make your last words bad ones!" Mana reasoned, almost begging.

"Alright sweetie, I won't..." Seigo smiled, and soon at that moment, Rinne teleported into the area and gasped as she rushed over. "Rinne..."

"Oh my god, Seigo!" Rinne cried, holding him close. "Why was I too late? All this power, yet no way to save you with it."

Seigo rubs Rinne's cheek, making her sniffle as she looked at him.

"Don't cry Rinne, it wasn't your fault... when I heard from Isamu I knew the risks... accepted them... and chose my priorities! That's how important you three are to me!" Seigo smiled, making Rinne sniffle and nod. "Sweetie, if you don't mind... I need to tell Shido and Mana something private. Something they need to hear before I die."

Rinne nodded and moved back, leaving hearing distance as she watched. The two held each of his hands.

"Listen Mana, promise me you'll watch over Shido, because... when I went in there... I gained a power I'll be passing on to him with the last of my life force." Seigo coughed, looking at Shido's face.

"In there I saw a vision... in the future, people will inherit the Sephira Crystals that are currently inside your mother's body. They'll be lonely, but this power will seal theirs, so they can live normal, they'll all love you and you'll love them. Hope you don't mind the harem."

Seigo rubbed Shido's cheek, chuckling at the oddity of that last part.

"Give them your heart, because in a way they'll be like you, sharing a pain similar to the one I'm giving you for letting my stupidity kill me. They'll all be wandering in the dark, lost and alone for various reasons. So... please be their light, because you can take them as they are, differences and all."

Soon he moves his arms as he grasped Shido and Mana's hands together, both staring and listening as they cry heavily.

"You two are Human, but you two are also Spirits. They are humans who'll be turned into Spirits. As children of the two worlds, with hands like yours... you can reach them! I know it, in my heart. This road will be full of pain and tears, but don't lose your idealism. If you want to know why, I saw one of them... Tohka will be one of these girls, you promised to protect her right? I can tell you love her Shido, so... never let go of her. Save this world I love, and know... I'm always going to be proud of you."

With that, Seigo closed his eyes for the last time, and Rinne suddenly rushed back over as his body turns into crystal slowly before it shattered, the fragments of energy that come out all flood into Shido's body as he hugs it close. Soon he and Mana cry out loud, and Rinne stops and collapses to her knees, doing the same before the three hugged each other close.

"Shido, Mana... if we hadn't let you get captured this wouldn't have happened." Rinne cried, soon looking at them.

"I'm going to guarantee that Tohka and you will reunite. However in this time period, it's just too
dangerous for you... I'm going to keep you somewhere until the right day comes. When we can be a family again, honor your father's memory."

The two nod and sniffle, and soon Rinne taps Shido's head.

"This is an aspect of me, my soul will watch over you. You may not initially know what's going on but I will be there to guide you when you finally come back. So until then, this is a short parting." Rinne sniffled, hugging them close.

The two felt themselves suddenly sealed in a time stasis, and soon creating two coffins for Seigo and Isamu. She teleported back to Reine giving the stasis held Shido and Mana, and then the coffins as Reine cried. Rinne hugged her before vanishing.

Rinne stared at the ground, crying as she realized her promise to Shido and Mana had been broken as her form slowly began to fade away. However, as she noticed her flowing power blind Westcott, she suddenly widened her eyes and realized something.

"No... I can still leave them one last thing. Seigo, you may not be here but I still have our love... I'm giving them a guide, one last bit of family to be there for them one day." Rinne muttered weakly, and as she felt her body fade, she held her hand out and used some of the leaking mana of her body;

The end result caused that mana to be take form and create a being with a similar appearance to her, almost a child version of herself, she had given birth to Rio Sonogami. The newly born Rio soon blinked at her.

"My last child with you Seigo, I'll name her using our own names Rinne and Seigo... your name is Rio Sonogami." Rinne breathed, rubbing her cheek. Soon tapping her head to share some information to her using the power she could. "Rio, do you understand me?"

"...Mama?" Rio asked, making Rinne smile as she realized she understood. Rio kneeled to her as Rinne weakly offered her arm. "Mama, please don't leave me. I... I just got to meet you, please don't go!"

Rinne rubbed her cheek and looked at her.

"I'm sorry Rio, but I need you to listen." Rinne asked, making Rio stare as both began shedding tears.

"It's up to you now... please, protect the Sephira Crystals. Protect Shido and Mana, protect... Humanity's future. I know you can, so don't ever give up... Rio. I know I gave birth to you right as I'm about to fade, and that I'm making you walk a road of pain but... I beg you to keep going. For your brother and sister, for the Spirits you'll help one day bring. Be there for them... in my stead, promise?"

Rinne soon slumped, and Rio held her as Rinne disappeared, giving her one last smile before she did. Rio tried to catch her pink spirit mana sparkles, soon flooding into her as Rinne's turned rainbow and then vanished.

"Mama!" Rio cried, collapsing onto the ground as she saw her mother disappear, as she was now... all alone.

"...I'll be waiting, for the day I return to you all." Rinne's voice echoed, unheard by anyone. However unknown to everyone, the last bit of her was seen sleeping within the time frozen Shido's mind, the one thing keeping her from death. She just lacked a body now. "Trust in Shido, because he
I get it... that's why you didn't revive. You gave up your soul for the sake of giving everyone a future, you gave Shido the power... to seal Spirits.' Rinne thought, smiling as her eyes became all misty.

Shido gasped as suddenly, the entire tree's power suddenly faded, and Rinne fell into Shido's arms as her son suddenly had his eyes shake.

"I... I remember, everything!" Shido breathed, his eyes filling with tears.

Meanwhile outside, everyone saw the tree slowly fading away as Tohka suddenly gasped, her sole lost memory flowing back into her mind as if reacting to Shido, Mana and Rinne's memories being restored.

---

Rio was seen walking through a forest, crying and sobbing over seeing Rinne fade away in front of her, beginning to hiccup from her prolonged sniffing. After a bit however, she looked up before preparing to continue again, only to see a purple haired girl with a ponytail held up by a butterfly ribbon.

"Who is... wait, Rio recognizes her!" Rio gasped, soon realizing the girl was Tohka. She gets closer to look at her, and to her horror sees Tohka was heavily injured everywhere, her clothes stained with her blood. Rio felt her pulse and saw it weaken.

"Oh no... this is bad! Rio needs to do something or Tohka will die!" Rio gasped, trying to think for a bit. Eventually all she could think of was putting Tohka in a time stasis. "Rio will try to help Tohka like this."

Rio moved Tohka to another location, and as the years went by she tried healing her the best she could. As she did, unlike the stasis holding Shido and Mana, Tohka had slowly aged over the years. During one day, Rio noticed the Sandalphon Crystal glowing.

"Rio can't make Tohka a Spirit, Rio will keep trying to heal Tohka." Rio told herself, she refused to push Tohka into that path. She had to meet Shido again and she wasn't risking the DEM killing her.

Unfortunately, during the first day of 2051, Rio noticed Tohka's condition took a turn for the worst. She could see Tohka's body clearly about to lose its hold on life. Rio panicked and soon looked at the Sandalphon Crystal, the last Sephira Crystal she had.

"...Rio has no choice, if Rio doesn't give it to Tohka, then Tohka will die." Rio admitted sadly, she soon placed the Sephira Crystal into Tohka, causing Tohka's eyes to widen as she became the new [Princess], and soon she teleported away to Rio's surprise.

"T-Tohka!?!" Rio asked, soon assuming her Phantom guise she looked around until she noticed Tohka had appeared in Tenguu City. "(Shido lives here now, she must be instinctively aware where to find him. I hope it works out.)"

Tohka looked around in confusion, blinking a bit.

"Where am I, what am I, and... who am I?!" Tohka wondered as she looked at herself, soon turning as DEM Wizards flew by ready to attack her. She panicked as missiles fired at her as she went wide eyed and ran away from them. "Wait, what's going on here!?!"
Tohka gasped as she sees the memory sink in.

'Rio... you saved me, and thought about me the whole time.' Tohka mentally gasped, shedding a few tears. 'Thank you. I can't ever repay you for that'

Soon enough, everyone saw Shido holding onto Rinne as she began to glow, her body vanishing, everyone gasped as they got close.

"No, mother! Please don't go! Please... don't leave us too!" Shido cried, and Rinne looks at him as her body slowly fades away. Reaching out to rub his cheek gingerly as she begins crying with a smile.

"Don't cry Shido, I don't have any regrets. When everything went wrong I had been so worried... wondering if my choice was wrong. However, Seigo always believed, and look at you now... such a strong kind man who gave so many girls a home, a reason to live again." Rinne cried.

Meanwhile with the green haired Spirit, she suddenly turned as she somehow heard Rinne's words reach her at the same moment she spoke them.

"You were always so curious, fully of energy... always a shining star in the darkest of nights." Rinne praised.

"Stop... whoever you are, your making me sad!" The green haired girl cried.

The silver-gray haired girl shook, dropping her book as her eyes shook as if she had felt something that wasn't meant to be.

"You always valued your family and your friends..." Rinne continued.

"This is... why?" The gray haired girl asked.

The blonde-golden haired girl suddenly felt her eyes open as the voice reached her.

"...because you inherited your father's kind heart!" Rinne smiled, tears streaming down her eyes.

"...What is this?" The blonde haired girl asked.

The orange haired twins were about to have a contest, only for both to get distracted once they heard it.

"You're old enough to stand on your own now, so... I think..." Rinne began.

"T-This is... what is Poseidon doing, trampling my eyes with this water worthy tone!?" The first twin questioned.

"Hurt. I feel a discomforting pain in me, I do not enjoy it." The second twin replied.

The indigo haired girl suddenly felt a melancholy tone as Rinne's voice finally reached her.

"...You'll be OK without me." Rinne finished, shedding all her tears and forcing a smile, but everyone knew how sad she really was.
"...This is too painful, why am I even hearing this?" The indigo haired girl asked, soon beginning to cry.

"No... no mom, don't talk like that! Please!" Shido demanded, tears flowing out of his eyes. "Why didn't you let me save you? Why'd you force me to seal you, without a body that's the same as... same as... don't just let death claim you like that!"

"I love you my little Shido, my... brave little boy." Rinne said, her eyes slowly closing. "I'm glad that for just a few days, we got to be a family again."

At that moment, Rinne's body faded into Spirit mana, causing Shido and the others to all stare as right before their eyes... Rinne Sonogami was gone, and this time it seemed to be for good. Shido grabbed the few sparkles of spirit mana in the air before screaming into the air.

"MOOOOOTHEEEEEER!" Shido shrieked at the top of his lungs.

- (*insert song end*) -

Soon the others began crying alongside Shido, they had come to help Rinne fully revive... but now she was gone.

Mana's eyes shook in horror as she fully got up.

"Stop the car!" Mana shouted, causing Kannazuki to gasp as the Sleipnir screeched to a halt. Mana opened the door and looked towards Tenguu tower... and could faintly make out the sight of her mother's fading spirit mana. "No... not you too, mother!"

Kannazuki saw Mana collapse to the ground and cry, he kneeled down and placed a hand on her shoulder as she sobbed.

Back in the Ratatoskr base, Maria's eyes were shadowed by her hair as she stared at the results, Reine looked at her worriedly.

"What happened, is it... is it over? Is everyone safe?" Reine asked, making everyone in the base, including the AST who came back in after being blown away by Rinne's energy wave, stare at the AI.

"The threat is passed, the massive influx of spirit power has been quelled..." Maria began, before turning and crying laser fluids as her tears. "...But we had a single casualty. Rinne is... she's gone!"

Maria began crying fully, and everyone could only stare at the revelation. Reine's mouth trembled as she realized it... Shido and Mana had lost the only parent they had left, she turned her head and shed tears while everyone else give saddened looks, some even showing slight anger at the end result.

The green haired girl soon hit the ground in anger.

"Damn it! I don't even know who that was, and yet... her words! It wasn't fair she had to die!"

The twins suddenly stop their contest, both suddenly having no will to resume it.

"I... I can't take it, that was so sad!" The first twin cried.
"Neither can I... such sorrow." The second twin replied in agreement.

The indigo haired girl sat down on her bed.

"This pain, its... just like what I had to go through. Why do people who don't deserve things like this keep experiencing them!"

The gray haired girl grabbed her book and shook and screamed.

"This is... this is all wrong, she was supposed to live! Why did she die, this shouldn't have happened!"

The blonde haired girl was as emotionless as ever... but suddenly, she felt a tear creep through her eyes and she noticed this.

"...I'm crying? I do not understand, how am I?"

Soon the next day came, and Westcott and Marina both smirked at the result they had learned from the mission. Right at that moment, Minerva walked in, stretching and cracked her knuckles.

"Ah Minerva, glad to see you made it back. Congratulations, thanks to you we've truly murdered the First Spirit for good this time." Westcott praised, making Minerva smirked. "And now your next assignment is ready, be prepared for official deployment at any time."

"Got it." Minerva replied, walking out.

As she did, the DEM board of directors all stared at the door as she walked the other way, soon heading to the ship area. Roger with a dark look on his face.

'It's clear now that bastard doesn't know what he's doing, it's time we consider permanently severing him from DEM Industries forever.' Roger mentally sneered, preparing to have Westcott discharged.

Westcott got up to leave as grabbed his mug of tea, when suddenly Marina noticed something and gasped.

"Hmm? What is it?" Westcott asked.

"No, this is... it's impossible!" Marina gasped, Westcott came to look over and soon the sound of his mug shattering on the floor was heard. His eyes stared at what he was sure shouldn't exist.

In a dark realm, Rinne's body faded as she began to fade through the gate connecting Earth and the void where the Spirit Dimension once was.

"...This is how it ends huh? The last of the true spirits about to die, and with it my kind will finally fade from existence... now it's over for me." Rinne lamented, knowing it was only a matter of time before it ended. "I only wish... I had gotten to fully understand the joys of humanity through her children before this."

As Rinne got closer to the voice, she suddenly begins to sob and frown, now second guessing herself.
"...Was this even worth it!? Should I have done what I did, I let Shido seal me and had him basically kill me, his own mother! Now I'm about to die and I can't undo what I've done!" Rinne cried, sobbing as she neared the void... only to be blocked from it. "Huh?"

"It's not the end Mama!" Rio's voice echoed, suddenly surprising Rinne. "It isn't over yet, Mama time's not today."

"...But how? I'm about to disappear, how can this not be my end?" Rinne questioned, crying more. Suddenly she felt an aura representation of Rio hug her to her surprise.

"Remember the day Rio was born, the Humanity you gave Rio? Rio never got to know Papa, but... Rio knows how much Mama loved Papa." Rio replied, soon making Rinne feel some strange warmth. "Rio won't let Mama die, Papa's last wish is with me... and now Rio will give Mama the one thing she always wanted."

Rinne suddenly gasped as a flash goes off.

At the Ratatoskr base, everyone was in a somber mood, all of the Spirits were present, all of those who went to school being absent for the day. After looking at everyone and then her own hands... Tohka tightens her fists and walks up to her fellow Spirits.

"Guys... I have a request." Tohka asked.

"Oh, sure Tohka. What is it?" Origami asked, surprised Tohka had asked such a thing.

"...I" Tohka began.

She tightened her fist.

"I want you all to train me!" Tohka declared as she closed her eyes, surprising them all.

"Ever since I came back into Shido's life, I've been so useless, I've barely been able to do anything. You might say I have, but... I don't feel that way. I promised him I'd protect him and yet he's the one protecting me alone! After what happened to his mother... I can't just stand here and be weak if it means I can prevent something like that again! So please! Origami, Yoshino, Kotori, Kurumi... I beg you, please help me!"

Everyone looked at Tohka surprised, and when they did... it was clear to them, why Tohka was the girl Shido's heart was closest to. Origami stood up and Tohka gasped, her eyes opening as she felt Origami put a hand on her shoulder.

"It isn't just you Tohka, we all want to stand on our own and protect Shido, but I can see it... your conviction and will to do it? We're no match for it. We'll help you so gain the strength to feel you're actually protecting him, I promise." Origami smiled, making Tohka tear up before giving a smile.

"Thank you!" Tohka sniffled, soon wiping her tears and gaining a determined look. "I promise... I'll make you all proud, you won't regret it!

At school, everyone noticed Shido and Mana were present with a sad and pained expression, everyone was worried about them. The fact some of the students gave similar depressed looks and others were absent did imply something bad had happened.
"Anyone know what happened to them?" A male student asked.

"Maybe someone they knew died, everyone who's not here or looking sad are their friends, right? They may already know." A female student adds.

Tamae soon prepared to take attendance, only for the door to suddenly open and a girl suddenly walks in to her surprise.

"Oh, do you need something?" Tamae asked. The girl smiled before turning to the class, specifically two students.

"Nothing much, just need a moment." The girl replied, Shido and Mana briefly reacted as if the voice was familiar to them, and then... "I'm here to bring a message to Shido and Mana from their mother. 'Come back home right after class ends, because... I'm home, and I'm never leaving again.'"

Suddenly the two went wide eyed and looked up, and suddenly they gave silent gasps. Before them was a familiar looking girl with short pink hair who smiled at them. It was... the human disguise they remember their mother made.

"Make sure you do that, I don't think she wants to be kept waiting too long." Rinne smiled, and at that moment Shido and Mana suddenly begin crying to the surprise of their classmates. Rinne left the classroom and began heading home as she looked at her hand again.

"What Mama's always wanted... is to be like Papa, Shido and Mana. To be part Human." Rio's voice echoed, and Rinne smiled.

"Rio... thank you so much. Not just for giving me this second chance either." Rinne replied, she soon looked outside and reached out to grab the sun playfully as she said one last word to define her newfound joy.

"Because of this gift you shared with me, now that I have it... I'm finally living with you all in this world's Utopia."

Aha! Gotcha there, did any of you think I was really gonna kill off Rinne? Sorry, but nope :3

Also, whoa... a total of 15,000+ words? This chapter beat my previous record, which was the previous chapter no less! I know I intended to make the movie chapters longer but... well, shesh!

Rinne's officially physical bodied again, but I will say now while she can fight alongside the others, she's been heavily nerfed, like to the point she's about as strong as the weaker Spirits and can only use the Limited Astral Dress. Her true power is still in Shido's Over-Limit Sprit Ascension. For how the last scene went, you'll see it continued in Date AST Re:Strike to see how everyone reacts to it.

Regardless if the end was happy, I really think I did really well making every remaining part of the Chapter sad, this arc was meant to be more tragic then the rests and I'm pretty sure I nailed it. Also, hope you enjoy the double dose of cameos for the remaining five spirits, I felt it was only right to have them respond to Rinne since they responded to the revival wave she sent, which was a major factor in this chapter's events.

And there you have it, Seigo and Isamu can't be revived because while saving Shido, Mana
and Tohka, both got hit with dangerous DEM chemicals of sorts in the form of a potion and medicine that destroyed their souls. Without their souls, reviving doesn't work, but before he died he passed on what Isamu gave him and he took to give Shido the power to seal Spirits. Even though he's gone, Seigo gave Shido the power to save the future.

Now as for Tohka's small indirect focus in this chapter? All I'll say for now is that in Season 2, and only Season 2, Tohka and Shido are swapping their roles as Protagonist and Deuteragonist. In other words, Tohka will be the main character of the story for the second season. It'll make sense eventually, but it relates to the events of the Season 2 finale.

I hope you enjoyed the movie chapter, and now before Season 2 starts... time to begin Date AST Re:Strike! So I hope you'll enjoy that story.

-Spirit Bond Levels-
Tohka - 85%
Origami - 78%
Yoshino - 73%
Kotori - 79%
Kurumi - 69%
Chapter 25

This is it everyone, today we're starting the last gap I need to fill before I build the bridge needed to start Season 2. There's only one event this season needs to have completed and that's finally dealing with Artemisia, so now it's time we make this story and give Mana the means to deal the hand of karma that Minerva's deserved this entire season!

As a quick reminder, Mana takes the protagonist role for this part of the story, why this is the case will be explained fairly quick, but I will say it's pretty much due to the events in the Rinne Utopia movie. Speaking of which, if you haven't read the Rinne arc (Chapters 23 & 24), read those first because this chapter has a huge spoiler to the movie's last few scenes.

I don't know how long the story will be, I'm re-reading Date AST Strike as I'm writing this and unfortunately there's no translations, luckily that might only end up a minor problem. There's at least gonna be three because I'm showing "Memory Files" that looked into Artemisia's memories, and the three I can guarantee are about Ashley, Cecile and Leonora. Specially how she befriended them and their backstories.

Also, we'll be getting more characterization from some of the other AST members and Maria, so far at best they've talked about their stories, now let's actually see what led them to Ratatoskr. While with Maria we'll see how she evolved from the program she began as after the incident that made her the AI we know her as now.

Minerva's up to something, and all that's been said right now is that Westcott had a mission made especially for her... sounds like it has to do with the fact the Basilisk CR-Unit has Artemisia's memories built inside, could this be related to the "Ashcroft Gamma" devices that were rumored in the previous chapter or an even worse project? I don't think any of us can be sure after I showed how deranged and evil the Date A Re:Live version of Westcott is, even me.

There's also gonna be a bit of a scene where Rinne finally explains to everyone about Yoshinon's current condition. I don't think I need to tell you all based on some the recent reveals from Encore's Hot Spring story and the Rinne arc, and where its leading towards in this story. Poor Yoshino, even though it's necessary for part of my planned story line, I don't like having to make Yoshino cry :(.

Oh, the emotion for Date AST Re:Strike is jealousy, for some... pretty obvious reasons. *coughs*Minerva*coughs* Though I'd say that the biggest surprise is none other than the location that everyone will end up heading towards. It'll have a small effect for next season, but how big of one it'll have is something I'll let all of you readers decide on.

So, without further ado, let's get ready... TO STRIKE!

Chapter 25, Movie Chapter: Date AST Re:Strike, Part 1

Artemisia Memory File 01, Subject - Ashley Sinclair

Artemisia pulled her wheeled suitcase up to an abandoned building that was run down and
possessed a sign notice that said "We're sorry, this building is in need of repairs. Please be patient while we finish the repairs.", noticing the first three S's were all in bold, she knew that this was the right place.

"I finally made it." Artemisia smiled, she looked at the notice closer and soon tapped the three bold letters, causing a secret doorway on the building's side to open up. Artemisia walked in before being dropped down quickly into an underground base.

Once she made it to the bottom, the opposite wall opened its door and Artemisia strolled out and looked around at the sight of the building before her. The technology she saw was amazing, and various people were all working together for a shared purpose.

"Excuse me." A female voice suddenly asked, getting Artemisia's attention.

Artemisia looked forward as she saw a woman who appeared to be in her mid-20s, having pale Nordic blonde hair with blue eyes. Her hair was short in length, but had two front bangs that reached beyond her shoulders. She wore a formal suit with a small necklace attached and thin circular glasses.

Overall, her appearance was very similar to the DEM's strongest Wizard, Ellen Mira Mathers. She was currently holding the wheelchair of the Ratatoskr organization's founder, Elliot Woodman, revealing she was the secretary that was behind him when Ryouko had spoken to him in the present day.

"You're the new recruit, Artemisia Bell Ashcroft, correct?" The woman asked.

"Y-Yes ma'am! That's me, I'm the new member of the Special Sorcery Service!" Artemisia replied, quickly bowing. "It's nice to be here."

Elliot chuckled at her enthusiasm, it was like a breath of fresh air.

"Glad to see you're so sure of yourself, if there's one thing all of us have in common here in Ratatoskr, it's that we're stubborn and unyielding in our beliefs. You fit in already." Elliot replied, making Artemisia blush as she scratched her cheek lightly.

"Anyways, I'm Elliot Woodman. I'm the founder of the organization. This here is my secretary, Karen Nora Mathers, she'll be tutoring your skills as a Wizard alongside your fellow teammates. She'll be a bit strict, but she means well. Make us all proud."

"Right!" Artemisia smiled.

Artemisia was putting on a Wiring Suit, and once she got it on she looked at the mirror and felt slightly embarrassed by how the suit looked. It made sense, the suit was a bit... revealing since it was meant to allow mobility and the defense depended on one's territory.

"Well, if I work hard I can get one of those CR-Units before I know it." Artemisia told herself, trying to psyche herself up.

She soon walked into the room to see the two current members of the SSS aside from herself, each of them facing off against practice dummies.

The first was the vile and cruel woman that everyone knew in the present as Minerva Riddell, only without either of her scars and her jealousy yet to form, but her pride plastered on her face as she cut down five dummies at once, shattering them to pieces.
The second was Ashley Sinclair, currently not in her teenage years as she tried to fire shots at a practice dummy, only for side dummy to avoid them and punch her across the room. Making her tumble near Artemisia before she stopped.

"Oh my, are you OK?" Artemisia asked, Ashley grunted as she got up and saw her.

"Who the hell are you?" Ashley asked, that made Artemisia blink since she didn't expect someone her age to swear so easily.

"Uh... I'm Artemisia Ashcroft, I'm the newest SSS recruit." Artemisia replied, making Minerva stop and toss her sword at the emergency stop button for training. Shutting the dummies down as she walked over. "It's nice to meet you both, may I know your names?"

Minerva chuckled proudly as she grabbed a towel to dry off her sweat.

"Minerva Riddell's my name, and I'm the group ace. Pay attention and you might learn something. This shrimp's learning that the hard way as you just noticed." Minerva sneered at her while Artemisia blinked at the response. Minerva threw her towel at Ashley's face right after.

"If you excuse me, I've actually done my work, so I get to take the rest of the day off now."

Minerva laughed mockingly as she walked out, and Ashley grabbed the towel off her face before she growled and threw it at the door, growling angrily at the older woman. Artemisia sweat dropped a bit and looked at Ashley.

"...And what's your name?" Artemisia asked.

"...Piss off, don't talk to me." Ashley bluntly replied, surprising Artemisia as the younger girl as Ashley left the room as well. As she did however, Artemisia felt something off from her, she felt... a deep dark pain in her heart.

"She's hurting, but what's harming her heart?" Artemisia wondered.

A few days later, Ashley was seen wearing one of her usual punker outfits, walking across the streets until she got to a bench and sat down on it. Soon she heard the sound of something being placed down by her and looked to see Artemisia in casual wear place a lemonade by her.

"Thought you might be thirsty."

"...I told you before to piss off and not talk to me, you bad at hearing or something?" Ashley growled, staring daggers at her 'teammate' and her actions. Artemisia gets closer to her and Ashley growls louder. "GET AWAY FROM ME!"

Ashley throws her fist and punches Artemisia in the face, however after she did it... she was shocked to see Artemisia didn't even try to dodge it, she whimpered a bit as she felt Ashley's face dig into her cheek while Ashley only stared in shock.

"You... you didn't even try to move away, why? You had to know how much that would hurt you!"

Ashley gasped, unable to understand how Artemisia reacted as she did.

"You're right, I did now... but I can tell that's nothing compared to the pain you're holding in you right now." Artemisia replied weakly, making Ashley's eyes widen as she takes Ashley's fist and held it gently, eventually making Ashley drop it. "I can't bear to see it."
Ashley's hand trembles before she shakes her head.

"Don't act like you understand! No one does, not even you! So just-" Ashley began, only for Artemisia to suddenly hug her. The sudden act surprised her.

"You're right, I don't understand. That doesn't mean I don't want to understand though." Artemisia replied, and with that one reply... Ashley screamed and collapses onto the ground. Artemisia rubs her back, as Ashley stares downward and shakes.

"Why... why would anyone be kind to me? Why do you... why do you actually care when no one else did?" Ashley asked, making Artemisia look at her. "L... I..."

Ashley's memories began flashing by her, dealing with various bullies at school who cruelly picked on her, her parents ignoring her and refusing to acknowledge her and everyone she tried begging for help telling things like ignore them and it would get better.

"I've never had anyone treat me this way, not one! No friends, a family who doesn't care, and adults who refused to bother more than saying it would get better if I just ignored it... they didn't know a damn thing!"

-Flashback Start-

Soon one day at school, Ashley had her lunch stolen from her by a larger male student, and the bully in question began mockingly eating it before her as the other students either did nothing or laughed with him. However, unlike before... Ashley finally snapped and grabbed a nearby chair.

"Aw, what's wrong, can't support yourself without a" The bully began, only to suddenly go wide eyed and then scream as Ashley threw the chair at him. All of the other students back to the walls as Ashley walked passed her scattered lunch with another chair. Her eyes now in a tsurime shape like in the present as she neared him.

"Tell me, does it really make you feel strong? I bet you feel so weak inside that bullying makes you feel above others. You target those weaker for that reason, even though who did nothing wrong or actually tried being nice to you!" Ashley reasoned angrily, lifting the chair up. "Well guess what... now you're the weakling!"

Ashley slammed the chair down, making all the students watching scream, cry, cover their eyes or turn away. Luckily, the chair wasn't made of a material strong enough to do anything more than leave a heavy bruise on the bully's body. He looked at Ashley, and saw a monstrous rage in her eyes.

"S-stop... I won't bother you again, please-" He began, only for Ashley to punch his face before grabbing him and forcing him to the ground.

"Screw them all! Those idiots don't know a single thing, they've never experienced what I have! If they wanna preach about solving a problem then they should actually have it first! The only one who knows what this like is me!"

Ashley soon threw the bully at the wall, knocking him unconscious as all the students screamed and ran out. Ashley panted heavily before she ran out herself, soon leaving the school as she ran away from it, from her family, from home... from everything.
Artemisia gasped at what she heard, Ashley still shaking.

"I get it now, you never found someone you could trust. It was so painful if anyone tried to get close you could only lash out." Artemisia reasoned, soon hugging Ashley close to the latter's surprise. "You won't have to feel like that anymore, because you can trust me. Because I want to be your friend."

Ashley's eyes widened at that.

"W-what?" Ashley asked, unsure if she had heard that correctly. However, Artemisia's smile was enough that she quivered her lip. She didn't get why, but... something told her she could believe in her, that she could trust her. "You asked for my name, right? It's... Ashley Sinclair."

"Ashley, that's a wonderful name." Artemisia smiled, soon holding Ashley's hands close. "I can see it, these hands of yours. They're so strong, with hands like these, you can protect those close to you. I'll be there to guide your way to that path."

Ashley rested her head on Artemisia's chest, and Artemisia hugged her. Letting the young girl finally feel the joy of trust for once in her life.

~Present Day

In the training area, Tohka shouts as she swings Sandalphon at Kotori who was sparring with her as part of the training regimen that the other Spirits made under their promise to train her. Kotori dodged easily, occasionally parrying Tohka's swings.

"Is that it? Well then, take some of this!" Kotori declared, swinging Camael forward as Tohka tried to defend against it. Unfortunately, all it did was prevent Camael from striking her directly as she was flung into the wall. Tohka soon slid down, her eyes becoming swirls as her head spun in circles.

"Alright, that's it." Ryouko said, clapping her hands for emphasis. She walked over to Tohka and helped her up. "There you go."

Kotori grabbed a water bottle and handed it to Tohka.

"Thank you..." Tohka said, still slightly dazed before she drank it all in seconds. "So... how did I do?"

"If you want my honest opinion Tohka, all you have is strength, not even a bit of skill. Do you even know how to swing a sword?" Kotori asked, making Tohka make a replying noise that people used when they clearly didn't know something but couldn't admit it. "...You don't, I should have known."

"Now that I think about it, when me and Tohka always fought each other while we were both Inverted, she always just flailed and slashed Nahemah around. Not even some kind of instinctual know how on sword play." Origami added, making Tohka feel a word bubble saying: 'Muscle head' pierce her back.

"In other words, I'm just a sloppy mess." Tohka sighed, hanging her head down. "Maybe that's another reason Rio didn't think of giving me the Sandalphon Crystal initially..."

Everyone saw Tohka's mood worsen and tried to think of something to help brighten it again, but before they could, they suddenly heard one of the secret passageways to the base open up as Rinne
suddenly dropped into view and stretched.

"Wow, these things are fun to use!" Rinne smiled, soon blinked and putting a finger to her chin. "...Wait, what are they called again?"

Everyone freaked out and suddenly either aimed a weapon or grabbed something to point at Rinne, making her raise her hands in surprise as she sweated a bit.

"Wait! Wait! Wait! Calm down, I'm not an enemy!" Rinne quickly replied, swinging her arms a bit.

"Who are you!?" Reine demanded, looking completely freaked out. Rinne blinked confused at that and realizing that Reine didn't know her current form, decided to be a little playful until her kids arrived.

"Oh, come on Reine, you know who I am." Rinne replied, suddenly making Reine and everyone else tilt their heads confused. "Really, no one recognizes me? Come on you've seen me plenty of times."

Everyone blinked and made sounds of confusion while they looked at one another, Rinne silently giggling at how confused everyone was. She was sure they'd have recognized her voice, unaware her voice when she wasn't part human was a bit different.

'This is a lot more fun than I thought it'd be.' Rinne mentally giggled.

Right at that moment, the same secret passageway opened up to reveal Shido, Mana and everyone else that had been at school at the time all feel out, having all come in at one. Rinne turned once she noticed them, and soon smiled.

"Wow, you guys are fast." Rinne smiled, and at that moment Shido and Mana got up and stared before both of them cried a bit and ran to hug her.

"MOM!" Shido and Mana both cried out, and Rinne hugged the both of them back. Smiling brightly at each of them.

Suddenly everyone who hadn't been present at Tamae's classroom suddenly froze in place as they heard that line, Shido and Mana had just called this woman their mother, their mother was Rinne Sonogami, who they had all recently believed to have died the other day. That could only mean...

"RINNE!?" Everyone screamed in shock, making Rinne smile.

"Surprise, can't get rid of me that easily." Rinne replied, briefly shifting her appearance back to her Spirit form to destroy the remaining doubt before shifting back. At that moment, everyone suddenly rushed in for a crowded group hug that knocked everyone to the floor. "Whoa! Slow down everyone, I'm not going anywhere."

"How is this possible! W-we thought you were dead!" Tohka sniffled, her eyes leaking waterfalls. "How'd you survive!?"

Rinne first raised a hand, signaling everyone to give her breathing room. She chuckled as she noticed her braid was undone and fixed it before stretching her joins back in place.

"Best way to answer that? Shido and Mana have the best younger sister ever, I was honestly about to disappear... but by some miracle, Rio managed to reach me with Mayuri's help and saved me." Rinne explained, soon twirling a bit. "And that's not even the best part, with how she saved me I'm just like the rest of you. I've got Humanity now!"
"Wait, you mean you mean..." Reine blinked, and soon noticed Maria's absence. "Maria! Get out here right now, you need to see this and do something for me!"

Maria soon formed from her hologram, yawning as she woke up from her nap, or recharge and she would define it. She rubbed her eyes and looked at Reine.

"What is it?" Maria asked, and soon noticed Rinne. "And who's that?"

"That's Rinne!" Reine answered, making the AI fully wake up as she wide eyed and looked in surprise.

"T-That's Rinne, but she was... one second please!" Maria exclaimed, soon using her analysis programs to check Rinne's body, and soon found the same spirit power with only a single difference. "I-It can't be, you're... you really are Rinne! You're alive!"

Maria suddenly began crying laser fluids again, and Rinne attempted to pat her hologram form's head.

"This is a miracle, but that's not even the strange part! Based on my readings your wavelength is more like the other Spirits', it's like you were a human turned Spirit too!" Maria replied, and Reine stared at the verification she got.

"Yep, Rio mentioned it was a gift Seigo gave me from the essence I used to make her. His wish that I'd to experience what it meant to be Human. To truly be part of the world he and my children lived in." Rinne smiled, soon hugging Reine close. "I wanted to do this since forever, hi there sis-in-law!"

Reine smiled as she teared up and hugged back, making everyone go 'Aww' at the sight.

"Hey, since you're back that means we can cream the DEM now!" Tohka cheered, and Rinne suddenly blinks before she sweat dropped.

"Uh... about that, no we can't actually." Rinne chuckled nervously, making everyone tilt their heads. "Unfortunately, while I have my physical form back, due to everything that happened, I wasn't revived in everything. Watch."

Rinne puffs her cheeks as she tries to concentrate, but only manages to get a small bit of her rainbow spirit mana out. Maria notices on her scanners it wasn't any stronger than the other Spirits. In fact, it would be accurate to say Rinne's power was weaker than the other Spirits' were right now.

"I think me kissing Shido near the end got my power stuck in him, so now the condition to restore my physical form by sealing all the Spirits? I think now it's the condition for me to regain my full power." Rinne explained, scratching her cheek.

"Who cares who soon or not we beat the DEM right now, I'm just glad you're bad for good this time." Mana said, hugging Rinne close. Rinne smiled and rubbed her daughter's head.

"Yeah, I think that matters most. It's really good... to be..." Rinne began, soon her face got flushed before she wobbled and fell to the floor. Her eyes swirled as she giggled a bit. "Oh dear, looks like I fell down."

Everyone stared at her oddly.

"That's odd, but maybe since she's finally got humanity, she might be feeling her first example of over exerting herself? She does seem a bit flushed." Maria wondered, and that moment she heard someone else fall. "Huh?"
Everyone turned to see Shido with the same flushed face, and in moments everyone with spirit powers except Mana and Maria ended up the same way. Reine gasped and placed her hand on their heads, but her worry died when they all just felt hot.

"Don't worry everyone, it seems like they all just caught fevers." Reine said, smiling to assure everyone. "Now can I get some hands putting all of them on some beds?"

Everyone nodded as they helped the seven of them rest on beds, though Saya looked at Mana oddly.

"What?" Mana asked.

"You have Spirit powers too, so why are you still fine? Better yet shouldn't Maria be affected since she's an AI based on a Spirit?" Saya wondered, making Mana blink.

"Yeah, that is a good point. What's keeping me from getting a fever too?" Mana asked.

Rinne shifts her head slightly to Reine.

"I think I have a theory, do you all remember when my powers went crazy the other day?" Rinne asked, making Rinne nod.

"Yeah, what of it?" Reine asked.

"Shido and the others all ended up having their powers overheat due to my connection to Shido, and their connection to him. The overflow was barely enough for their bodies to handle without risk. So maybe due to that overflow, the rest of us ended up getting sick as a side effect because it didn't properly regulate." Rinne explained, soon turning to Mana.

"Mana, you and Maria don't have that same connection to Shido. Since neither of you had the overflow..."

Mana's eyes widen.

"I get it, me and Maria are fine because we weren't effected by that in the first place." Mana realized, and Maria sighed in relief. "Still... this is a problem, what if another Spirit shows up right now?"

"Mana's right, how long will this last?" Maria inquired.

"I think we'll be fine after a day, since it took that long for us to get sick, that should be how long it takes for our power to regulate to its proper wavelength. One day shouldn't be enough for a new Spirit to show up." Rinne answered, soon feeling herself get drowsy. "For now, we'll get rest so we'll be on our feet tomorrow."

Rinne soon fell asleep, snoring loudly and making Reine sweat drop. A call sound suddenly comes as Maria's eyes shake like a ringer.

"Commander Reine! Its Founder Elliot, he's got an urgent message for us!" Maria replied, making Reine come over as she answers it.

"Commander Reine speaking, what do you need sir." Reine asked, soon seeing Elliot himself appear on the screen.

Most of the group who had never seen Elliot before were in shock that a man with an easygoing expression founded the entire organization, not to mention the fact he was in wheelchair. Mana suddenly notices Karen holding his wheelchair.
"She looks just like Ellen!" Mana thought.

"Good to see you in good health Reine, though brushing that to the side for right now..." Elliot began, clearing his throat. "Recently you alerted me to how you learned of Artemisia's disappearance and the reason behind it, and the fact she is currently comatose right now due to her memories being stolen, correct?"

Reine nodded.

"I thought I should let you know we've managed to trace the source to where her memories are being held." Elliot revealed, making everyone gasp. "However, what's strange about the source is that it's moving. Not just that, but its moving too erratically to be a transport vehicle. I'm not sure what it is as a result."

"Minerva."

Everyone looked at Mana as she recalled their previous battle.

"When mom's power went crazy, I saw her using Artemisia's movements firsthand being used by her. Then when I said something, she pretty much admitted it." Mana explained, looking at her hand as she tightened it. "It's no wonder she's the new Adeptus 2, her memories are in that new CR-Unit of hers!"

"Westcott... that bastard!" Ashley growled, smashing her fist into the wall.

"If that's the case, we must retrieve those memories now. Every moment he has access to them, he can continue studying her unique territory to his advantage." Elliot stated, surprising some of the group. "Oh, that's right, most of you aren't aware of this. Artemisia is unique among those with Mana core's her territory is one in a million."

Everyone looks at the SSS trio, and Cecile speaks up.

"Basically, Artemisia's territory defies any physics that apply to them. When you make a territory its usually only able to move if you use it as a shield. Any other time its locked in place." Cecile began, looking at Elliot who brought up a video. "As you'll see her, Artemisia can somehow ignore that rule."

Everyone saw Artemisia during her early SSS training and how she could move her territory when not surrounding her, and that was just one ability it possessed. Everyone was shocked at the sight.

"Exactly, and that's just one thing that made her territory different. Artemisia seems to be a miracle child when it comes to those born with mana cores." Leonora continued, now holding a sketchbook as she drew something. "Ratatoskr was intending to study it... but that's when she went missing, or rather the DEM got her."

Artemisia draws a strange sphere like device with glowing spots, and everyone takes a closer look... but Tohka who slightly raised her head recognized it easily.

"I-I saw that... on ship that I fought." Tohka said weakly, making everyone look as Katie supported her body. "I think it was called... Ashcroft Beta. It seemed like it was supporting the ship, that's all I know though."

"Ashcroft... that's Artemisia's last name, so the DEM is creating some kind of realizers with it?" Mana sweated. "And if that was the Beta, I bet there's an Alpha. Then wouldn't that mean..."
"...Yeah, that's why we asked Reine if she knew anything about Artemisia. We heard rumors of an Ashcroft Gamma." Ashley sighed, staring at the wall.

"For that reason, I'll need Shido and the others to go-

Reine holds up a hand to his surprise.

"I'm sorry sir, but none of the Spirits or Shido will be able to help. After the incident the other day, they've all gotten sick. They'll need another day to recover and we don't have that kind of time. We lose her now and we might not get another chance." Reine sighed, making Elliot nod.

"I understand, then there's no choice." Elliot replied, looking at Mana. "Mana, you and the AST will all need to go and stop Minerva before we lose the chance to save Artemisia. She's not just a valuable asset to Ratatoskr and our best Wizard, but a good friend who's smiles saved many."

Before Mana could reply, Ashley rushed by her.

"Of course, this is my friend we're talking about! We're gonna save her and make sure Minerva learns the hard way she's gonna pay! This time that bitch is gonna die and get all the karma she needs to pay up!" Ashley declared, making Mana giggle before smiling.

"While not my word choice, Ashley's right. We'll save her no matter what." Mana replied, and soon all the other AST members gave their own looks of approval.

"Glad to hear it, I'd also like you to go with them Maria. Since you're the only other Spirit who's up and mobile now they could use your aid." Elliot replied, making the AI nod as she disappears to enter her android body. "Elliot out, good luck everyone."

Elliot's face leaves the screen, and Mana turns to everyone.

"Alright everyone, the AST is alone this time against an opponent who's a serious threat. We don't have my big brother and the Spirits to help us... but let's still do this!" Mana declared as she raised her arm up, and the whole AST did the same.

"Everyone head for the Sagittarius then, we'll be deploying right now!" Maria announced as she appeared in her android body, everyone nodded as they headed off to the Sagittarius.

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*)Fairy Tail - Strike Back, begins playing*

(*Guitar solo begins*) Mana appears in a field, her eyes closed.
(Whooaaa... Whooaaa... Whooaaa... Whooaaa, Whoa! Strike Back!) Mana keeps standing there, Ryouko and Mikie appear beside her, then Katie and Saya, followed by the SSS trio, and finally Maria before the remainder of the AST appear. All of them open their eyes at the same time.

(*Heavy guitar wailing*) Mana and Maria ready themselves in the city limits, Katie and Ryouko observe a faraway grassland, and Mikie and Saya grab some food before the SSS trio yells at them and they run.

(When the chance comes into view, we have to take the chance to change any possibility.) Mana walks through her neighborhood, an intangible copy of herself following, both turning their heads to look towards the sky.
(But even if we don't, we have the right to fight against inevitability!) The two soon combine,
equipping the Murakumo onto Mana as she grabs her swords and swings down at an unseen enemy.

(My path is wrong, because I don't know what's right, but I don't want to turn back now...) Artemisia is seen smiling, before slowly fading as Minerva's hand encompassed her inside, forming the Basilisk around her body. The SSS trio stare at her.

(I'll accept the future I make no matter what it needs to be!) The equip their CR-Units before they take out their weapons and begin clashing with Minerva, who gave an insane smile as they clash with her.

(*musical explosion sound*)

(What is up!? What is down!? Turn me left, right and then around!) Minerva raises a hand, standing by a fleet of DEM automatons, the AST clashing with them with everything they had.

(I don't wanna give up, so please... let me try another round!) Maria spins and assumes her Astral Dress form before beginning to attack through the automatons, looking up as she readies herself for their reinforcements.

(Through the land and the sky, I don't know why! But...) Ashley, Leonora and Cecile's memories with Artemisia pass by before showing her comatose body suddenly shake in pain, making the trio scream in anger as Minerva slashes through the memories, trying to strike Mana on the other side.

(If it leads to me dream I'll say this one thing!) Mana's Murakumo glows as she charges and clashes her swords against Minerva's.

(*drum beat solo*)

(No matter what becomes a wall, I'll stay by your side through it all!) Mana rushes forward and swings her sword, slashing across Minerva to create a scar on her eye, while a memory illusion of Minerva does the same to the other eye, making Minerva scream as her eyes glow with anger.

(That's just my way!) Mana is knocked back, the Murakumo trashed as she skids across the ground, Minerva slowly walking, only shadowed as her form was now different and something... darker.

(My soul is unbreakable, that's why I refuse to fall!) Ashley seen angrily lashing out at someone who touched her only for Artemisia to hug her and make her shake with guilt, Leonora trying to appear strong and tough before Artemisia rubbed her back as she began to cry, and Cecile fell to the ground as Artemisia picked her up.

(So please say...) Mana feels those three memories flow into her, and soon she sheds the Murakumo before she raises her hand.

(*Drum beats and guitar wails*)

(That it's time to strike back!) In Mana's hand, she sees herself forming a sword of cyan spirit power before she charges ahead, Minerva doing the same as the two enemy wizards both shout loudly, clashing their blades as a massive explosion of power bursts from them, causing them to continue nearing each other as their respective energies cover them.

(*sudden music stop*) Artemisia was seen knelt to the ground on a field of flowers, rubbing Mana's head as she slept on her lap. Making Mana's mouth shift to a smile in its sleep as she holds part of Murakumo in her hand.

Maria was flying the Sagittarius through the sky as the entirety of the AST was riding on the ship, Mana looked as Ashley, Leonora and Cecile all seemed toe most anxious. Especially the former of the three who was clasping her fists so tight, Mana swore it was making the seats shake underneath her.
"Uh... Ashley, ease the hand grip a little?" Katie asked, making her glare at her. The sniper shook a bit. "N-No it's fine, in fact continue on!"

Ryouko hit Ashley on the head a bit, making the close combat Wizard rub her head.

"Will you ease up troop? You're not gonna do yourself doing any good worrying about this mission." Ryouko ordered, making Ashley look down a bit. "I know how much you want Artemisia back, but it won't do you good if that worry hinders you."

"...I'm sorry, I just owe her so much. Not just me. Leonora and Cecile, Artemisia changed our lives more than most people know." Ashley replied, tearing up a bit. "I can't face the possibility she might not wake up, especially as we get so close to the possibility of seeing her smile again."

Mana rubbed her back.

"I heard a bit from Aunt Reine, she told me you used to lash out at everyone. Artemisia was the one who got you to open up to others wasn't she?" Mana asked.

"Right on the mark there, Artemisia is like the sister I never had... the family I didn't have. If it wasn't for meeting her, Leonora and Cecile... I don't know where I'd be right now." Ashley answered honestly, getting the other AST members attention. "So... I'm gonna make sure I save her!"

Mikie looks at her before looking forward and looking a bit sad.

'She's still willing to stand tall despite all the pain and suffering, just for the sake of a friend. I wish I had that... instead of being afraid so often due to back then.' Mikie thought, remembering the day she left the comfort of being oblivious to Spirits.

---Flashback Start---

Mikie suddenly panicked as she and everyone heard the Spacequake alarm go off.

"A Spacequake right now? Oh, come on, I can't even enjoy a simple walk without something happening!?!" Mikie complained, soon running towards the shelters like everyone else, however during the process she slightly tripped and soon crashed into a nearby statue that fell over her and landed over her leg, making her yelp in pain. "Oh no... no, no, no!"

Mikie panicked and tried to push the statue off her leg, panting as she knew the Spacequake could go off any second and she still wasn't in the shelters to protect herself. Mikie's efforts would be for naught as she heard the explosive sound and screamed as she covered her head as she felt the strong winds from the quake blowing... but she didn't feel herself dying.

"Huh?" Mikie blinked, and looked to see she had narrowly been away from the blast radius. She breathed in slowly, thankful how luck she was, especially since the force of the wind tossed the statue off her leg. "I'm OK... that was so scary!"

Soon she heard a sound, one that she was sure was the noise of shuffling armor. She turned towards the crater left by the quake... and her eyes widened as she saw the girl she would later know as Tohka Yatogami standing in it.

"T-that's a... why's there a girl there?" Mikie gasped.

At that moment, Tohka turned and held up her hand to form a barrier against missiles fired at her, Mikie fell back and shook as Tohka summoned Sandalphon and flew at them. With a mighty yell
Tohka swung it down and slashed at the DEM wizards, knocking most of them back.

Though to Mikie's eyes at that moment, Tohka looked a lot more demonic than she actually was, and the DEM looked much more innocent, especially as Tohka's strength ripped through the city like a Spacequake would.

Mikie sat in place as she wondered what she should think about what she had been told while present on the battlefield.

"This thing is a monster called a Spirit! They cause the Spacequakes, they hurt the world, and we're the ones that keep them from destroying it!"

"I..." Mikie said to herself, holding her hand closer to her chest. "After what I saw, it seems like that one man was right, but... can I believe him? A bunch of woman and some men in suits, and a girl with supernatural powers? Who's the real victim?"

Mikie looked at her phone, wondering if maybe she could call someone, but would they believe them? After a bit, Mikie decided to call someone she could trust with odd secrets and called her cousin Tamae. She heard the phone ring for a bit until...

"Hello, is that you Mikie?" Tamae asked.

"Y-yeah, do you mind if I ask you something? I might sound totally crazy but please hear me out... if you saw some girl with superpowers attacked by a group of flying people in suits, who seems like the victim? Even if the latter claims they're protecting the world." Mikie replied, suddenly she only heard silence and checked to make sure Tamae didn't hang up.

"Uh... hello?"

Tamae took a moment to regain her bearings before Mikie heard her talk again.

"Mikie... come meet me in my classroom tomorrow, I have something you should see." Tamae replied, making Mikie shocked at the reply. Did Tamae actually know what she was talking about?

"Bye."

Mikie stared at her wall in shock as she heard the hang up sound.

Mikie soon entered her cousin's classroom after school hours.

"Um... I'm here, what do you need to show me?" Mikie asked, Tamae soon reached for a button hidden under a specific spot of her desk. Mikie suddenly gasped as a secret entrance revealed itself in the wall. "W-w-what is this!?"

"I'm about to show you the truth of what you saw." Tamae said, taking Mikie's hand as they suddenly travel down and appear in Ratatoskr's secret base. Mikie looked around in shock as Tamae looked at her.

"Mikie, I'm about to tell you the truth behind the beings known as Spirits, and the man who caused the tragedy of 30 years ago." Tamae replied, and Mikie stared as her whole life changed in that one moment.

-End Flashback-
Mikie's mind soon returns to reality, and she breathes as she makes a determined face.

'What am I saying!? Maybe I might still be traumatized by that one moment with Tohka's powers, but... if I don't pull my weight then Artemisia will stay asleep! I can't let that happen!' Mikie thought. 'Just like Tohka told me that one time.'

---Flashback Start---

Mikie was sitting on a park bench, and suddenly heard the sound of a bike screeching a bit, constantly no less. She looked up and saw...

"Look out, I can't stop it!" Tohka warned, making Mikie panic as Tohka hit a bump, and the bike flew into the air before she and Tohka's heads conked one another. Causing both to tumbled into the bushes behind the bench. "Ow... sorry Mikie."

"It's OK, nothing's broken... except maybe my common sense." Mikie groaned, rubbing her head as she got back up. She saw Tohka grab the now broken bike and try to fix it. "Uh... why are you trying so hard to ride a bike like that? There's easier things like electric scooters."

Tohka looked at her and blinked.

"True, that would be easier, but... I don't want to do things easy." Tohka replied with a smile, making Mikie blink. "I realized it after what happened with me and Origami being frozen. If you only do what you can, you'll never become more than you are now."

Mikie gasped slightly, and Tohka soon got back on the bike.

"OK, let's try this again!" Tohka said vigorously as she rode the damaged bike with some difficulty.

"...Do more than what you can, become more than you are now." Mikie repeated, feeling like Tohka had taught her something important.

---End Flashback---

Mikie gripped her fist.

'It's time I did that here!' Mikie thought with determination, and soon Maria whistles to get every AST members attention before she turned around slightly.

"Everyone get ready... we're about to reach our destination." Maria stated, a serious look on her face.

Inside the Ratatoskr base, Mildred was replacing the wet towelettes on Shido and the other Spirits' heads as they continued resting from their overflow fevers, she replaced Rinne's last and stared oddly at how Rinne had kept smiling throughout the entire thing.

"Uh... Rinne, not to be weird, but why are you smiling right now? I mean while it's just a small fever, you're sick right now." Mildred asked.

"Because it's my first time getting sick, I'm getting to experience what it's like to be human every moment and I'm loving it!" Rinne replied, giggling a bit as Mildred sweat dropped after hearing the answer. "Hey sis, how's everything looking for Mana and the others."

Reine grabbed a tablet and looked at their location compared to where Minerva seemed to be
heading, putting it back down afterwards and missing Minerva's sudden turn to a specific location.

"They're getting pretty close to their destination, I just hope they'll be OK. We had to cut our communications to avoid a risk of Minerva detecting them... I can't help but worry." Reine replied, showing her worry.

"You shouldn't worry too much sis, my daughter's a strong girl. I know she'll make sure everyone comes back in one piece. That's the best thing any mother can hope for their children, and I've seen firsthand how hard she and Shido have worked. Even Tohka's striving to do better." Reine replied, smiling brightly and making Reine blink and give a smile back.

"You sound just like my brother used to, he really did have a strong influence on you." Reine smiled, and soon noticed Yoshino looking at the ceiling sadly. "Is something wrong Yoshino?"

Yoshino weakly moved her hand, showing Yoshinon looked even worse now. Reine took a closer look as the rabbit puppet couldn't even open its eye or hold up its ears anymore, and by this point 70% of her body was all wrinkly.

"Oh no, this isn't good. Do you mind if I take her off to check on her real quick?" Reine asked, and Yoshino nodded. Reine does so and puts her on an examination table. "Hey Kurumi, if I recall correctly, didn't we start seeing signs of this around after Shido sealed you?"

"Yeah, in fact I remember watching the Goliath fight and noticing Yoshino mention she couldn't Inverse, that was about... two days before if I remember right. I think that was the first sign." Kurumi replied, and soon thought a bit more. "In fact, I think it was a day or after we beat the Deus that we saw more physical signs."

Shido tapped his bed, and Mildred came over to help him sit up a bit.

"And I think by the time we planned our Hot Springs trip, Yoshino was clearly really ill and kept getting worse. From there her health kept spiraling downwards." Shido added, making Reine think.

"Hmm... I'm not exactly able to diagnose a living puppet's health for obvious reasons, but I think there might be a change in Yoshino's powers that's affecting Yoshino this way. What would it be though?" Reine wondered, and Rinne blinked and sighed before raising her hand. "Wait, you think you might know Rinne?"

Rinne sweated a little, groaning a bit.

"Actually, I don't think... I know. I saw the reason why during yesterday's events. I was able to dive into the flow of Yoshino's mana flow and saw something... a memory Yoshino seems to have forgotten." Rinne answered, getting everyone's attention.

"It was when Yoshino got her Sephira from Rio, there was something odd I saw during it... Yoshino looked older than she does now. She looks 10 right now, I think most of us can agree on that, right?"

Everyone nods, Rinne breathes as she knew she already crossed the draw bridge.

'Yoshino, please forgive me for the reveal your about to witness. I was hoping to wait on this but I don't think it can wait any longer.' Rinne thought, soon clearing her throat. "Yoshino, tell us... what's your actual age since becoming a Spirit?"

"I'm 13." Yoshino answered.

Everyone suddenly freezes in place and looks at Yoshino with a look of surprise and then...
"WHAT!?” Everyone shouted.

"Yep, if I learned something from Seigo, romantic love doesn't happen until you're at least in your teen years and its clear Yoshino likes Shido that way. That makes what I saw make more sense.” Rinne continued, soon grabbing a drink of water before continuing.

"Yoshino looks 10 because I noticed in her memories that when Yoshinon was created, Yoshino got younger. It's very likely a response Zadkiel's crystal made to her. I think we've already seen the Crystals can sometimes to unexpected things.”

Rinne looked at Origami, Kotori and Kurumi.

"Origami, you had your lock briefly fail if you sensed mana. Kotori, Saya's consciousness survived inside of you. And Kurumi, when the Cassiopeia was attached to you, all your powers changed entirely. Based on what I see, Yoshino's lack of friends at the time manifested into a puppet with its own will, a piece of herself.”

Reine's eyes widen.

"Wait, you mean..." Reine asked, and Rinne nodded.

"Yoshinon is part of Yoshino, likely the part that has her inversion taint, and they were separated into two individuals which likely regressed Yoshino's age to make Yoshinon old enough to talk with her. Since Yoshino has found friends finally... Zadkiel's crystal realizes Yoshinon isn't needed anymore.” Reine explained, looking at Yoshino who was shaking scared.

"I'm sorry Yoshino, but... I'm afraid Yoshinon will soon become fully part of you again and vanish, we can't help her because to keep her alive... you'd need to shatter your bonds and friendships with all of us. I'm sorry."

Yoshino gasped loudly, her eyes suddenly tearing up.

"No... no, Yoshinon..." Yoshino whimpered before she began crying. Ai, Mai and Mii all hugged her as she cried. Rinne watched her and looked at Reine, who walked over holding Yoshinon on hand.

"...Be honest Rinne, do you know how much time before Yoshinon vanishes?” Reine asked.

"Nothing specific, but I can way it could be three days at most... and today at the least. We need to help Yoshino prepare for to say goodbye.” Rinne replied, and Reine nodded before walking over and handing Yoshinon to Yoshino who hugged her friend tightly. 'Poor Yoshino, you had your wish granted... but I doubt you wanted to lose Yoshino either.'

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Artemisia Memory File 02, Subject - Leonora Sears

Ashley and Minerva were having a mock battle with one another, though the condition between the two was hands were the only thing allowed and it was strictly melee combat, Ashley dodged some of Minerva's strikes before sliding under a surprise kick she made.

"What!?" Minerva stated in shock, giving Ashley the opening she needed to grab Minerva and finish the mock fight with a back drop. Minerva gasped as she soon slumped onto the floor. Ashley cheered as she jumped around excitedly. "No way... how could this shrimp beat me?"

"Hah! Take that Minerva, you can't make fun of me anymore!” Ashley exclaimed, making Minerva
growl angrily at how she was being mocked. Artemisia panicked slightly as she was afraid a fight would break out.

Luckily, said fight would never happen as they suddenly hear the door open. A black-haired girl soon walked in wearing a Wiring Suit, making Artemisia and Ashley turn to face her while Minerva gets up to look as well.

"Huh, looks like we got a new recruit already. Didn't you only join us last week Artemisia?" Ashley asked.

"More or less, though didn't the group get formed due to Ratatoskr facing a large-scale attack they faced from the DEM? Wouldn't that make joining intervals wonky already?" Artemisia questioned, Ashley groaned trying to think while Minerva shrugged. Artemisia turned to their new member. "Hi there, welcome to the SSS. What's your name?"

The girl in question just walked by her coldly, making Artemisia blink. She grabs a training rifle, and before she set any kind of training... she suddenly aimed her gun and fired, shooting a fly to the group's surprise. The girl turns to answer Artemisia's question.

"...Leonora Sears."

The eyes of the three veteran SSS members all shifts towards where Leonora walked as their bodies were frozen by shock, each blinking three times in unison.

"Did she just shoot a freaking fly with a gun!?" Ashley asked.

"I... I... I..." Minerva stuttered, even she couldn't do that with her level of skill... and actually wondered if trying to learn how to do that was a good idea. "Excuse me, I need to go lie down."

The two turned their heads slowly to follow Minerva's retreating form. Once she had, Artemisia and Ashley look at Leonora as she completes multiple levels of long ranged and sniper based training flawlessly.

"Damn, that girl's good." Ashley commented, soon noticing Artemisia stare at Leonora intensely to her confusion. "Something wrong?"

"...She's hurting, I can feel it in her heart. A deep dark pain that's harming her regardless of if she's aware of it or not." Artemisia answered, making Ashley stare at her oddly with an eye raised. Artemisia chuckled oddly as she rubbed her head.

"Sorry, guess that does sound kinda odd. I don't know why but... I just seem to know when someone's hiding some kind of pain in their hearts. Mental anguish, dark pasts, painful memories or stressful emotions... I can sense and feel it all. I can tell this girl has it too."

Ashley's eyes widen slightly at that.

'Is that how she was so sure of herself when she was helping me? If she could she tell I had something like that, I wonder if Artemisia went through something painful herself.' Ashley thought, looking at the sweet and cheerful girl who saved her from herself. "Let me guess, you're gonna try and help her?"

"I can't turn my back on someone who hides their pain, no matter what I'm going to help her even if I have to bare it with her." Artemisia nodded, and Ashley sighed before smiled at her friend.

"Alright, guess I'll help you out." Ashley replied.
After waiting for Leonora to go outside the base for something, Artemisia and Ashley followed her to see if they could learn anything... and Artemisia kept getting distracted by Ashley's 'incognito outfit', which was a detective coat, a beret that she put all her hair into, large sunglasses, a face mask and snow pants. Ashley looks at Artemisia as she blinks at her attire.

"What?" Ashley asked.

"Uh... Ashley? Are you sure you need all that, or at the very least need those specific things for a disguise?" Artemisia asked, sweat dropping a bit. "I mean for one, its Summer and you're wearing snow pants."

Ashley looked at her like she was talking heresy.

"Seriously? This is the whole of a disguise, making yourself completely unrecognizable." Ashley replied, shifting her sunglasses to give them an emphasis shine. "No one's recognize me like this, much less Leonora."

'Maybe, but the problem is you stand out so much you still seem suspicious.' Artemisia thought, mentally chuckling nervously as she noticed some stares aimed towards them. "I think you should at least change out of the snow pants."

Ashley groans, and soon starts walking.

"Look, I'll prove to you that it works here. Right now, I'm walking and..." Ashley began, only to suddenly faint as she felt herself suddenly hot. Artemisia panics a bit and rushes to Ashley.

"I knew it was a bad idea!" Artemisia said to herself, helping Ashley up.

Soon Ashley was sitting on a bench, now in one of her usual casual outfits as she drank some cold water and Artemisia fanned her a bit. She pants as she finished her third water bottle and wiped herself with a towelette.

"OK, I'll admit it... maybe the disguise was a bit of a problem." Ashley groaned, soon turning her gaze to Artemisia. "Thanks to my pride we ended up losing her, sorry about that."

"It's alright, plus it was kinda cute to see you try too hard to be stealthy." Artemisia smiled, making Ashley blush and make a comical angry stutter upon hearing that.

"I don't act cute!" Ashley denied, looking away embarrassed, as she did she noticed a trash can suddenly fall over to her surprise. "Huh?"

She focused her vision a little and soon noticed the one who knocked it over had been Leonora.

"Artemisia, Leonora's right there!" Ashley whispered, getting the older wizard's attention as Leonora continued walking somewhere while rubbing her one leg.

"That was lucky, let's follow her then." Artemisia whispered back, and two followed her without Leonora noticing.

During their little stalking crusade, they noticed Leonora didn't really seem to stop anywhere or have anywhere she planned to go. She was just there and walking, keeping the tough cold look they had seen her making since she had first walked into the SSS's training room.
Though Leonora did seem to be somewhat aware she was being followed as a few times, Artemisia and Ashley had to quickly hide somewhere, but Leonora luckily never caught them despite what they had briefly seen showing she seemed to notice things from a distance with great accuracy.

"I can't read this girl at all, what's she doing?" Ashley whispered.

"I'm not sure, but-" Artemisia was about to answer, but soon the two heard another trash can fall over and looked to see Leonora had knocked another one over. Leonora looked at it before picking it back up, and Artemisia noticed her facade slip for a moment.

"...Artemisia?" Ashley wondered.

"Ashley, I think I may have just spotted a clue to what the problem is." Artemisia replied, motioning her hand. Ashley nodded and followed her as she and Artemisia began moving after her again.

Eventually, the two noticed Leonora stop by a small clearing in the park's forest area. The two looked to see a stick embedded in the ground with a ripped piece of cloth tied around it. Leonora kneeled and stared at it, drawing two lines in the ground. The two noticed that there were hundreds of lines already present.

"...My clumsiness only came up twice today, I'm getting closer to being truly being tough." Leonora stated, making the other two go wide eyed at the claim.

'This is a marker for how many times she ends up being clumsy!? They both thought, and in the process of their reaction... Ashley steps on a tree branch that makes a rather loud snap. Leonora suddenly turned around and noticed them.

"...Oh crap." Ashley sweated, realizing she had made the sound.

Leonora suddenly takes out a hidden gun as she gives them an angry look, Ashley paled while Artemisia shook. However right as Leonora prepared to fire, she suddenly took a step... and suddenly fell flat on her face. The duo blinked at the sight, and at that moment noticed Leonora look up, suddenly with a crying face.

"Damn it! Right in front of others no less, how am I supposed to look tough to them now!?" Leonora cried before hanging her head down again.

"She's a... crybaby?" Ashley asked, though more like answering herself. "This is weird, now I'm confused!"

Artemisia looks at Leonora before walking closer and helping her up.

"I think I get it, this is the real her, and it always has." Artemisia replied, and Leonora looks away, trying to not cry and salvage what she had left of her tough looking image. "Hey, it's alright. I won't judge you. Though I would like to know why you feel the need to act like someone else, what's your story."

"...If I tell you, promise not to laugh or make fun of me?" Leonora asked.

"I pinkie swear." Artemisia replied, Leonora looks at her and then breathes as she began.

-Flashback Start-

A younger Leonora, about maybe 11 or 12 years at the time, was walking through a park area as
As she carried her lunch on hand, she got near a particularly crowded area, she suddenly tripped over nothing and stumbled, causing everyone to turn as they saw her fall and her lunch spilled all over her.

"Aw man, I was looking forward this this too..." Leonora cried, but soon she saw everyone looking at her and a few light giggles. Some of them even pointing to have others see it. It wasn't meant to be harmful, but to Leonora... it was like a stab wound. 'Stop it, stop laughing! It's not funny!'

Leonora soon grabbed all the scattered mess of food she could and ran off, she soon found the garbage can and noticed more people by the closest one. Not wanting to get near them, she simply threw the scattered lunch's remains into the trash with full accuracy.

"...I'll just go home now." Leonora said to herself.

As she turned and prepared to go home, she bumped into someone... she fell back onto the ground, and soon felt a bunch of lemonade spill all over her. She looked up to see a girl and a group of tough looking girls stare at her, the leader of sorts holding a now empty lemonade can. After a moment, they all began laughing.

"Oh man! What a klutz, normally when you bump into someone you spill their drink on them, not yourself!" The leader girl replied, soon the girls kept walking as the leader threw her can at the garbage and missed, making it bounce over.

Some of the nearby people moved out of the way as they came back. Leonora grabbed the can, and cried before getting an angry look in her eyes.

"Why does everyone laugh when I end up being clumsy, and yet those girls aren't shown any trouble for how tough they are?" Leonora asked, soon tossing the can into the trash with full accuracy. Leonora screamed and ran into part of the forest, soon she noticed a stick and stuck it into the ground while tying a cloth around it.

"No more... I'm going to be tough, I won't let anyone laugh at me like that ever again! Do you all hear me!"

She marks a line into the ground by the stick, and soon looks up with the tough look she had now.

-End Flashback-

Ashley stared in shock as she heard that story, it wasn't the same as her own, but the feeling rang all too similar in how her environment shaped her and the skill set she developed in the present day. Artemisia looked at Leonora before suddenly hugging her close, surprising the black-haired sniper.

"I understand now, you can't help by be a little clumsy and due to how people saw you and their reactions you felt awful. You felt that unless you could look tough you'd be walked over. There's nothing wrong with wanting to be strong, but..." Artemisia began, soon rubbing Leonora's back.

"You don't have to be alone, we'll always fall and we'll always stumble, but we can get back up. Let me be someone to help you when you fall over. You'll make mistakes, but I'll be there to help you grow from them. No matter how much you cry it's not a weakness, when you feel you've been too strong for too long, don't be afraid to cry, because I'll be there to get you back on your feet."

"Artemisia..." Leonora said quietly, soon crying into her chest as Artemisia hugged her closer. Ashley stared for a moment before sighing and smirking at the sight.

'Looks like we've got a new friend in our group, seeing this... I'm really glad you and I met.' Ashley
thought, smiling brightly.

And the group is about to take the first stage in saving Artemisia, the question is what's the mission that Westcott had sent Minerva on, and what has it lead the AST to in their attempt to follow her? Either way they need to expect a fight, and they don't have the Spirits to aid them this time, so Mana's gotta be the hero this time, just like Reine mentioned she might have to be back in Kurumi's arc. *chuckles* That's irony for ya ;3

Poor Shido, he and the other Spirits sure have it rough right now, who knew that overheated feeling in the last arc would eventually lead to them getting sick? Well... I knew that, but you get the idea. *giggles*

Now some of you might be wondering, why did I give Ashley the backstory I did? Its due to how her character is in canon, where she prefers punk rock outfits and is kinda a loner, and the Ashcroft series CR-Unit that she used was made for melee combat. So, the best backstory I felt connected to all of those? Being bullied to the point that she responded with physical force, and leaving her unable to trust anyone until she met Artemisia.

And for Leonora's choice of a backstory? Canon shows she acts tough on the outside, but in truth she's a crybaby that despite being a year older sees Artemisia as her big sister, and that she's an incredibly gifted at long-range attacks including sniper weapons, guns, cannons and missiles. I figure that clumsiness had to be what made her want to look tough, and that also got her quite distant from a few people, and that caused her to be more aware and alert of things that were far away from her.

However, the most shocking thing this chapter revealed? The simple fact that Yoshinon's going to disappear soon. For those wondering why I'm doing this? Well, recall when I made Kotori's appearance older due to how she Inverted and regenerated her body at the same time? I also mentioned I'd be aging up Yoshino and Natsumi's appearances so they looked more like their actual teenage ages, and this was the best thing I could think of for how I'd do it with Yoshino.

The second is because this is to help her gain a bit of character development where she'll learn to stand up on her own when she needs to, especially once Natsumi finally shows up where it'll become necessary for her.

Whoa, now I'm rambling here ^^; *chuckles embarrassingly* see you all next chapter.

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 85%
Origami - 78%
Yoshino - 73%
Kotori - 79%
Kurumi - 69%
Chapter 26

Oh yeah, final chapter time! XD

Last chapter, we had the story behind how Artemisia befriended Ashley and Leonora, the survival of Rinne and her nerf, then Shido and the Spirits (which may or may not include Rio and Mayuri, that's up to you readers :3) all got sick with only Mana and Maria unaffected which was finally topped off by Elliot revealing the information about Artemisia's memories that set the AST into action. *blinks* Oh, and Yoshinon's starting to disappear ^^;

In this chapter, you're gonna see the stories of how both Ryouko and Katie were led to Ratatoskr, and unlike Ryouko and Mikie I've yet to mention anything about how Katie joined the group in the slightest. There's also a bit about Maria's past, and we'll be starting this chapter with the memory of Artemisia and Cecile's first meeting upon her arrival in the SSS.

Along with that, we'll be seeing the SSS trio and Mana as they go to fight Minerva, and to anyone who's familiar with Date AST Strike's story... I don't think it's any surprise this will be a fight to the death, when this ends there's going to be someone dead because Minerva will literally fight to her demise or until she succeeds in killing her opponents.

What will be the highlight of this chapter is I've had Mana's Murakumo slightly upgraded after the damages it took during the Rinne arc, but most of all... there's something else you'll see with her that I actually hinted from the opening theme. You'll know it when you see it, and boy will it be awesome, let's just say it became possible due to a previous event. I can't say which because it'd spoil you no matter how I hinted it.

Finally, I think we all know of one event that will happen by the end of this chapter... so I won't say anymore, but I'd advise tissues if you're a fan of Yoshino and/or Yoshinon, especially the latter.

Chapter 26, Movie Chapter: Date AST Re:Strike, Part 2

Artemisia Memory File 03, Subject - Cecile O'Brien

Leonora fired at multiple targets with her rifle, scoring direct on the bulls-eyes of each one in only three seconds. Minerva stared in shock as her record was shattered so easily, Leonora sighed and smiled before Ashley and Artemisia ran over and each gave her a high five.

"Yeah! You showed those targets who's boss, that's why you're our ace sniper!" Ashley shouted, turning to Minerva with a 'take that' look to SSS Ace's irritation.

"I can't take all the credit, Artemisia's support when I falter has helped me become more focused. I'm not as distracted about my image all the time." Leonora replied, making Artemisia blush slightly as she scratched her cheek. Soon everyone saw Karen walk in, causing all four SSS members to turn to her. "Oh, do you need something Miss Karen?"

Karen removed her glasses real quick and cleans them slightly.

"Yes, she's currently in the process of changing into her Wiring Suit, but I thought I should let you
know that the SSS has now gained its fifth member." Karen replied, getting their attention. "I want you all to be supportive of her, she has great potential but suffers from some self-doubt about herself. Try to help her confidence best you can."

"Yes ma'am!" Everyone replied, although Minerva gave a 'not gonna care' look in response with Karen only failing to notice cause Minerva's head as turned slightly.

"Thank you, now if you'll excuse me." Karen replied, soon leaving the room while Minerva groans and goes to get a drink.

The rest of the group waited for a moment, and soon their new member came in through the door, revealing Cecile to the three of them for the first time, but none of them aware of what her Wiring Suit was doing for her.

"Hey there, so you're the new girl?" Ashley asked.

"Oh! Uh... yeah, my name is Cecile O'Brien, it's nice to meet you." Cecile introduced, soon noticing Minerva from afar, drinking some kind of bitter beverage. "Uh... is she OK?"

Ashley snickered.

"Oh, just ignore her. Minerva's just a bitch." Ashley said, waving her hand a bit. Minerva had a vein form on her head. "What? You know it's true, right... Alice!"

"How did you find out my old name!?" Minerva screamed angrily, her face going red.

"Because you left your license out when you were changing the other day, on obvious view. Didn't even need to try looking, I walked by it on the way out." Ashley smirked, making Minerva pale while still looking angry. She threw the empty drink can at Ashley as she walked out. "And she just proved it there."

Cecile sweat dropped at the sight.

"Eh, don't mind me too much. I'm a bit of a rebel. Name's Ashley Sinclair, I'm the youngest here and our melee combat expert. The jerk who just left was the so called SSS's ace, Minerva Riddell." Ashley introduced.

"Leonora Sears, sniper and long-range expert... don't let my usual look fool you. You might see me cry a few times." Leonora followed up.

"And I'm Artemisia Bell Ashcroft, and I'd say I'm best at all all-around rather than one focus. It's nice to meet you." Artemisia smiled, offering a hand which Cecile accepted.

"It's nice to meet you all." Cecile smiled, any nervousness she had about her teammates gone... at least for everyone but Minerva. "My strength I guess is in defense, support and trickery. I'll... I'll do my best!"

The five SSS wizards were doing a teamwork exercise, Artemisia and Minerva both slashed at some of the training dummies while Ashley rushed by and punched at others, giving Leonora opportunity to snipe a few.

"Hmm?" Ashley said as she noticed Cecile's position, a training dummy about to whack her. "Cecile, heads up!"
"Huh?" Cecile said, turning to see it, she attempted to move away, but made a big miscalculation and was hit before she really got the chance to. Ashley winced as Cecile was hit across the floor and a sound signifying they failed the exercise went off. "Ow... I'm OK."

Ashley helped her up.

"You sure? You didn't exactly really try to dodge that one, no need to lie." Leonora noted.

"No really, I'm OK. I just messed up my timing." Cecile chuckled, rubbing her head a bit. She soon got up and walked to the drink machine. "I know I'm bad at that sort of thing, don't worry too much. We can't succeed at everything."

Cecile soon grabbed a flavored water and began drinking it. Ashley scratched her head a bit and looked at her two friends.

"Artemisia, Leonora, something feels off... I don't know why but her timing at dodging? It's almost like what we saw and what she saw were completely different things." Ashley whispered, getting their attention.

"What do you mean by that?" Leonora asked in a whisper.

"Well... it almost seemed like she saw the dummy further away, and maybe even moving slower than it actually was for both." Ashley answered in a whisper.

Minerva secretly listened in on them, with Cecile still distracted, getting a second drink due to feeling a bit more parched than she expected. Minerva soon secretly edged closer without them noticing.

"You sure? I think she's just having trouble in that area like she said." Leonora replied in a whisper.

"Actually... about that." Artemisia whispered, getting Leonora's focus and making Ashley pay attention.

"I didn't want to say anything since I had no way to prove anything and I didn't want to hurt Cecile's feelings by accident... but I've noticed her eyes seem a bit dimmer, and the way her legs move? It's almost like she isn't moving them, or at least not with her leg muscles. It's like she has a limited reaction in both areas."

Minerva suddenly made an odd face at that, thinking a bit. Soon Cecile noticed the clock.

"Oh crud! Sorry guys, I gotta hurry and leave or I'll be late for my job. See you all tomorrow!"

Cecile shouted suddenly, quickly running out of the room. At this point, Cecile had to leave earlier than her teammates due to a job she had, so no one saw her change in the locker room. Minerva looked at her as she left.

'...Let's see what your hiding.' Minerva thought as she smirked.

Minerva followed Cecile to the locker room, and after some time once she went inside... Minerva soon gave a cruel grin and opened the door. Cecile, who lacked hair braids at the time, gasped as she heard the door open, and she turned where Minerva was looking.

The SSS ace stared before giving a cruel smile, having just discovered Cecile's secret. Her eyes were completely closed and she was sitting on a wheelchair. Now it made sense about what Artemisia said, Cecile tried to push herself out of the way, but Minerva grabbed the wheelchair and knocked her off of it.
“So, this is your big secret? Oh, how rich is this, and they actually let you into the SSS? Hah!” Minerva laughed, soon tapping a speaker. "Hey Arty, Ash, Leo! Cecile got herself a bit hurt in the locker room, how about you come help her?"

Cecile turned her head to the direction of Minerva's voice before she walked out of the room and laughed, Cecile tried in vain to reach her wheelchair, but without the use of her legs... she couldn't reach it before the others had all rushed in to see the truth.

"Hey Cecile, we're here! What-" Artemisia began, before everyone saw the wheelchair. They all gasped before Cecile's closed eyes began to shed tears and she cried. The secret she had tried to hide had been revealed because Minerva was a jerk.

Everyone had helped Cecile back onto her wheelchair, and soon they were all sitting in a lounge area of the base as Artemisia put a nice cup of tea down in front of her. Cecile drank it before sighing.

"...So now you know, this is the real me. A paralyzed and blinded cripple. I lost my legs and eyes a long time ago." Cecile said sadly, her usual cheeriness completely shattered from being exposed.

"I knew Minerva was a jerk, but this was just cruel." Ashley replied, clearly angry at the stunt Minerva had pulled. "You don't have to feel bad, we don't think any less of you. You're still the same Cecile we became friends with. Though I do admit, I'm confused how you can move and see while wearing a wiring suit."

"If I had to guess, it uses the power of her mana core and channels it to her eyes to create fake replacements to the damaged areas that caused her blindness. For her leg movement, my guess is that she's using her own territory to move her legs in place of her leg muscles, so she barely has any muscle atrophy." Leonora theorized.

"Is that right?"

Cecile nodded, taking another drink of tea.

"...Cecile, if it's not too much trouble. Could you maybe tell us what happened? I don't know too many kinds of accidents that can take both away from someone." Artemisia asked, making Cecile stop and 'stare' at the tea she held for a moment.

"...If I'm to be honest, the result of that accident was considered lucky. I should have been killed." Cecile answered, making the trio flinch. "That accident... was I was caught in a Spacequake's radius."

-Flashback Start-

Cecile was running to the nearest shelter along with everyone as the Spacequake alarm went off, as she began running up an area on a hill to make it, she suddenly takes a moment to catch her breath... only for her to suddenly end up tripping and falling back down the hill.

"Oh no!" Cecile cried out, tumbling back towards the ground.

Right at that moment, the spatial distortion finally hit the ground and a blue Spacequake went off. Cecile got up to see it coming, but before she could run away... the quake managed to hit her, and she screamed in pain as it struck her right in the face and flung her forward across the landscape into a building, before she could register everything... some debris from what she hit fell on her and
she was knocked out.

After the time of the Spacequake ended and the Spirit had already left, everyone had come out of the shelters. After they did, an old man soon noticed the debris to notice Cecile. They gasped as they ran over, and saw she was still alive.

"Hey! Someone's caught in the rubble, they're still alive!" The man shouted, attracting others as they worked together to move the debris off Cecile. They all look in horror as they saw the state of her legs. "Oh my god... it's a miracle she's still alive, but I don't think she'll walk ever again."

The man helped her up, Cecile's hair covering her face as he did.

"Hey miss, are you awake?" The man asked.

Cecile shook a bit before coughing, soon she looked up to reveal her eyes were closed, a bit of dried blood coming from them like she had cried it out.

"Huh? Who's there, get this thing off my eyes, I can't see you." Cecile replied, making everyone watching gasp in horror. "What? I just said get this thing off my..."

Cecile tried to remove what was off her eyes, and felt nothing there, she gasped as she tried to open her eyes but failed. That's when she learned the horrid truth... she had become blind. The Spacequake had shot her eyesight for good.

"No..."

Cecile soon began crying, not even aware she lost more than her eyes.

-End Flashback-

The three all stared in shock at that, it wasn't uncommon to hear someone who failed to reach shelter survived a Spacequake... but she was outright struck by one and still came out alive. Though it seems not in one piece.

"Yeah, I was hit by a Spacequake and lucky it was a small one. However, my legs were completely shot to the point I couldn't even try therapy to regain them... and my retinas were heavily damaged from the energy that struck my face." Cecile said, tears flowing down my eyes.

"When I heard that I could regain those, even if only for short periods as a Wizard... I was happy. However, I needed to train hard, they said I had potential, but look at me. I can barely react to what I see, nor am I able to properly move in response to it."

Cecile covered her eyes and cried louder.

"I'll never be strong enough for this, never be strong enough to somehow prevent more situations like mine! I didn't want anyone to know because I knew someone like Minerva would mock me for it! I shouldn't... I should just resign." Cecile replied, soon attempting to drive her wheelchair away... however she felt Artemisia hug her.

"A-Artemisia?" Cecile asked.

"You're better than you think you are, look at you. You lost so much and yet you haven't given up, nor have you lost your kindness. Most people wouldn't be able to keep standing up like you have."
Artemisia replied, making Cecile gasp. "It may be hard, but... don't forget you're not alone. You have us. No matter how long it takes we'll be here."

Cecile cried more and looked at her.

"...You all really have that much faith in me? Do you really believe in me this much?" Cecile asked, almost begging to know they were being honest.

"Yeah, we're with you! Truth is me and Leonora are just as odd and out of society as you in our own ways." Ashley chuckled, looking at her current outfit. She soon points at Leonora who was already in tears. "And look, miss tough sniper's already crying!"

Leonora playfully hit Ashley, and Cecile sniffles before Artemisia brought the four into a group hug.

"Whatever comes next, we'll do it as a team." Artemisia smiled.

Maria whistles, getting every AST member's attention before she turned around slightly.

"Everyone get ready... we're about to reach our destination." Maria stated, a serious look on her face. Everyone nodded as they all tightened their seat belts as the Sagittarius has a final burst of speed before landing on the ground and engaging its Invisibility realizer to hide itself.

"Alright everyone, we've arrived at our location. Get your CR-Units deployed and we'll head out."

Everyone nods and summon their CR-Units, soon leaving the ship and seeing they had found themselves on an island. Mana blinks and looks around.

"An island? This seems like an odd place for a mission, wonder why Minerva was heading here?"

Mana asked herself.

"Hmm... hold on guys, I'm going to try registered our GPS location." Maria answered, her android body's eyes flashing as she processed some data... and then gasped as she saw the location to her horror. "Oh... shit... guys, I think we're in trouble."

"Why, where are we Maria?" Ryouko asked, but Maria didn't reply. She tapped the AI's android body to get her attention. "Uh... hello?"

Maria turned to everyone, a strange look of fear on her face.

"...This place is a spare headquarters Westcott uses if the Arbitel needs repairs that Tohka kindly required it to take. Everyone, this place is Arubi Island!" Maria exclaimed, while a few members like Mana and Saya were clueless, the rest all knew and gave reactions filled with horror. This place... it was DEM territory!

"Uh... what?" Saya asked, scratching her head.

"OK, since some of you aren't aware... right now we're basically on the front lawn of Westcott's spare house while he's currently using it!" Maria answered, and now the remaining members suddenly gained the same fearful looks the others had. "Yeah, in fact I think at any moment we'll--"

Suddenly at that moment, Ryouko suddenly fired at something, and everyone turned to see a Cheshire unit sparking before it crashed to the ground.

"We've been spotted, which means now this is an all-out war." Ryouko grimaced, and her words timed the arrival of a bunch of DEM automatons including the familiar Bandersnatch, Jabberwocky
and Alice units. "Alright AST, give them Hell! Don't hold anything back!"

"RIGHT!" Everyone declared.

As everyone got ready, Maria jumped by Mana and the SSS Trio.

"You four, I need you all to go find Minerva, if we have walked into a trap... she might flee at any
time. For all we know, she might be leaving to attack the others while they're still recovering at
Tenguu City. Don't let this chance slip by us!" Maria ordered, and the four nodded.

"OK, we're going!" Mana replied.

The four quickly flew off, all of them looking for signs of a Wizard among the chaos of the
automaton army. Maria opened a panel on her android body and input a specific code.

"Emergency Astral Dress activation code accepted, transforming now! Go Ex-Celsior Sephira!"
Maria declared, screaming as her android body took its Astral Dress form. "Time for you to meet a
Machine among spirits you mindless Mecha rejects!"

Maria's crystal attachments dug into the ground, and suddenly a bunch of vines sprouted out and
attacked the Bandersnatch that had rushed at her, either piercing through or tearing them apart. As
this happened, she suddenly saw quick moving automatons she couldn't recognize rush by.

"A new type of automaton?" Maria asked, she soon felt her spirit mana shielding her as these
automatons rammed her. "Dang it, I can't see them! These must be speed based!"

Katie fires a shot when she notices Maria in trouble.

"Oh no. Saya, Mikie! I need some cover give me an opening to help Maria!" Katie requested, the
two turned to her.

"You got it!" Saya smirked, jumping up and drawing her sword. "Go Tyrfung!"

Saya swung it around, causing a brief bit of fire to surround her and Katie, giving Mikie the chance
to hide from view and gouge all her claws into the nearby Bandersnatch and Alice units. A trio of
Jabberwocky charged at them, but Saya grabbed Dyrnwyn and shot at them, causing them to tumble
over each other.

"Bigger they are, the harder the mechanical bastards crash in an epic fail!" Saya smirked.

Katie adjusted her sniper rifle, and soon closed her eyes and breathed. She slowly opened them as
she felt her focus intensify, the world around her feeling like it had suddenly began slowing down.

'This isn't the first time, I've had to fire in this kind of situation before. It was back then... back on that
day.' Katie thought, feeling the memory flash through her mind.

-Flashback Start-

At Raizen High, Katie was seen playing a game of basketball in girls' gym class and was dribbling
the ball as she neared the net. She suddenly stopped as Claudia and Sarah got in her way, trying to
make sure she couldn't make the last shot her team needed before time ran out.

"You're not getting past us!" Claudia stated, her and Sarah blocking off Katie's movements.

Katie looked around, noticing no way to get through or at least past them with the remaining time.
Taking a look at the net, she focused her eyes a bit.

'I think I can make it, just gotta aim this right.' Katie thought.

Katie soon shifted her foot and shot the ball high up, surprising Claudia and Sarah as the ball flew high enough to pass over them and then land in the net, not even needing to swirl around the rim. The whistle blew right after.

"That's three points! Game over, the Red Team wins!" The gym teacher declared, and Katie's team cheered as they all gathered around her.

"That was amazing Katie, no one can beat you when it comes to accuracy!" Hannah praised, making Katie blush a bit. "We're gonna go hit the showers real quick, think you can put everything back in storage?"

"Sure thing, I think it's my turn today anyways." Katie replied, soon grabbing the basketball and everything else as the others head back inside to shower. As she did that, she suddenly heard the sound of someone crashing into the wall, surprising her. "Huh?"

Katie comes outside, and soon notices a girl with green hair had hit the wall, soon flying away into the sky and dropping a small rifle to her surprise.

"W-w-what!?!" Katie suddenly stuttered in shock, soon seeing that same girl being attacked by people in flying suits.

"We have [Witch] in our sights, preparing to annihilate her and collect the Sephira Crystal!" A DEM Wizard declared, opening fire with the same guns as the one that fell by Katie, the girl tried to dodge, holding her shoulder.

"That girl... they're hurting her, and she's not fighting back. I need to help her somehow..." Katie said worriedly, and soon noticing the rifle near her. She picked it up and looked at it. ":Would this be enough?"

Katie soon looked again and suddenly found herself breathing, calming her nerves as she looked around, to her surprise... the world around had suddenly felt like it had become slower, but she was still moving at her usual speed. Not just that, but she felt her focus intensify. It was like when she had her usual deep focus, but more.

'This is so strange, it's almost as if I'm projecting my desire to insure my accuracy to affect my senses. Is this how I've been so accurate before? Is this an ability my mana core has?' Katie thought, soon slowly motioning the rifle in her hand. 'OK... don't shoot to kill, those devices on their back are letting them fly, so I just need to disable them.'

Katie positions herself best she can, and then... she fires at each DEM wizard, quickly moving to hide herself after. Each wizard suddenly felt Witch drop high out of their view as their flighty realizers suddenly malfunctioned.

"What the? What's going here, why are they failing now!?!" One wizard roared, the Spirit in question looked where Katie was and smiled before zooming off and escaping. "No! She got away, we finally had her too!"

Katie stared at what she achieved from behind the wall and was shocked.

"Amazing... I hit all of them, and I've never even used a gun before." Katie gasped in a whisper, unaware that Sarah, Claudia and Hannah had all seen what she did and looked at one another.
"Guys, I think we finally found the AST a sniper." Sarah smiled.

*End Flashback*

'That's what lead me to the AST, where my accuracy can do some good. Sometimes I falter and stumble, sometimes I panic and get nervous, but... when people need me to hit something, I'll always step up to fire the shot.' Katie thought, soon readying her shot as her scope locked on. "Here goes."

Katie fired three shots, and Maria was about to get another blow, only for Katie's shots to hit the automatons now revealed to be based on Centaurs.

"Whoa! No wonder you're a sniper on this team, that shot was sick." Saya replied, this having been the first time she saw Katie's skills firsthand. 'And Leonora's considered better than her, these girls? All of them are definitely trained to be able to defend themselves from the DEM or a Spirit.'

"Thanks Katie, now I can figure out how many of these Centaur units we've got." Maria smiled, scanning the automatons to update her data with them and soon find how many more were present. "We've got another 5 Katie, look alive!"

Katie nods and re-positioned herself before firing 5 more shots and taking the remaining Centaurs out.

"All clear Maria!" Katie smiled, giving a thumb's up. Maria nods and motioned a few more vines to constrict the eight Centaur units and make them explode. Right at that moment, the Jabberwocky trio Saya had temporarily taken care of and she turned to look.

"Aw snap, I forgot to break those three!" Saya panicked.

As the trio of Saya, Mikie and Katie all were about to be struck by the three Jabberwocky, Ryouko suddenly drops down and takes out her C-C-C while putting a normal energy sword in it, and shouts as she slashes forward. Suddenly all three Jabberwocky explode instantly.

"Take that you mechanical scrap piles! This is the power of the AST leader, so let those DEM pansies know we ladies are gonna fight back while having fun breaking your toys!" Ryouko declared, the trio staring at her.

'She's having way too much fun with this!' They all thought.

Ryouko rushes ahead as some more Jabberwocky units appear, and she slashes down on another.

'True, it may seem like I'm having a blast... however, I have a reason to psyche myself into going full out, because I know that if I'm not at my best then I'll be dead if I ever have to deal with someone like Adeptus 1-3' Ryouko thought, recalling 15 years ago.

*Flashback Start*

A 12-year old Ryouko was currently inside a barren construction site that was currently having no work done, sitting under some beams as she had a relaxing snack in the shade they provided.

"Ah, who says that it isn't relaxing to eat in this scenario? I know I'm not one of them." Ryouko giggled, right as she was about to take another bite, she suddenly heard a crash and blinked at the sound of it. "Huh?"
She looks up through a crack in the beams to see a girl wearing Kurumi's Astral Dress, her predecessor, crashed on the ground. She coughed as she got up and the Spacequake alarm went off, making Ryouko gasp as the sudden timing.

"Right as she landed... is that girl related to the Spacequakes somehow?" Ryouko wondered to herself.

At that moment, a woman wearing a purple and gray CR-Unit named Gawain dropped into view, a cold look in her eye as she grabs her weapon which was named Galatine and holds it out as it formed an energy blade like a chainsaw. This was the former Adeptus 2 who had since met her demise in the 15 years since this day.

"Victoria Bailey... the mother of the current Adeptus 3, Jessica Bailey. This was the first time I saw her... and I'm still surprised I didn't take her threat seriously."

Other DEM wizards landed besides her, and the current Nightmare stood up and prepared Zafkiel, ready to fire at the group despite clearly looking afraid. Ryouko noticed that, she had just summoned a weapon from nowhere and she was the one that was terrified.

"Get ready to die monster." Victoria said without emotion, holding Galatine out.

The current Nightmare soon flew off, the Wizards going after her, with the Spirit only firing Zafkiel to defend herself from the wizards as they fired and slashed at her, however Victoria smashed her back down. At that moment, Ryouko shook as she saw Victoria's face look monstrous.

'She's calling that strange girl a monster, and yet...' Ryouko thought, seeing the KO'd form of Nightmare on the ground. Victoria's eyes were cold and devoid of emotion... and as terrifying as a snake staring someone up close. 'She looks like the real monster.'

At that moment, Ryouko covered her mouth, knowing how she'd react as Victoria swung her sword down. A loud slash sound was heard, and Ryouko turned away after that. The only thing keeping her from being heard was her hand covering her mouth.

The scene comes to 6 years later, a now 18-year old Ryouko was donned in her newly acquired Lynx CR-Unit as she found herself face to face with Victoria herself. Ryouko had an eye closed as it had begun to slightly bleed, making her unable to properly see with it open, and she could barely move her left arm or either of her legs.

"This is all you have? Pathetic, you green horns are just that, green horns. I'll do good and well to expose your secrets and have you all ruined further. First however... I'll kill you." Victoria said lacking emotion, and soon rushed forward holding Galatine to swing down.

"No, I... I can't die here!" Ryouko stated, seeing her nearing her end, she tried to move only for her to tumble back. That's when she noticed the device she was near. Right as Victoria neared her, she suddenly used her one good arm to yank it out and revealed it was an electrical wire.

Victoria suddenly stopped moving as Ryouko stabbed the wire into her body, the emotionally void Adeptus 2 didn't react for a moment as her body was electrocuted. Soon her body suddenly fell to its knees, and she shook before holding Galatine tighter.

"I'll have to make your death twice as-"

Before Victoria could finish, her CR-Unit gave a fast warning signal, and Ryouko soon rolled to the side as Victoria was covered in a bright light as it exploded. Ryouko breathed and turned away as
she saw a piece of the now destroyed Galatine land before her.

"...Adeptus 2 is finally gone, but I nearly died. This isn't a game anymore." Ryouko breathed, resting at what she just survived.

-End Flashback-

Ryouko turns around as the remaining Jabberwocky automatons all explode, and she looks at the trio.

"I know what you're thinking girls so let me tell you something, even if not intentionally, and even if it was only the chain reaction to what you did and therefore can't truly be consider your action... have you been the reason someone died?" Ryouko asked, making them all go wide eyed.

"Let's just say that 12 years ago I met the Adeptus 2 that came before Artemisia, and it was a fight to the death. I think you can tell who came back alive. Even then it was luck, you can't expect to win because your opponent's CR-Unit exploded while they were still wearing it."

The three turned as Ryouko flew by at some Alice units.

"...Whoa, sounds like the Captain's strange behavior is more of a story than a hobby." Saya noted, wondering what Ryouko experienced that day.

Mana and Ashley cut through a door before Leonora and Cecile blasted it apart, finding themselves in a room full of a bunch of undeveloped or failed Realizer technology, even ideas that were noble but only used to develop more weaponized or personal realizers.

"Whoa... this must be where they make the DEM's Realizers." Mana stated, soon noticing some of the ideas mentioned. "He invented a device that kept the world from falling apart due to a near-Armageddon he made... if only he used all these ideas for humanity as a whole. Let's take these and see if Ratatoskr can use them."

The quartet began gathering notes, and during their collecting, Mana looked she found one note of interest. It was for a Realizer that could heal disabilities caused by accidents. Accidents like the one that caused Cecile's legs to be paralyzed and blinded her.

"Cecile, you see this?" Mana said, showing her the notes. However, rather than excitement... Cecile looked fearful? No, more like worried. "What's wrong, don't you want to be able to see and walk again without a CR-Unit aiding you?"

"...I do, it's just that I only want to if I can have one thing." Cecile replied, looking at Mana. "I want Artemisia to be the first person I see when I open my eyes again, and walk to her and tell her 'thank you for believing in me', she was the reason I became the Wizard I am now."

Cecile cried slightly.

"If it didn't work, I'd be terrified. So, I decided I'd never try it. Truth is Ratatoskr's already made that Realizer... I've just refused to use it since it was made."

Mana stared in shock, while it might sound odd... she knew just how much that decision was symbolizing her friendship to Artemisia. She smiled and put a hand on her shoulder to the blind wizard's surprise.
"I think I get it, but word of advice? Look at what Artemisia's had to go through since. I won't force you, but... maybe you should welcome her back by letting her wake up to see the sight of you looking at her with both eyes." Mana smiled, making Cecile stare at her. Before anymore could be said however...

"Look there!" Ashley shouted, pointing to a certain shadow rushing through the hallway... a human shadow. "That might be Minerva, hurry!"

The SSS trio rushed forward while Mana just grabbed everyone note, stored them away and ran after them.

Artemisia Memory File 04, Subject - Artemisia

Soon half a year passed by, and the five SSS members were all standing by Karen who had since ditched her glasses and grown out her hair which she had kept in a small up-do at the moment. She was looking at the status reports for the SSS's growth.

"Congratulations, while it's still too early for personal CR-Units, you've finally achieved status as official wizards." Karen smiled, making everyone smile in their own ways.

"Ashley Sinclair, your close combat ability and melee skills are exceptional. Leonora Sears, you've been able to handle and long-range weapon from any distance with almost 100% accuracy. Cecile O'Brien, your territory control and defensive capability is one of the most refined, you've come a long way. Minerva, hard to say where you improved except you do well in all areas."

'Of course, I am the SSS's ace member after all' Minerva thought, a smug smile on her face.

"Oh, and Artemisia?" Karen added, making said wizard focus towards her.

"I want to congratulate your personally. Your skills are so high in each area they've nearly topped the charts, not to mention we think there's something special about your territory. You get along with the whole team as well. I think it's no surprise that your skills have proven you've become the new Ace of the SSS."

Hearing that claim suddenly made Minerva's eyes widen in shock.

'What!?' Minerva thought in horror.

"M-Me? Are you serious, I'm the..." Artemisia replied, shocked at the revelation. At that moment, her friends all gave her a tackle hug in excitement. Minerva stared with rage, her fist shaking and her teeth gritting... this was the day her jealousy of Artemisia formed.

'How dare she waltz in and take what was mine, I will prove I'm better than you Artemisia!' Minerva mentally growled.

After a bit, they ran into a room where the floor was suddenly shifted onto the ceiling. Once they arrived, they all heard laughter as they saw a certain wizard with two scarred eyes clap at them.

"Well, well, it looks like you've finally made it. Well then Ashley Sinclair, Leonora Sears, Cecile O'Brien, and Mana Takamiya... prepare to meet your end!" Minerva declared, giving a sadistic glare as her eyes glowed. "I've been looking forward to this day forever! Four of the five people I hate most, and now I get to kill you all!"
Mana glared at her.

"Damn it Minerva, you've always been pulling this kind of crap! You got jealous at Artemisia for being nice and getting where she was from hard work rather than the fear you used on us! You deserved losing the spot of SSS ace like you deserved your first scar!" Ashley roared.

"Deserved? Exactly, I had power, I had everyone unable to oppose me! I had power and Artemisia was the naive idiot who didn't get that! Made you agree with her... now it's time I murder you all." Minerva laughed, drawing both of her swords. "But first I'll kill the little girl who dared to mimic her!"

Minerva rushed forward holding Hrunting and Naegling before swiping both towards Mana, seeing them coming she activates Murakumo's sword mode and slashes at her as well. After a few seconds, Minerva saw the Naegling burst into pieces to her complete surprise.

"What!!?" Minerva declared, making everyone look in shock as they saw Mana's swords had expanded and revealed eight energy daggers within it while the swords themselves became longer.

"Like it? You should, it's one my new trump cards... the Orochi Blade!" Mana smirked, making Minerva cackle as she held Hrunting. She rose it up as it drew in the shards of its broken comrade and grew stronger, soon changing form.

"Alright you cocky rookie, let's dance!" Minerva smirked, Mana and the SSS trio all got ready as Minerva rushed ahead. "Taste my Beowulf!"

Minerva rushed forward at the four as they fly at her in return.

Maria shouts as the last of the Alice units were smashed by her vines, leaving only the Bandersnatch units left. She pants as she wobbles and falls on her butt, her Astral Dress form being undone as she reverts to normal.

"You did your part Maria, leave the rest to us." Sarah replied.

"Yeah, we've got this!" Hannah followed up.

The rest of the AST all begin their attacks against the remaining DEM automatons while Maria watches. She pants tiredly, and soon smiles a bit.

"...Look at them, these are mostly kids and yet in a world where they were once powerless, they become bigger than themselves for the sake of protecting what they know only they can protect. This takes me back to that day when I first became aware."

-Flashback Start-

The members of Ratatoskr were all examining the program that had helped them escape the Arbitel and show it had suddenly evolved into someone more, hoping that their attempts to get serious and spring back against the DEM even stronger in the future would be aided by this newly evolved program.

"It's incredible, this small emergency program faced off against an AI and evolved. In fact, I think it's mimicked and replicated some of the programming from it." Kannazuki noted, looking at it up close.

"Hmm... hello?" A young Ryouko, who had yet to become the AST's captain at the time, asked the
newly sentient program.

At first... nothing, Ryouko sighed until a static sound was heard.

"He...llo?" The program replied back.

"Hey, you spoke!" Ryouko said happily, Reine watched closely as Ryouko tried talking to her.

"What is... speaking exactly?" The program asked. "I am... aware I am more than what I was, but... I don't feel I understand anything yet. Is this what it means to... ask for aid? To receive... help?"

Reine looked at the simple program, it was becoming more than it was but it also seemed so... human, alive.

"I believe we can help you, if you'll be willing to trust us in helping you develop." Reine asked, and the program has some of its hologram move like a hand resting on Reine's own.

"I... will try this... trusting." The program replied.

Reine, Minowa and Shiizaki were all seen working together on programming new data into the currently nameless AI, using an image of Marina as a basis. Reine thought for a bit and then looked at the old Fraxinus' colors.

"Let's replace the black with white and the gold-yellow with blue." Minowa suggested.

"It might also be a nice change to make her expression softer and her clothes fully less technological looking at the ends. Give her a feel of being more than just some technological manifestation."

Shiizaki added.

"Alright, we'll go with that." Reine answered, typing quickly and applying it to the body design.

"And with this spirit data in her, for her Astral Dress... we'll have it chosen by the Fraxinus' successor model."

Reine types it all in.

"Personality basis module completed, and archive link formed." Minowa stated.

"And we've linked her to all Ratatoskr systems, here it goes..." Shiizaki breathed, hitting the enter key. Soon all the data was transferred to the nameless AI, and it felt its body twitch as it suddenly gained a physical form and blinked as her eyes opened.

"This is..." The AI gasped, soon realizing her awareness. "I feel like I'm alive!"

The trio smiled at their work and the AI's happiness.

The nameless AI soon moved around in an android, or gynoid if someone wanted to be specific, body based on her hologram form for her to walk around in. She moved her arms and shook her hair before smiling.

"Thank you, I love it!" The AI replied with a smile.

"You look great in that, you may not have flesh in blood but I think your soul makes you alive enough for an AI." Ryouko complimented, having since become the AST's Captain. The AI blinks as she thinks a bit. "What is it?"
The Nameless AI blushed a bit.

"Well... I just realized I don't have a name after all this time, can you give me one?" Maria asked, making everyone blush embarrassingly at this good up.

"Hmm... a name, what should we call you?" Reine thought.

"I have a suggestion." Kannazuki interjected, making everyone look at him. "Considering her outfit's similarity to a nun, and the fact she gained this form by copying the other AI whose name was Marina... let's use a bit of that name to link it to an important church figure."

Kannazuki showed a picture of the Holy Mother Mary.

"One form of the Virgin Mary's name is Maria, so... how about we call her that?" Kannazuki asked, looking at the AI. "Do you like it?"

"Maria..." Maria replied, soon smiling and nodding. "I love it! From now on, I'm Maria. My full name will be Maria Arusu."

Everyone smiles at that.

-End Flashback-

Maria smiled before turning to where Mana and the SSS trio went.

"Good luck you three, all of us here... we're rooting for you." Maria replied, looking up at the sky. "Because... we're Ratatoskr, and unlike the DEM we won't let one of our own be left behind."

Soon an image of Artemisia turning and smiling at the group was seen.

"You can save her, I know it... we all know it." Maria smiled.

Minerva screamed as she smashed the Beowulf into the ground, making Ashley dodge as she reached behind her and grabbed her double-bladed swords, the Asura's backside opened up to reveal the eight Arm Blades as Mana had come to define them.

"Go, Vairochana! Mahabali!" Ashley declared, rushing forward as she swung all her blades at close range. Causing Minerva to quickly swing the Beowulf to block them. However, Ashley soon kicked her in the gut.

"Ack!" Minerva cried out in surprise, and soon Ashley thrust all her swords forward like spears, forcing Minerva to block them with her Territory field, but even then... the barrier was slowly cracking under Ashley's overwhelming melee force. "What the hell!?"

Cecile landed behind her, readying the Longma's wings to attack.

"Activate Territory Jamming!" Cecile declared, and the wings shake as her CR-Unit emitted the field. Minerva sees her barrier begin to fail and jumps out of the way as Leonora had moved behind her and readied the Horus to fire.

"Ouroboros Storm!" Leonora shouted, each of her suit's wings open and reveal the red gems ready to activate their blasters while she extended her arms to focus their blasters.

Minerva turned as a bunch of red lasers suddenly quickly shot before slithering around like snakes,
and soon the arm cannons fired a blue beam, making all the red lasers converge. Minerva screamed as they pierced through her and knocked her back, and Cecile spun at that moment to allow the blades on the Longma's wings to slash at her.

Minerva was thrown back as she screamed, the Basilisk torn and full of holes that had some blood on them from Leonora's shots before cracking slightly as she crashed into the laser field acting as the arena walls. Minerva stared and got up, ignoring the bit of blood trickling out of her mouth.

"Damn you... damn you all!" Minerva screamed loudly.

Soon, she saw Mana had already rushed in front of her, aiming her blasters at her directly as she shoved her swords in their Orochi forms into two new slots, combining them with the blasters.

"Susanoo Bazooka!" Mana shouted.

Minerva was shot at point blank, and the force sent her flying up the barrier walls. She grabbed Beowulf and swung it down at Mana as she ran up the wall to block her next attack.

"DIE YOU!" Minerva screamed, slamming Beowulf against Mana as she formed a territory to defend herself. Soon Mana breaks it and shifts the swords into her blasters, pulling them off with the blasters still attached and surprising Minerva. "Cheater! Where did you get all these new tricks!?"

"Training and effort, you should try it!" Mana declared, swinging her blades like a roundhouse kick as beams charge in the blasters. "Tsukuyomi!"

Mana hit Minerva and the sword swings exploded, making her scream in pain as she was flung towards Ashley at sonic speeds.

"Hey Cecile, catch!" Ashley smirked, swinging her fist at Minerva, decking her right in the face as she flew over to Cecile, who readied the Longma's blades again. She slightly turned her foot, spinning a bit.

"You're up Leonora!" Cecile smiled, slamming the blades into Minerva, sending her spinning towards Leonora who ducked and pulled out a rifle barrel from her arm cannon. Pointing it up and back towards where Mana jumped. Minerva gasped at what they were about to do.

"...Bam."

Leonora fired the shot, blasting Minerva into the air as a concentrated blast of magic burned her skin, and soon Mana moved her blasters one side of each sword as she slammed them together. Minerva's eyes widened as the now single sword doubled in length.

"This is it Minerva... AMATERASU!" Mana screamed, slamming the blade down and sending the scarred wizard into the ground so hard, she made a crater, and Minerva actually coughed out a handful of blood. Mana soon landed on the ground, and slightly collapsed. Luckily Cecile caught her.

"...And we've got her. Come on, let's take Artemisia's memories back. Best we don't risk them being destroyed if we break that suit."

Three SSS trio all smiled, it wouldn't be too much longer to save their friend. Ashley walked over and ripped the Basilisk open, revealing a white and blue realizer. She rips it out and feels it, Artemisia's essence.

"Artemisia... hold on, you'll be back home soon enough." Ashley smiled.
"All that's left now is-

Suddenly Minerva's eyes widen as she smirked, the Basilisk opened a few slots and fired four shots at the group, Cecile noticing this pushed Mana out of the way. Mana stumbled and turned back to see Ashley, Cecile and Leonora all hit by the what looked to be poisoned realizers.

Mana stares in horror as the realizer with Artemisia’s memories slid towards Mana’s feet, and all three of them cough heavily as their CR-Units were forcefully dispelled, and purple markings showing that they were poisoned began to spread through them. Minerva gets up, her bloody face showing a complete loss of sanity as she cackled.

"I don't think so, I'm impressed you knew leaving me alive would be fatal... but you were too damn slow! This is a fight to the death, and I intend to make it fun! If I'm going to die here, I'll drag all of you to the grave with me!” Minerva cackled, her eyes stuck in a shocked state as they twitched and glared at Mana.

"Oh Mana... Mana Takamiya! You actually did it, you've actually made me finally hate someone more than I hate Artemisia! I'm glad you weren't poisoned, I want my hands to be what rip you into pieces! Best of all, I'll do it like this!"

Minerva takes out a switch and presses it, soon from the crater on the arena floor, a door forcefully opens to reveal an automaton in the form of a Mecha suit. However, wires and needles were inside of it.

"This is what real power is, sacrificing your inhumanity to become a Demon!” Minerva said viciously, soon giving an insane cackle as she stabbed the needles and wires into her, and her laughter gets distorted as the soon crawled and devoured her body, soon enough it mutated.

Mana stared in horror as the sight of Minerva transforming into a cyborg like creature and form, but... it was clear by the end anything that was flesh and blood... that made her human at all, was gone. She was looking at a mechanical monster, a chimera of sorts. *(A/N: This is the same machine from the final Date AST Strike Volume)*

"My... my god." Mana breathed, staring at the horror before her. Panicked a bit, she raised her hand. "Come to me, White Licorice!"

Mana’s White Licorice formed on the Murakumo and she instantly unloaded every bit of ammunition it currently had stocked simultaneously, but in a mere moment... she felt something stab her through the smoke. She held where she was stabbed as the Murakumo and White Licorice both vanished, the intense damage turning them inoperable.

"No..."

Mana collapsed to the ground unresponsive with the Artemisia memory realizer still in her hand, the SSS trio all looked at her in horror.

"MANA!"

Everyone on the ground heard the shouting as they saw the mechanical monstrosity.

"W-what is that!?" Mikie asked, shaking in fear.

"Let me see..." Maria replied, scanning it... and sensing Minerva's signature in the entire thing. "Oh... my god, I don't know how, but I think that's Minerva!"
Everyone gasped at that.

"I think Mana and the SSS trio are in trouble! Come on, let's get up there!" Saya declared, she zoomed ahead... and soon crashed into the barrier field. "Damn it! There's a barrier, I can't shatter it!"

Everyone sweated and Maria thinks.

"Saya, the Salamandra's special ability is it can make barriers without using a territory or one's mana! That's why no one could use it! Try countering the barrier with the Salamandra's own and you might get through!" Maria shouted.

"Really? Alright, better than nothing I guess!" Saya shouted.

Saya soon focused and formed the barrier, and soon she feels the barrier's energy burn into her skin. Luckily, she shrugged it off.

"Thank god for letting me be Efreet once, this burning's nothing from the flames that healed me in the past!" Saya shouted, soon ramming into the barrier with her own. 'Come on... please work!'

Minerva's mechanical laughter is heard as Mana was still laying on the floor immobile, appearing to be dead from the attack and the only thing preventing confirmation being no one could move to check her pulse.

"You... you bastard!" Ashley screamed, soon feeling the poison knock her back onto the ground.

"Now all I need to do is wait for the poison to kick in and kill you! Oh man, I was hoping to tell her killing me would purge it from you three so she'd attack me in anger, that way leaving her in state would be even better! Too bad, guess that was too much to ask for!" Minerva replied, still laughing in her mechanical form.

"This... this can't be it, Mana, Artemisia... we're sorry." Cecile stated weakly, coughing as the poison kept spreading.

Meanwhile on the ground, Mana's immobile form began thinking of some thoughts as she felt the life fade from her body.

'Is... is this it? Am I going to die, leaving everyone here to die with me? Leaving Artemisia comatose, and my brother and mother crying?' Mana thought, trying to force her body to move without any luck. 'No... I can't let it, I need to move! Come on, something, please... give me the strength!'

'You won't give in, just like me.'

Mana's eyes widen slightly, recognizing the familiar female voice, and soon...

Mana soon found herself in a mental landscape, and looked around the area which was a field full of flowers on a vast grassland. After looking for a bit...

"It's nice to finally meet you, Mana Takamiya." Artemisia replied.

Mana turned and saw Artemisia appear in front of her, walking closer to her with a smile on her face.

"Artemisia..." Mana gasped.
"You carry a heavy weight on your sword, and you're willing to fight even if you lose your life... but you also refuse to give it up either. The power of a Human, and the power of a Spirit is within your body." Artemisia stated, as Mana watched her senior's words. "Even in certain defeat you refuse to give in."

"Of course, I already know what it means to lose, what it means to fight and protect. My brother and I... we fight for our world, and everyone who's come and gone. For the Spirits and Humanity." Mana replied. "A burden I willingly carry."

Artemisia nodded and put a hand on her shoulder.

"I know, and you've hit your limit... so now let me lend you the strength. So, I hope this once, you don't mind a little help. You have it in your hands already. Not just that though..." Artemisia began.

Mana blinked confused until she saw a cyan energy begin to well from her body, just like when she wore the Murakumo.

"This is... a spirit aura? But how, I'm only Half Spirit!" Mana gasped.

"True, but... you and Shido hold the potential that can stop Westcott. Perhaps being half isn't a disadvantage, but a late blooming. Now it's time you blossom!" Artemisia said with determination.

Mana soon saw the sight of a certain CR-Unit.

"For this brief moment, my power and yours will be one. You can win." Artemisia said as she fades into Mana and the landscape brightens.

At that moment, Mana grips the Artemisia memory realizer and soon slams her other hand on the ground, making the SSS trio and Minerva gasp in shock as she slowly pushed herself up, her eyes soon regaining their light as she glowed brightly with a cyan aura. She held out her hand and a cyan sword made of spirit mana formed.

"W-what? No, that's impossible!" Minerva roared in shock, and Mana walked forward slowly.

"Artemisia... thank you, I feel it. Even if I lack the Murakumo right now, I can still fight! I can still win... no matter what, I will never give up! To save this world, that is my wish, for the sake of the father I've lost! For the sake of his dream!" Mana declared, her aura glowing brighter. "Please... lend me your power."

At the hospital where Artemisia was resting, her unresponsive body suddenly twitched slightly.

"...CR-Unit Bahamut, ID Registration: Artemisia Bell Ashcroft." Artemisia's body suddenly spoke, as if reacting to something. "Activate control reassignment, single usage. Link to ID Registration: Mana Takamiya."

With that, Artemisia's body goes silent again.

Back at the Ratatoskr base, Reine suddenly sees the computer suddenly give an alert.

"What the... wait!" Reine gasped, looking over at it. "This is..."

It mentioned the Bahamut CR-Unit was activating.
"Artemisia's CR-Unit is activating... but how, and who's using it? Wait, better yet how is it being used?"

Soon she saw who was given access to a single use of it.

"Mana?" Reine gasped.

Soon Mana gasped as she felt the realizer with Artemisia's memories being equipped to her body, and soon closed them.

"I feel it, your strength! I promise to use it well!" Mana declared, soon raising her hand as she felt it respond to her. Artemisia's CR-Unit shined from its place in Ratatoskr and soon... she called for it.

"Bahamut!"

Soon a bright light blinded everyone, and Saya who was still ramming the barrier soon gasped as she saw the sight Mana had pulled, making her stop and drop her barrier from the shock of event.

"Mana?" Saya whispered in surprise.

Soon the light ended, everyone saw Mana not wearing the Murakumo, but a CR-unit that took the form of a futuristic white and neon blue armor. Part of it was translucent and showed the skin under it, almost like the fins of a fish.

In fact, parts of the CR-Unit resembled parts of a fish, but also a Dragon at the same time, referencing how the true Bahamut of myth was a fish but also had common depictions in present day fiction as a Dragon.

A similar sword formed in Mana's hands as the strongest Ratatoskr made CR-Unit was now being worn by her. *(A/N: This is the CR-Unit Artemisia wears as of her LN debut, only without the part that look like cat ears.)*

"This is the strength I've been lent... the power me and Artemisia use together for this single moment!" Mana declared, making the SSS trio look with happy tears while Minerva roared in anger.

"Minerva... this is the end for you!"

"YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'LL MEET THEIR END!" Minerva screamed, her voice heavily distorting from her volume and rage. Her mechanical body thrust forward in an attempt to smashed Mana apart. Mana soon moved her body, Artemisia's spirit beside her. "Mana! Artemisia! Both of you... just die!"

Mana closes her eyes and readies herself as her sword glowed brightly.

"Nandaka!" Mana shouted, swinging the sword alongside Artemisia's spirit. In a single moment, Minerva's entire arm was cut and then shredded apart. Minerva screamed in pain and looked at the mechanical stump of an arm she had left.

"N-No... this can't be! I'm better, I'm stronger! Why is it that I can't exceed you!?" Minerva begged, her mechanical body sparking as she screamed that question.

"Because..." Mana began, rushing forward as she cut through every weapon and limb that Minerva fired off at her. The silhouette of everyone Mana knew following behind her to Minerva's surprise. 

"...Unlike you I'm not alone, I didn't get here by stepping over others and knocking them down! As they grew so did I!"
Mana rushed through Minerva's body, causing a slash mark to appear everywhere, and Minerva's voice cracked as her mechanical form shook. She screamed loudly as oil squirted out and the body emitted light, glowing red from overheating.

"IMPOSSIBLE!" Minerva screamed, and soon she exploded with her final screams echoing. The greatest traitor of Ratatoskr... had finally met her demise!

Mana turned around and panted, and soon collapsed to her knees as the Bahamut unequipped from her and went back to the Ratatoskr base, she looked at the SSS trio who saw their poison makes fade as Minerva's defeat destroyed the Basilisk's poison.

"We... we won." Mana smiled, panting from exhaustion. She saw the barrier disappear and then everyone in the AST flew up and gathered her and the SSS trio in a group hug. "And not just us, you were with us too."

She looked at the realizer and saw Artemisia's smile.

"Come on everyone... time to go home."

Marina suddenly got a status update from Arubi Island right as the AST left, leaving a surprise behind. Marina suddenly screamed and got the entire Arbitel crew to look at her. Westcott, Jessica and Ellen also gave an odd look.

"No way, this isn't possible!" Marina shook.

"...Oh god, you only do that when something bad for us happened, what is it? It can't be that bad." Jessica asked.

Marina gave a 'you are so wrong look' before answering.

"The entire trap we left at Arubi Island for Minerva to take care of completely failed! Everything we had there including the base itself is gone! Worse... Minerva is dead and they got back Artemisia's memories before we could finish the Ashcroft Gamma's with all her data." Marina grunted, making everyone look in shock.

"Oh, and that's just the icing on the cake, the Spirits? They didn't even show up! That damn AST alone took out all we had set up! That damn AI clone Maria was even there too, if I had been there..."

Marina screamed so angrily she disconnected her hologram.

"...Damn it, such a large defeat? Just how strong did Ratatoskr become in the last 12 years since our invasion?" Ellen asked, gripping her fist angrily.

"It seems I've underestimated them one time too many, and they used that against us. We can't do that anymore. For, now we'll need a new Adeptus 2... no, Adeptus 3, after this it's clear." Westcott answered, looking at Jessica. "Jessica, consider this a promotion. You're the new Adeptus 2. I think it's time you inherit the legacy your mother left."

Jessica gasped as Westcott walked out of the main room.

'I can't let this go on, I must obtain that boy's power and bend it to my will.' Westcott thought, thinking of Shido's power and connection to the spirits. 'Seigo Takamiya... you and your family have been a thorn in my plans for too long now.'
Everyone was in the Ratatoskr base, the Spirits and Shido were still a bit out of it but now no longer sick, and Artemisia's body had been brought to begin the procedure to hopefully wake her up. Cecile had bandages on her face, and on her legs.

"So, you really did it Cecile? You got the treatment for your eyes and legs?" Mana asked, and Cecile nodded.

"You told me yourself, and after I thought about it... that's when I remembered why Artemisia said I should braid my hair. A sign of a promise, when I finally gain the strength I need I can remove them to show I kept it. So... I want her to wake up and see me walking and seeing again without a CR-Unit." Cecile replied with a smile.

"Thank you for making me remember that."

Mana smiled, and soon everyone gathered as Maria began the process.

"Here goes everyone, if this works... we can finally welcome Artemisia home again." Maria smiled, and soon began the transfer.

The realizer glowed as the memories within them began to transfer. After about a minute, everyone waited and watched... and saw Artemisia's hand twitched slightly, making everyone gasp. At that moment, Cecile undid her bandages and readied herself to stand.

"..." Artemisia blinked a bit, and soon saw everyone looking at her. What she noticed first was her three friends standing in front of her, and gasped a bit. "Ashley, Leonora, Cecile? And... all of Ratatoskr? Then that means..."

Her three best friends all began crying, and Cecile soon managed to move her legs before she opened her eyes... and clearly saw Artemisia, who gasped as she realized Cecile's eyes were open without a CR-Unit, her braids having come undone.

"ARTEMISIA!" The three cried, all hugging her close. She hugged them back as she began crying happy tears as well.

"I don't believe it. After so long... you never gave up on me, and Cecile... you're walking and you can see." Artemisia replied, sniffling a bit. "This is a miracle, thank you... I'm home! I'm finally home again!"

Soon everyone gathered around, and Artemisia met everyone, including the Spirits. She soon noticed Mana.

"Mana... thank you, this is all because of you." Artemisia smiled, making Mana blush a bit. Soon she felt Artemisia hug her. "I owe you more than I can ever repay, but... at the very least I can start helping the AST again soon."

Everyone smiled at that... and then, everyone heard Yoshino gasp. That's when everyone saw Yoshinon was starting to turn into blue spirit mana and flickering away.

"No... Yoshinon, Yoshinon!" Yoshino cried, it was finally time for her to disappear. Everyone all gave a sad look. Rinne kneeled by Yoshino and put a hand on her shoulder, and looked at her.

"Yoshino, don't hide how you feel. Let Yoshinon know your sad. That way, she can at least go in
peace knowing you cared and will always remember her." Rinne stated, and Yoshino sniffles before nodding a bit. She stepped back.

Yoshinon soon weakly moved her head, and after a long silence since she kept getting worse and worse...

"Yoshino... I'm sorry, but... it seems like it's time for me to go. I was... never met to be here, it's time... I gave back... what's yours." Yoshinon cried, her one eye shedding some tears. "You have... others here for you now, you... won't be alone... without me."

"Yoshinon... please, don't leave me. Everything I have now is because I had you. It's not fair... why can't you be here too!? Why do you have to disappear, I care for you so much, you're... you're like my sister." Yoshino cried, hiccupping a bit. Everyone tearing up as they watched.

Yoshinon weakly rubbed Yoshino's cheek.

"Leave? Yoshino, you silly... I am you... I won't be leaving because I'll... always be inside of you. I just won't exist as... my own being. So, stay... strong, no matter what... you have to be what I was for you... on your own." Yoshinon continued, soon hugging her. "I love you... Yoshino. Goodbye."

At that moment, Yoshino hugged Yoshinon back before she dispersed into blue particles fully, all of which float into Yoshino. At that moment, Yoshino cried loudly and everyone else begin to shed tears as well. Soon, Artemisia kneeled by her, and Yoshino looked at her sadly.

"Let me, I think I know what needs to be said, what she needs to hear." Artemisia requested, both Rinne and Reine nodded in approval.

"Yoshino... I know exactly how you feel. My mother and father were both members of Ratatoskr, they were great people, but... 12 years ago during the DEM's mass invasion, they were both some of the people who were lost that day."

Cecile, Leonora and Ashley all showed surprise at that. Artemisia never told them that... but now it was clear how she had strong empathy and knew how to reach them. Because she knew that loss better than anyone, and it stung because of how kind they likely were.

"I know how much you miss Yoshinon, because I still miss my parents, and I miss them every day I'm still alive and remember they're not here anymore. It hurts, trying to forget doesn't help, but... you still have us. You have Shido, the Spirits, the AST, Ratatoskr, all of us. We're your family Yoshino... and that's why now is when we really need to stick together."

Yoshino looks at her, sniffling a bit.

"Yoshino, you and Yoshinon go back a long time. Years' worth of time that was precious... time you wouldn't wish to disappear no matter what." Artemisia continued, soon rubbing her head. "And I know that every second Yoshinon spent with you was the happiest time of her life."

Yoshino sniffled, and looked at her.

"You... you mean that?" Yoshino asked, and Artemisia nods.

"And that's why ever though it hurts, you need to keep going. Don't forget the sadness or the tears, just live, because that's what Yoshinon wanted... because as long as we remember her, part of her will always be with you... with all of us." Artemisia smiled. Soon Yoshino cried again and hugged her.
"That's right, let it all out. It's gonna be OK... nothing's gonna break up this team. Don't be afraid to let out how you feel."

Soon everyone hugged her together.

[That day, we saved Artemisia and brought her back to us... but we also lost Yoshinon. It was sad and hurt us all, she was important to us too. However, we also gained a stronger bond. A bond that would be important for what came ahead, I have 5 more Spirits to seal, and everyone here right now would support me through this. This is our story, and we'll fight for our happy ending.]

After a bit, Yoshino was still crying... but smiled as she found some piece in this moment.

And that's it for Date AST Re:Strike everyone, Minerva's finally kicked the bucket, Cecile's no longer blind or paralyzed, and Artemisia finally woke up and has rejoined Ratatoskr. However, at the same time... Yoshinon has finally disappeared, while Yoshino's body hasn't regained its true form yet (that'll be when Season 2 begins), the impact is still there.

So, the AST's destination point was Arubi Island, the very place Westcott has been using as a temporary base due to the damage left by the Arbitel? No wonder Westcott needed such important timing for when he sent Minerva on the 'mission', it was a trap for Ratatoskr all along! Unfortunately, none of his intended targets came because of what he indirectly caused in Rinne's arc... that had to sting him pretty hard.

This is also why he and his Co-Dragons had already left the island, aside from the Arbitel having been fully repaired, because with how powerful the AST members are currently... both Ellen and Marina are out of their league. If had either of them there during the fight, the AST would have been dead... literally. Sucks for Marina even more because she lost a chance to get revenge on Maria.

I hope you liked Katie story and getting to see Ryouko's in full. I did mention back in Yoshino's arc she saw Adeptus 2 kill the prior Nightmare 15 years ago, but I never said it was Artemisia who held the position at the time. Surprised to learn it was Jessica's mother? I bet it's no surprise, but her death is what lead to Jessica leaving her job as a torturer, which lead to her eventually becoming a wizard for DEM.

So how do you like Maria's plant based powers, you might be asking why I chose this? It has to do with the Fraxinus' name origin, for those who don't know, the Fraxinus and its upgrade form, the Fraxinus EX-Celsior are named after the scientist name of the European Ash: *Fraxinus excelsior*, which was believed to be Yggdrasil, the Norse World Tree. Since Maria is the AI for this ship, plant based powers felt the most fitting.

Plus, this helps fit the Ratatoskr and DEM's opposing goals, as Marina has the opposite ability, where Marina can make plants growth and flourish, she causes them to wither with poison. A good example of these powers would be Kusano and Shiina from Sekirei who have the same elements, Kusano herself even states their powers are opposites.

With this chapter, Season 2 of Date A Re:Live can finally begin, I want to thank everyone for their support through Season 1, the Rinne Utopia movie, the Encore series and even Date AST Re:Strike.
Until then... stay awesome everyone, the next part of this story journey is coming soon! ^v^

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 85%
Origami - 78%
Yoshino - 73%
Kotori - 79%
Kurumi - 69%
Hey everyone, before we get started... you should know why I didn't get a chapter up for a while despite my usual flow, and why for an unknown period of time I likely won't have my usual flow. You see... my grandmother just passed away, since I don't know when this chapter will officially be up, it was during the early afternoon of May 24th.

I wasn't particularly close to her, but it still hurts... the few days before it were where we expected things, so I simply couldn't focus at the time and I still can't now, but that's only because I can't keep my mind on writing. I kindly request that no asks me what did her in, truth is I don't actually even know and it could have been her clock just finally ran out, all I can say is disease wasn't the killer.

OK... *breathes* now that I have that out of the way, let's resume.

Now for some of you who look at my start and end notes, especially if you like re-reading the story on occasion, you might remember me saying the Yamai arc was going to be the first arc of Season 2, right? Well... *giggles* sorry, but that was a little white lie :3, I wanted to twist everyone's legs a little so the surprise and shock value increased. Natsumi's going to be the first Spirit of Season 2, partially cause she's one of my favorites among the Spirits.

Also as a friendly reminder to everyone, for Season 2 and it alone, Tohka and Shido have switched their Protagonist and Deuteragonist roles with each other. This is even to the point that while Shido still has the big hand in sealing the Spirits and bonding with them, I'd say it's more accurate to claim that Tohka will be responsible for each Spirit being able to truly trust Shido through her actions in this season.

You'll see this decision make sense by the end of the Season, right now the only thing I can confirm about this season is that there will be something replacing the part where Tohka undergoes her Inversion since we already had her do this from the start. It may surprise you, so before I say anything that could give it away... *takes the secret from my mouth and puts it in a vault, locking it up* there, won't give it away now ^^

Now, time for Natsumi's data sheet and then it's time to begin!

A/N - As a friendly reminder, Natsumi will be given her last name by Ratatoskr just like Yoshino's was, so she doesn't have it just yet

-Natsumi Itsuwari, Code Name: [Witch]-

Angel: Haniel, the "Witch of Forgery" - Haniel is a futuristic looking broomstick that's noted by Rio to somewhat resemble the Yggdrafolium realizers on the rear end of the current and original Fraxinus ships, and like an actual Witch's broom can be used by Natsumi to fly instead of using her natural flight. According to data recordings by Maria, using Haniel to fly allows her to fly faster and turn better midair, but has trouble slowing down and stopping.

- Alternate Form: Yata no Kagami - Haniel takes the form of a mirror, one that has the ability to send living and non-living things into a different dimension through a portal embedded into
the glass, one that's quite similar to Kurumi's shadow dimension. While in Natsumi's personal dimension, the objects or subjects are put into a stasis field, though time doesn't stop or slow for them like the stasis fields that Rinne or Rio can create.

- Alternate Form: Kaleidoscope, the "Ever-changing Mirror" - Haniel's trump card, by remembering the appearance and abilities of another Angel, Haniel can overlay the mirror properties of its "Yata no Kagami" form to turn itself into a copy of that specific Angel. Similar to Shido's Spirit Ascension, the copied Angel is weaker than the original, but even weaker than Shido's Spirit Ascension copies because they are less powerful and can't use the copied angel's alternate forms.

- Powers: Natsumi's primary element as a Spirit is Metamorphosis with Illusion as a secondary element, being able to alter an entire area's shape or change the appearance of anyone or anything into something else be it something living or non-living within a 1 km radius of her. Natsumi is also able to learn the skills and mannerisms of whatever she can mimic and keep them, making her able to act as someone else without suspicion. Anything she transforms will revert back if she loses concentration or gets knocked unconscious.

Risk Factors: B

Spacequake: C

Spirit's Astral Dress: C

Angel Rank: AA

Strength: 79

Consistency: 65

Spiritual Power: 180

Agility: 82

Intelligence: 174

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Chapter 27, S2: Natsumi Inverse, Part 1

After a long flight, the Arbitel finally made its return back to England, the main branch of DEM Industries in sight as the ship turned on its Invisible Realizer and teleported Westcott, Ellen, Jessica and Marina's android body into the building. Various staff noticed Westcott's return and saluted him as he walked by.

"Sir Westcott! The board of directors have been awaiting your arrival, and they appear to need you to visit urgently." A nearby DEM Employee stated.

"Oh? Very well, I guess I have been gone for a while now, I'll take care of that then." Westcott replied, soon heading over there with the rest of his group. After a few minutes of walking (and stopping twice due to Ellen's strangely physical condition making her short of breath), they made it to the conference room where all the DEM board of directors were present.

Various faces were present, among these various new and unseen faces, Russel, Simpson and
Murdoch were all present. None of the people in the room seemed happy, and when Westcott finally came into sight that didn't improve in the slightest, in fact their moods only got worse.

"It's been a while everyone, I'm sorry repairs kept me away for so long. So, what do I owe the honor of this meeting?" Westcott asked, acting like their looks didn't matter.

"Can it Westcott, you honestly thing we're gonna be playing this game anymore." Simpson replied, having a much more annoyed and angered tone to his voice than he used to because of nearly dying in the Goetia. "Your actions are insane and by now... a complete mockery."

Westcott only stared as Simpson turned, giving a dark glare as he crushed what he held in his hands to pieces.

"We've seen your actions since this April, and in the past half year you've cost us billions of pounds in damages to repair the Arbitel and build replacements for every lost automaton. The Pendragon CR-Unit was completely destroyed, Material A & B are gone, a whole section of research was destroyed and made impossible to replace, one of our own joined Ratatoskr and worst of all... the entire Arubi Island base is gone and one of our top Wizards is dead."

"Your point being?" Westcott asked, acting like it wasn't a big deal.

"Simple Westcott." Murdoch said, his gaze meeting Westcott's who gazed back with equal challenge.

"You've finally made us doubt you, 30 years ago your big plan with the Spirits was something we all sided with? But now? You just seem like some spoiled brat who demanded a toy under any cost to get it. This obsession with the Spirits is worthless... in fact maybe we shouldn't even bother with Ratatoskr trying to gather them all. We can ignore their existence this way."

Murdoch glares darker at Westcott who only lightly chuckles.

"I believe you're forgetting how much I managed to create with the power of the Spirits mere residue, and what I accomplished with control of one. You honestly believe this is a mere-

Russell quickly throws a ruler past Westcott, and the DEM board of directions all showed him looks clearly stating their patience was finally worn too thin.

"Shut up Westcott, no one wants to hear you babble about your fun self-satisfaction anymore. You leave me no choice..." Murdoch soon turned to the other board of directors. "Russell, pay attention to the hand count you'll be seeing. As the highest representative of the DEM's board of directors, I hereby request Westcott's dismissal as the DEM's MD!"

Westcott's loyal trio all gasped at this, every prepared to raise a hand... only for Ellen and Jessica to rush by, suddenly cutting off everyone's hands as they formed their personal energy blades, Murdoch simply stared as screams and thuds were heard.

"Z-zero hands have been raised, therefore the request for dismissal is rejected..." Russell said angrily.

"Sorry, but it's our duty to break any swords pointed at Ike, even metaphorical ones." Ellen declared, staring at Murdoch. However... the man showed no fear, and simply revealed a switch, causing Ellen and Jessica to gasp as it showed a recording of your act. "You... you bastard, what have you-"

"I wouldn't point your sword at me, do it and I'll make sure these gets\ to witnesses and put all three of you under criminal charges." Murdoch stated, unyielding and coldly. "Oh, and don't bother trying to get into the system to delete it Marina, I used reverse engineered tech of that Cassiopeia machine
to create an encryption that'll invade and destroy you otherwise."

Ellen, Jessica and Marina all grow angrily.

"So... it seems we're at a stalemate." Westcott answered, somewhat intrigued at the situation. "What are you up to Murdoch?"

"Since you claim these Spirits are so beneficial despite your failure to do anything to the ones you've let Ratatoskr get their hands on... let's have your dismissal decided without a raise of hands. I'll prove your incompetence myself... by multiple Spirits at once, something even you've failed to accomplish." Murdoch stated.

Suddenly everyone showed shock at that, Westcott on the other hand...

"I admit it, I'm impressed. If I say no to you I'm screwed regardless. The only chance I have to win in any form would be by this. Very well. I'll agree to your little game Murdoch." Westcott replied.

"However... I think it's only fair I also get a right to try on the next Spirit, wouldn't killing 6 at once be a bigger point that 5?"

"Fine, I guess since you've already agreed we can allow that. However, only under this condition, you're forbidden from using anyone assigned the Top 3 Adeptus numbers, we're not letting you have access to everyone who's already managed to kill a Spirit." Murdoch reluctantly sighed, making Westcott grit his teeth slightly.

"Now scram, I'm not letting you hear my plans for this. Not to mention everyone here needs a Medical Realizer now." Murdoch demanded, and Westcott nodded before he and his group left the room. As they did, Ellen with an annoyed look, turned to Westcott.

"Ike, are you sure you were wise to let that happen?" Ellen asked, only to feel Jessica put a hand on her shoulder. "Hmm?"

Jessica sighed before looking at Ellen.

"Murdoch knew Westcott too well, for all we know he could have had something that would send that recording out if we actually attacked him. The fact Marina didn't even act just helps prove that." Jessica answered, and Marina grit her teeth sharply as proof.

"You took the words right out of my mouth Jessica, had I said no they'd have gotten me kicked out without resistance, at least this way... we have some chance. How annoying is it that this time we actually hope Ratatoskr aids us?" Westcott sighed playfully, soon hearing a crash in one room.

"Oh?"

The group of four soon walked back to see a room used for training, where a girl was seen standing before a Jabberwocky. All she had was a steel katana, not a CR-Unit or even a simple Wiring Suit seen on her at all.

"What the... why is she training against Jabberwocky!? They aren't made to be fought as a training opponent, and why's she bare of any kind of wizard gear!?" Ellen gasped, by all means the sight of this girl's choice of combat conditions could be seen as suicide.

"Hmm... hold on a minute, I'm curious about how this will go." Westcott replied, smirking as he stared at the sight.

At that moment, the Jabberwocky rushed forward, its arms and legs pushing against the ground as it charged at the girl, said girl slowly shifted into a stance... before her eyes widened and she shot
forward, and suddenly went past the Jabberwocky, her katana gleamed as she turned to face it. The machine shook before a single slash mark cut it down the middle, making it explode! The two elite wizards all stare in shock, while Marina shows some awe.

"Well, well..." Westcott began, smirking heavily. "Let this be a sign of good fortune everyone, we already have something new for us the moment the reins are truly mine again. Now let's cash in on it."

Westcott walks closer to the girl, catching her attention as she turned to look.

"Welcome to the DEM... my new Adeptus 3."

*Trust in You plays*

(*piano melody playing*) Flows of the energy that one made the Spirit Dimension appear across the sky.

[30 years ago, a single man's dark ambitions destroyed an entire world of peaceful beings called the Spirits, and forever damaged and changed the course of history on Earth as the echo of his act. Only a single being from this world survived, but the treasures of her world were soon inherited by Humans who evolved into these same beings. Now they fight to stop this man's goals from destroying everything. This is the story of...

The Fraxinus EX-Celsior flies through the air, soon from an opening on the ship's haul, the sight of Tohka, Origami, an older looking Yoshino, Kotori and Kurumi jumped out before assuming their Astral Dresses and landing.

[...Date A Live!]

(*High pitched guitar wail and piano playing synthesize together*) The five turned forward and gave determined and hopeful looks, smiling brightly as they did. Following them, a green silhouette, two orange silhouettes and an indigo silhouette did the same from the opposing side. The silhouettes soon faded as they revealed Natsumi (in her adult form), the Yamai twins and Miku. Unlike the former five, their looks were a bit more sullen and serious.

(*Same high pitched guitar wail and piano continuing, but with sharp focused points flaring every few seconds*) Rinne, Rio and Mayuri stood by a silver/gray and yellow/gold silhouette, the former giving a peace sign as Rio hugs Mayuri. The entire AST follow up, with Mana flashing a bright smile, soon a smiling Maria appeared with Ratatoskr behind her, and finally behind a darker screen... a frowning Marina with Westcott and the DEM at her side, the new Adeptus 3 mostly hidden behind Westcott.

(*Guitar solo wailing*) Shido stood with his sister and the other Spirits as the words "デート・ア・ライブ - DATE A RE:LIVE" appear on a blackened screen, a brief pause came up before the colors invert showing a white screen with the now blackened text. Shortly after, two vertical orange lines form by the side, followed by a horizontal green line on top and a horizontal indigo line on the bottom, changing the title to "デート・ア・ライブ - DATE A RE:LIVE II" as a result.

(Is everything inevitable to chance? Has fate already decided the path before it? No, we write our own destiny! [DESTINY] That's why I keep fighting for my dreams!) Tohka jumped up a bit as [Tohka Yatogami - Spirit No. 10] appeared by her in purple text as she landed. She ran by Origami and Yoshino, making the former nearly trip, as [Origami Tobiichi - Spirit No.
and [Yoshino Mizui - Spirit No. 4] briefly flashed by them in white and blue text respectively before they followed her.

(Just like this beating feeling in my chest, I understand my life's own story! [Own Story!]) Kotori saw the three run by in a distance, [Kotori Itsuka - Spirit No. 5] appearing by her in red text with a Chupa Chups lollipop in her mouth, looking at Kurumi who had [Kurumi Tokisaki - Spirit No. 3] appear next to her in black text before they followed them by walking.

(That's why I let things go as who I am!) Soon the sight of Miku dancing and singing on a concert stage in her Astral Dress, indigo text stating [Miku Izayoi - Spirit No. 9] appeared at her side, as she did a twirl and held out her hands making a double "L" pose using them, exciting her fans.

(Now let's... begin! This path ahead, and with it we'll decide, to choose... this thrilling date!) Kaguya and Yuzuru were seen arguing over something as [Kaguya Yamai - Spirit No. 8-A] and [Yuzuru Yamai - Spirit No. 8-B] appeared by their sides in orange text, and Natsumi just walked by with [Natsumi Itsuwari - Spirit No. 7] appearing by her, soon noticing the Fraxinus and Arbitel flying across each other, higher into the sky.

(*Heavy guitar slam*) Rinne stands backwards in Tenguu Park before turning around and posing cutely as [Rinne Sonogami - Spirit No. 0] appears by her in pink text, her Spirit form is seen as an intangible illusion behind her giving the same pose. Unaware that by a nearby tree, someone holding a strange tome smiled, closing it as she walked off.

(When we first talked, when we first touched, when you first made me laugh! I suddenly wondered...) The Ratatoskr allied spirits ran together across a white realm with a partially black stained ground. Natsumi, the Yamai twins and Miku flying at them from another side. The AST flew in from the other two sides while the DEM all dropped down from below.

(This feeling in my heart, I never wanted to give it up! This feeling, was... yes, it was love!) Shido, Mana, Rinne and the and the currently sealed Spirits all rode a subway train, with said sealed Spirits all resting their heads on Shido, making Rinne who smiled at the sight.

(Even if this feeling gives me pain, I won't ever surrender it! The reason why, is because even in the darkest despair, I can feel the light of hope!) The forces all clash, while Shido suddenly screams and a black version of the metal tree Rinne created a while ago formed, a serpentine pink eye forming in the middle before glowing iridescent. The Spirits all suddenly clash with familiar looking dark spirit power before it swallows Tohka inside.

(That's why I want to believe in this story-) Suddenly a flash goes off as Tohka's eyes regained their glow and bright purple light encompassed the area with her inside it. She rushed forward hidden by a silhouette as she reached out for Shido.

DATE A LIVE!

(*Guitar instrumental melody*) Shido and Tohka soon fall into each other's embrace, Tohka in her casual clothes again as all of Ratatoskr, the sealed Spirits and the newly introduced ones gather around them.

(*soft guitar, drum and piano sounds synthesizing*) Soon Rio, Mayuri, Maria join them. Marina, Westcott and the DEM all staring at them from afar at the DEM's main branch with a dark look, a pair of various flashing eyes hiding behind them in the darkness.

Tohka ends the intro song by kissing Shido who gave a surprised look at how sudden it was, making the image into a freeze frame and giving it a picture like quality as the "デート・ア・ライフ - DATE A RE:LIVE II" logo appears again and overlaps it.

Inside the secret base of Ratatoskr's Tenguu City branch, Reine Murasame stood before the base's
"Ah, good to see you Reine. It seems you've been doing incredibly well. You don't even have your dark spots anymore." Elliot replied, making Reine blush a bit as she scratched her cheek. Karen cleared her throat. "Oh, forgive me Karen. I'm guessing you have a reason behind this call?"

"I do, by now I think you've become aware that Ratatoskr has saved half of the Spirits, and with recent events on the First Spirit's official return, the sights that Westcott has seen with Shido, and most of all the AST's destruction of their Arubi Island base... Westcott will start getting more serious." Reine stated, taking a sip of her usual coffee.

"With all due respect Elliot, I think it's time we have you relocate here to the Tenguu City branch and have you operate here as Ratatoskr's main HQ. As much as Westcott would want to avoid dealing with us here, the other Spirits have likely noticed the oddities, not to mention Rio and Mayuri, the Phantom and Watcher respectively, have been going around and will likely be leading the remaining Spirits here."

Rinne soon slides into view.

"Hey sis, is that Ratatoskr's big shot on the phone? Let me see!" Rinne asked, trying to fit into the screen as Reine holds her hand up to slightly hold her back.

"And I think it'd be easier if you could talk to Rinne in person, you've probably got questions anyway- Rinne, there's pudding in the fridge, go and have it and let me talk for a while!" Reine stated, making Rinne's eyes sparkle as she goes to grab it. "So, what do you think?"

Elliot thought for a moment before nodding.

"I believe that's best, you've focused his attention to a single place and where the current HQ is stationed, we've barely seen any activity. That could be dangerous if something major happens in your area again." Elliot replied, and Karen soon lowers her head into closer view.

"I agree, plus I've recently heard the news of Artemisia's return, she was always like a child to me during her time in the SSS. I'd like to be there to aid in her recover. There's a good chance that I may need to aid my own services as a Wizard again in the future." Karen replied, making Reine smile.

"Thank you both, I'll make the announcement to everyone here soon. Until then, Commander Reine out." Reine stated before disconnecting the call and standing up, breathing as she walked of the room and through the base.

Things were normal, until... a sudden scream came out, nearly making Reine trip, she took a moment to realize that had been Mana.

"What the? Why is Mana screaming, what happened!?" Reine asked, rushing ahead. Soon once she arrived, she suddenly blinks before giving a dull stare, and face palming as she suddenly realizes what the problem was. "Of course... I should have known."

Mana was shedding tears as she grabbed onto Yoshino's current shirt and stared at the nervous Water Spirit, it had taken a day to fully kick in, but due to Yoshinon having been fully absorbed back into her, she had regained her true age and now looked to be as physically old as the other Spirits.

Yoshino's face didn't get any older, but her already long hair had extended from past her elbows to her waistline. What Mana was currently freaking out about however? Simple... her usual reaction to
her small bust line. Upon regaining her true age and body, Yoshino, who had originally been the only Spirit who was smaller than Mana had suddenly out-sized her.

"My god... really Mana!?” Reine complained, annoyed by her niece's reaction. Mana turned at her with an angry look.

"You'd get it was a big deal if you were my size Miss 95cm!” Mana declared, making Reine blush and cover her chest as she heard her niece accurate declare her size.

'How did she know that!? I hope she's psychic, otherwise I'm gonna kill Kannazuki later!’ Reine thought.

"U-Uh... Mana, it's not that bad.” Yoshino said gently in an attempt to calm her, and surprisingly Yoshino's voice didn't change with her age. Mana looked at her again and making her shake. "I-I'm sorry!"

Mana sobs.

"Seriously, you were supposed to have my back! You understood me when you were just a 73cm... but now you're a freaking 85cm!” Mana cried out, making Reine sweat drop at the sight.

"It was bad enough hearing Kurumi's an 87cm when came here, then my own mom's 92cm in both her human and spirit forms, and Tohka somehow just had another growth spurt and actually hit the triple digits to become 101cm! Why is every Spirit busty but me!?”

Yoshino and Reine watch as Mana slumped onto the floor.

"Wait, that's it?” Reine asked, soon blinking a bit. "Although that suddenly says a lot to why she doesn't seem to care about everyone else's size. I'm probably only normal she bothers to consider since I'm her biological aunt."

Soon Rinne comes back, making Reine groan as she saw her mouth stained with pudding.

"Hey you two, what's up?” Rinne asked, and soon noticed her sobbing daughter on the ground. "Uh... anyone wanna tell my why Mana's on the ground and suddenly a blubbering mess?"

"First off, please wipe your face clean. Can't believe I'm the responsible one." Reine said, wiping the First Spirit's face with a handkerchief. "Second, your daughter's having an identity crisis about now being the only Spirit with small boobs, happened ever since that one time with Kotori getting her body aged up."

"Ooh! I remember Tohka mentioning that, but since I was in Shido's head at the time, I didn't get to see it cause he's a boy.” Reine answered, soon looking at her daughter.

"Hmm... although I think she has a reason to be worried. Back when the Spirit Dimension still existed, every Spirit was pretty busty, that old... World of Buxom trope on that internet thing I still can't figure out. Anyways, unless she's a late bloomer... there's a possible chance being Half Spirit means she's stuck at that size for good."

Reine and Yoshino's eyes get shadowed in shock as Mana looked at her mother before outright crying a waterfall of tears.

"Did you have to be blunt about it!?” Reine exclaimed angrily.

"Depends, what does 'being blunt' mean?” Rinne asked, making Reine groan and face palm multiple
At the training field, Tohka was seen in her Astral Dress as she fought with Kurumi and Origami simultaneously, she dodged Kurumi's shadow bullets before slashing Sandalphon at her, Kurumi actually struggling to dodge her swings.

'Holy! She's only been training for a short time, but she's improving at an incredible fast rate!' Kurumi thought, soon dodging another slash. "Carnwennan!"

Kurumi holds up Zafkiel as they take a dagger like form to block the attack, though Tohka has her right hand release its hold on Sandalphon as she charged a mana shot towards her, making Kurumi pale.

"Aw crap..." Kurumi replied, soon being blasted out of the training field boundaries with her eyes becoming swirls. Ryouko blew a whistle at that.

"Kurumi out of bounds!"

"OK, that was unexpected, I don't tend to let you win that easily though Tohka!" Origami stated, aiming Metatron's pillars at her. Tohka got ready and rushed forward, slashing Sandalphon at the right points when the beams fired. "No way!"

Tohka swung her sword, and Metatron teleported Origami away... only for Tohka to turn and fire an energy blast at her, knocking Origami out of the field boundaries as her eyes became swirls too. Ryouko blew the whistle again.

"I learned from some of the best after all." Tohka replied, giving a big cheerful smile before jumping up and dispelling her Astral Dress. "I did it, I beat them!"

"It's amazing, I thought what I heard about how quickly Mana got as far as she did was impressive, but Tohka seems to have really striven in a short time to get stronger." Artemisia commented, currently using crutches due to slight muscle atrophy.

"Makes sense, she began this training because she wants to protect her boyfriend, she's determined to get results." Ryouko replied, smiling a bit. "They do say to improve you need an enemy bigger than one's self. Even if that enemy is just one's own doubt or feelings of inferiority."

At that moment, everyone hears Rinne and the others come in. The sniffling Mana still hung over her mom's left shoulder.

"Wait, let me guess... saw Yoshino's got a bigger rack then her now?" Kotori asked, making Rinne nod. "Yeesh, how annoying. I don't let the fact Yoshino's an inch bigger bother me. Tohka herself doesn't even seem to care she's hit the triple digits now."

"I'm not sure why breast size is that important anyways." Tohka asked, Mana glaring at her breasts slightly bouncing as a result. "Then again I'm not sure on a lot of stuff nowadays due to my mental times. "What? What did I say?"
Everyone chuckles a bit at that, and a sudden flash goes off as Rio and Mayuri suddenly appear in the base, after regaining their bearings, Rio turns to see Rinne and smiles.

"Mama!" Rio cheered, running up to her and giving her a hug. Rinne giggles and hugs back. "Rio finally gets to hug Mama, Rio's so happy!"

"Hope you don't mind, we needed a break from our search for Zodiac and since Rio helped save Rinne a few days back, she really wanted to come back and see her." Mayuri told Reine, the commander smiled and shook her head.

"Of course not, Rio's my niece after all. Nothing wrong with wanting to see her mother. Especially when you add the circumstances, she's had to work hard just for the chance to reunite with her." Reine answered, making Mayuri smile in agreement.

"You know, when this is over, I wouldn't mind letting you stay with me. It's probably time I try raising a daughter."

"W-what? Really, you mean it? You'd..." Mayuri asked, making Reine nod before Mayuri blushed and smiled. "Thank you so much, that's really nice of you!"

After a bit, Rinne puts Rio and Mana back on the ground.

"So, how's my little ball of sunshine doing with her search?" Rinne asked.

"Rio an Mayuri are having bad luck, Rio can't find Zodiac anywhere on Earth. Mayuri and Rio are confused, and now Rio thinks she should have asked Sister." Rio pouted a bit, slightly irritated Zodiac kept hiding from them. Soon she sees Tohka's training and gets confused. "Tohka, Rio's confused. What's Tohka doing?"

Tohka blushed slightly embarrassed.

"Well... I've been feeling I haven't been able to help Shido as much of the others, so I'm having the others all train me." Tohka explained, Rio gives an 'oh' expression and nods happily. Tohka soon blinks as she thought of something. "Hey Rio, you've seen everyone's predecessors, right? Maybe you could tell me how mine used their powers to help me?"

Rio blinked at that.

"Uh... Rio doesn't know what you mean? Tohka's the only possessor of Sandalphon, Tohka has no predecessors." Rio answered, suddenly making everyone stare at her silently. Even Rinne gave a surprised look. After a few moments of silence, the room was suddenly deafened by a simultaneous-

"WHAAAAAT!?" Everyone minus Rinne shouted, Tohka herself having gone white eyed as she blinked at Rio.

"Uh... I'm sorry sweetie, but you've had to give people the Sephira Crystals for three decades. How could Tohka be the only one you ever gave Sandalphon to?" Rinne asked, just as confused as the others.

"Well Rio couldn't give Sandalphon to anyone else." Rio explained, making everyone tilt their heads.

"Rio didn't just ask everyone she offered a Sephira Crystal just to see if they were sure if taking it,
Rio also needed them to say it so the Sephira Crystal could undo its lock on a candidate and switch to a new one. When Rio saved Tohka, Rio saw Sandalphon's crystal consider her worthy, and Rio then learned Sandalphon wouldn't accept anyone else until Tohka said no. As Tohka was in stasis healing, Rio couldn't ask her until she woke up, but Rio never could and had to save her with Sandalphon's crystal.

Shido gasped.

"Of course! That's why Purple Spacequakes didn't exist until January of this year, the power to make them wasn't in anyone's possession until then. Though wait, if that's the case how'd you have all the info you did about her Spirit abilities?" Shido asked, making Reine pull out some notes. "What are these?"

"They're notes your father made about the Spirit Dimension, truth is most of our info came from what he learned. Not to mention with past hosts dying and being everywhere, getting information was already tricky that we didn't even notice the absence of Sandalphon's powers." Reine revealed, letting Shido and Mana look at the notes.

"OK... but what does that have to do with my powers?" Tohka asked confused.

Rio soon piggy backs on Tohka's back, lowing her head to look at her upside down.

"Remember how Saya's consciousness lived in Camael? Well, Rio believes it's an extension Camael created from the Sephira Crystal's shared ability to transfer the past user's combat experience." Rio revealed, making Tohka's eyes widen a bit. "Aside from Tohka, each Spirit's had at least one predecessor before Rio gave you all your powers."

Rio soon falls backwards and lands on her feet before running in front of Tohka.

"Rio even recalls some alternate forms were made by past possessors, Rio remembers seeing Kurumi create her Carnwennan trick herself." Rio giggled, making the Shadow Spirit blush bashfully at the compliment.

"So Rio believes Tohka's not weak because she's not strong, Tohka just doesn't have past experiences to aid her. Still, that means Tohka made all of Sandalphon's current potential on Tohka's own. Rio thinks Tohka should be proud of her achievements."

Tohka blushed slightly.

"Uh... Kurumi, is she telling the truth? Did you really make one of Zafkiel's alternate forms?" Tohka asked.

"Yeah, I noticed how the others were all meant for long-range, so I was worried about what would happen if an opponent came too close for my shots to be effective. Ryouko's story showed me how right I was when I learned that's what got my predecessor dead when faced with a close combat fighter." Kurumi confirmed, nodding her head.

"So your lack of battle experience is pretty much because you have a past possessor to transfer their skills over like us, I'd probably fumble just as much if that was the case. Though with how easily you made Halvanhelev and Chrysaor I think you'll catch up fast."

Tohka smiled.

"Oh wait, Rio remembered that Mama was born in the Sandalphon region, maybe Mama can help Tohka with her powers?" Rio wondered, but Rinne chuckled as she sweat dropped.
"Sorry Rio, but mama can't help there. It is true I was born there but... as Seigo's notes state, some Spirits were born with other powers outside the Sephira Crystal regions and kinda like an 'other' category." Rinne answered, rubbing her head in embarrassment. "It's been 30 years too, so I don't remember much about what my region's spirits could do."

Rinne thinks for a moment, trying to recall anything.

"Although... I do think Tohka's seismic waves and creating Sandalphon's throne from the ground are both clues to parts of her powers she might not be using. That's the best I can remember though. I mean I can still help train you Tohka, but for specifics on certain Spirit powers, that's not where my mentor and advisory role works best."

Before the rest of the group could say anything though, they suddenly heard a familiar alarm go off.

[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE!]

"A Spacequake, we've got another Spirit coming!" Mayuri gasped.

"Confirming location and getting visuals now!" Maria responded, her data processing as the screens revealed the area of focus as an old abandoned amusement park. "This is that old amusement park on the outskirts of the crater walls that everyone calls Ghost Land nowadays, right?"

"It is, the quakes barely hit it when Tenguu Crater was formed, and since Spacequakes rarely hit there there's little need to repair it, especially as less people came and places like Ocean Park were created. Deconstruction hasn't begun simply due to the Spacequakes requiring more attention." Reine answered, looking at the video feed.

"It's a bit surprising that this is where the next Spirit will appear."

Soon the dimensional ripple began to near the ground.

"The Spacequake will go off in 3, 2, 1... now!" Maria announced.

Once the ripple hit the ground, the dimension flux rose back up into a spot midair, causing a green colored Spacequake to go off and destroy a majority of the park. One Rinne and Rio saw it, it was clear which Spirit had just appeared.

"Green... that's definitely the power of the Haniel Crystal." Rinne confirmed, looking at everyone. "The elemental power associated to the Haniel region back in the Spirit Dimension was the ability to shape things, transform something that was almost nothing into something more. Rio, what do you know about the past possessors?"

"From Rio's experience, Haniel's form in this world takes after a witch's broom, Rio thinks it kinda looks like the old and new Fraxinus ship at the one end. Rio doesn't remember Haniel's current possessor though, Rio hasn't seen her for a while." Rio revealed. "Rio wishes she could remember."

Katie blinks and gasps.

"Wait, I remember seeing her. It's how I ended up joining the AST. Did she have green hair by chance and the code name [Witch]?" Katie asked, making Rio nod.

"Yes, Haniel possessors have the code name Witch! Thanks for helping Rio remember." Rio smiled, making Katie blush a bit. After a while, the Spacequake faded away, but for some reason, no one could see the Spirit in the crater left behind. "Ooh? Rio doesn't remember the current Haniel user
being a good hider, where'd she go?"

Rinne tries to think about the situation, and soon Reine turns to Shido.

"Shido, for now it might be best you go visit the Spirit alone. It's been a while since we've been in a situation we might be able to help one without any conflict." Reine reasoned, making Shido nod. "Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori, Kurumi... be ready to be beamed over if things get bad. Rio and Mayuri, same to you."

Reine then looked at Rinne.

"What about you Rinne, think you can aid them too?"

"I'm afraid not, my powers are all offense based and since a weakened a lack of defense with a Limited Astral Dress might be..." Rinne answered, making Reine nod. Rinne would probably be unable to help in a direct fight. "Sorry about that, until we seal every Spirit I'm kinda just present for now."

"Its fine, it's better for you to be alive in the end." Reine smiled, making Rinne relieved. "Shido, are you ready?"

"Yeah." Shido replied.

In the area that was the remains of the abandoned amusement park, Shido soon found himself standing at the wreckage as he landed from being beamed over. He looked around, seeing nothing but damaged attractions and rides covered in rust and age.

"Alright, now the question is where do I start looking?" Shido wondered, starting to walk around.

After a bit, he felt something off... and suddenly saw part of the Amusement park had turned into something out of Halloween, making the "Ghost Land" name that had since been given to it over the years more accurate. Shido sweated a bit.

'Holy crap, so this is the power to shape things that mom mentioned. Could this be why we didn't see the Spirit? Yeah, maybe she moved towards this spot when the Spacequake went off, we were too focused on the crater after all.' Shido thought, and suddenly out of nowhere...

"Ooh? How intriguing, to see a Human like you here." A young sounding voice came, attracting Shido's attention. He looked around and soon saw a face staring at him as he jumped back in surprise. "What? You need to use the bathroom or something?"

Before him was the Spirit he was looking for, and compared to the Spirits before, she was quite different. She had jade green colored hair and eyes, and for her Astral Dress, she wears a purple semi-transparent suit with star patterns all over it. A belt was hung at her waist, and some articles of cloth were attached to it.

She wore a cape and a witch hat that had a pair of bat wings with a belt with a gemstone wrapped and locked onto its front. Overall, her appearance resembles that of a flashy witch... and boy did that flashy part fit. Why was that? Because unlike the other Spirits before her who were teenagers, the exception being Rio and the original appearances of Kotori and Yoshino, this spirit clearly looked like an adult.

She was a slender woman whose age should at least be a little past 20 years old. She had long slender limbs and voluptuous bust, making Shido glad Mana wasn't present. She has perfect
proportions, enough to make gravure models run away barefooted. Long and glossy hair that was spreading out under the wide visors of the hat, and in that interval, her pair of eyes which could be mistaken with emeralds were staring at Shido filled with interest.

In fact, if it wasn't for the fact she was a Spirit, Shido would have thought she was a man-made girl who looked as beautiful as she did because she was made from a collection of all the best traits and DNA from all of the ideal women in the world.

"You're pretty cute." The girl giggled, and soon got closer to Shido who was blushing nervously due to how close she was, both through her face and figure. "What's your name little boy?"

"Uh... I'm Shido Takamiya, and yours?" Shido asked. The green haired Spirit giggled as she winked at Shido.

"My name is Natsumi."

And with that, Natsumi's made her appearance! Now get it together quickly or you'll make your harem jealous of all those stares you're giving the lady just cause of her body. *snickers*

In case anyone asks, the reason I chose Itsuwari for Natsumi's last name is because the definitions for it include "False", "Fiction", and "Fabrication". All of those fit the nature of Natsumi being the Mimicry spirit.

Poor Mana, she's really sensitive about her chest size, and now she's at rock bottom due to Yoshino's age up. Also... seems Tohka grew again. *giggles* I swear that's as far as Tohka's gonna grow, this isn't my DxD fanfic so I can't exaggerate the size here as much as I can with Vali. Not to mention that would just make the running gag with Mana's whole A-Cup Angst transform from a small joke into a cruel one instead ^^;

So tell me... how surprised were you all for me to drop the reveal that Tohka actually didn't have a predecessor? I actually gave you some clues last season, aside from moments where Phantom only had one crystal out, the Sandalphon crystal was always one of the crystals she held out when trying to see if a person was a potential candidate. I'd say that's the theme of secrets for Season 2, we'll be learning more about the secrets related to the powers of the Spirits.

Now we have the DEM preparing to try and kick off Westcott, met the new Adeptus 3 while still being unaware of who she is, and now Elliot and Karen are going to be transferring over to the Tenguu City branch of Ratatoskr due to expecting Westcott's about to get more serious... all while Tohka learns there's possibly more to her powers than she's actually been able to use magically and physically. Man, what a great way for me to start Season 2 :3

Well, with all of that cleared out of the way, I guess there's only one thing left to say... welcome to Season 2 everyone, and stay awesome!

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 86%

Origami - 80%
Yoshino - 78%
Kotori - 79%
Kurumi - 72%
OK, before we start things off... I need to apologize, I completely forgot to mention what the emotion of the Natsumi arc was during the last chapter, so let's fix that now ^^;

This arc's emotion is Doubt, seems like an obvious choice considering Natsumi, but there's an added layer of flavor in the arc's name to spice this said "doubt" up. Oh, and I guess I should give everyone a heads up, since the Natsumi arc is two Volumes, this is the first of two Natsumi arcs, the second will be covering the Volume 9 half. I won't say its name until it's out, but I will say the emotional theme will still be doubt.

Now this is the point where Tohka taking the protagonist role for the season will start showing, I probably could have done this earlier if I had Tohka go with him, but I had to keep her behind so Natsumi wouldn't be suspicious. Plus, the sealing point is Shido's thing, I gotta at least actually show him in deuteragonist status for the season, and that's gonna be hard if he doesn't have some solo shining moments.

Also... get ready everyone, a data sheet's incoming, and I think you all know what that means will be showing up in this chapter. So here it is ^^

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-Inverse Natsumi, Code Name: [Sorceress]-

Demon King: Baal - Haniel's Demon King counterpart, Baal takes the form of a more zig-zagged shaped futuristic broomstick, almost like a lightning bolt, with the same end as before. However how the crystalline broom has become dark green in color with the crystals now possessing spiky edges that can actually extend and strike at enemies through piercing and slashing strikes. These extending broom ends also allow Baal to have a greater speed and turning than its Angel counterpart, but without the difficulties in slowing and stopping it possessed once before.

- Alternate Form: Izanami - The inverse counterpart of Haniel's Yata no Kagami form, the mirror now taking a dark reflective surface and a spiked frame that harms anyone other than Natsumi if they simply touch it, making it impossible to be stolen or manipulate to another's will without great risk to themselves. Along with the same storage stasis field abilities, the mirror now has a pair of even darker abilities behind it. The first is that she can teleport within a radius of half a kilometer... and setting a time limit within the mirror that will cause anything inside to be absorbed into Natsumi’s spirit mana, permanently.

- Alternate Form: Izanagi - The inverse counterpart of Haniel's Kaleidoscope form, it retains the ability to copy another Angel's form, but now there are some changes in the rules of what she copies. Natsumi can now copy an Angel at its full strength, and use any alternate forms provided she's seen their use or captured that Spirit using her Izanami. She can also copy Demon Kings this way, but the restrictions Kaleidoscope had for Angels applies to the Izanagi as well, and they're only as strong as their Angel counterparts.

- Alternate Form: Shinigami - By shifting the crystals that act as its broom brush and the jagged broomstick that make Baal's body, the Demon King changing into a staff-like magic
blaster that fires off dark spirit power, and using her illusion powers, she can erase something from physical view and existence by mere sight and contact. The object(s) hit by this form's blaster aren't actually erased however, and will eventually return if Natsumi chooses to, after some time, or if its forcefully dispelled.

- Powers: While in her Inverse Form, Natsumi is no longer limited to her 1 km radius when using her power, with her range now being decided simply by how much spirit mana she has, how much she intends to transform, and what she'll transform everything into. Natsumi's level of mimicry even increase where simply seeing one's body language can let her learn, mimic and keep the skills of that individual, and when mimicking an individual, she can even read their closest friends' body language to be aware of recent events and avoid exposing herself. However, like her normal form, being knocked unconscious or losing her concentration will cause all her transformations to be reverted afterwards.

Risk Factors:  AA

Spacequake:  B

Spirit's Astral Dress:  C

Angel Rank:  AA

Strength:  92

Consistency:  83

Spiritual Power:  222

Agility:  111

Intelligence:  190

Chapter 28, S2: Natsumi Inverse, Part 2

"You're pretty cute." The girl giggled, and soon got closer to Shido who was blushing nervously due to how close she was, both through her face and figure. "What's your name little boy?"

"Uh... I'm Shido Takamiya, and yours?" Shido asked. The green haired Spirit giggled as she winked at Shido.

"My name is Natsumi. Although to most of your people, I'm called [Witch] due to the obvious appearance." The Spirit, now known as Natsumi, answered. She soon floated a bit closer as she rode on Haniel like a broomstick. "So tell me Shido, why would you come here when most people would flee a Spacequake alarm?"

Shido sweated a bit, unsure how to answer. As a result of this, Maria brought up a response option that said {I actually didn't, I was late in running away and panicked, running without seeing where I was headed. When I noticed my surroundings... I was over here.}, making Shido breathe a quickly.

"W-Well I actually didn't, I was late in running away and panicked, running without seeing where I was headed. When I noticed my surroundings... I was over here." Shido replied, making Natsumi fly closer as she looked at his face.
"...Yeah, that's a lie." Natsumi stated, making Shido flinch in worry. "Though now that I think of it you seemed kinda used to seeing me here out of nowhere, not to mention you've had to noticed I'm on a flying broomstick, why would you be so calm about it? Unless..."

Natsumi got a closer look, and soon she gasped in glee.

"Of course, that's it!" Natsumi gasped, suddenly hugging Shido close... into her breasts, and based on her expression she knew this. "You know about Spirits, and since you didn't attack me that means you're friendly, aren't you!?

"U-Uh... yeah, and just to be clear you know my face is touching your boobs, right?" Shido asked.

"Yes, yes I do. What about it?" Natsumi teased, making Shido blush before Natsumi laughed and let him go. "What's with you boys and thinking every girl hits you for touching their boobs? That's so dumb!"

Shido sweat dropped a bit, but that did give some good signs to his chances since so far. She was clearly choosing to be social, already could tell he had no intent to harm her and knew what she was, and... well based on where he had willing had his face hugged, he had a good feeling she was very understanding.

"Uh... well, I guess there are exceptions every once in a while." Shido answered, scratching his head. Natsumi soon got closer to Shido.

"Hey Shido, I have a question to ask if you don't mind." Natsumi requested, soon giving a somewhat somber face to his surprise. "...do you think I'm beautiful?"

Now that question was odd, both Shido and everyone watching back at the base gave a similar blink in response to it. Usually when most girls said that they had looks that made them doubt this due to the words of others. Natsumi on the other hand? With an appearance like hers, that was the last thing anyone could doubt.

"Uh... is this a trick question? Because I'm pretty sure you've seen enough yourself to know you are." Shido replied, though in a more question like tone than an answer.

"What about me is beautiful?" Natsumi asked again.

'This is getting strange, it's almost as if she doesn't believe she's beautiful.' Shido thought, while also thinking of an answer that didn't sound strange or too perverted. "Your silky hair, the cute look of your eyes, and you have a sweet looking smile."

Natsumi blushed a bit at that, and soon to Shido's surprise... Natsumi suddenly made a lonely face, and opened her mouth softly.

"Yeah... as expected, this me... is beautiful..." Natsumi replied.

'No way... does she actually not think she's beautiful!?" Shido thought to his surprise, his eyes widening in response to said surprise.

Meanwhile back at the Ratatoskr base, everyone gave a similar response on their faces.

"OK, this is weird..." Maria stated, checking her emotional state which showed her happy and somewhat sad. Making her scratch her head. "Why would she say that? You don't think she feels Shido's being dishonest, do you? Or what if it's the fact she can tell he already has girls and can't take
"I don't know, but me and the others can confirm this. When I once asked Shido how he's able to reciprocate all of our feelings he said... [It's simple girls, when I save you I've had to have the mindset of working for a harem, and why is that?]." Kurumi began, posing in a way that made her body sparkle and look like she was in an anime.

"[The answer's quite simple, because when I try to save a Spirit, I feel that I need to fall in love with that Spirit as much as I tries make them fall for me. Love isn't love if both sides don't give it their all, and I refuse to half-ass it just because of the reasons behind it!], it was really sweet."

Saya blinked at her best friend.

"...Did he really say it like that?" Saya asked, making Kurumi sweat drop and chuckle.

"Well he said the same words, the rest was me just being a little hammy." Kurumi admitted with an embarrassing blush and smile, making Saya chuckle and smirk at her usual antics. "Yeah, yeah, I know. Ten years hasn't change that part of my personality."

Rio makes an exaggerated thinking face, causing Mayuri and Rinne to look at her oddly.

"Uh... Rio, why are you doing that?" Mayuri asked, getting the young Spirit's attention as she turns to her mother and sisterly figure.

"Rio feels she's forgotten something, but Rio can't remember what Rio forgot." Rio answered, soon making her thinking face again as Rinne and Mayuri look at each other before they both shrugged. "What could Rio be missing?"

Shido blinked for a while as Natsumi fidgeted her fingers after occasionally looking at Shido, and right before he could ask her anything... the sound of something familiar entered both their ears as a familiar group of DEM wizards, namely Adeptus 4 through 12, flew into the area with their weapons ready and willing.

"Oh great, the DEM had to show up now?" Shido groaned, he was prepared to Spirit Ascend when Natsumi held a hand out. "Huh?"

"Not sure what you're trying to do there, but I can handle this. Let's get this going Haniel." Natsumi stated, giving a playful smile.

[Aye master!]

Natsumi jumped up high into the air, grabbing Haniel at the start of her jump and smirking as the Adeptus wizards blasted a barrage of missile fire at her, she twirls Haniel before holding the broom brush end at them.

"Sorry, but I think we should switch these missiles out with these!" Natsumi declared, Haniel's crystals glowing as they blasted out dazzling green light that hit the missiles... and turned them into gumballs! Shido stared as said gumballs hit the ground and gave off harmless comical explosions from cartoons. "Much better!"

'She transformed those missiles into gum, and made them like anime bombs? No way, can she actually change the whole nature and existence of a non-living object?' Shido thought, suddenly looking at the amusement park's Halloween like nature.
"Damn it, swarm [Witch] before she can pull off that trick again!" Adeptus 4 declared, making the other eight Adeptus wizards draw their energy swords and rush at her. Natsumi looked at them and smirked, soon tapping her finger against Adeptus 4's blade before... "What are you-"

Natsumi giggled as she swung Haniel and knocked all nine of them away.

"And now it's time to open Natsumi's petting zoo!" Natsumi declared, making Shido confused until suddenly... all nine of the DEM wizards were changed into something else completely in one instant! Shido saw a rabbit, dog, cat, baby panda, ferret, chicken, pig, koala and a duck. "Aww, isn't everyone is cuter this way?"

"H-h-how did..." Shido suddenly stuttered, it worked on living things too? 'I already thought some of what Kurumi could do was incredible, but she's making even her abilities seem like they're nothing! Although I don't get it, mom didn't mention her powers were like this. Did she learn this herself, or is it something about Earth?'

Shido began muttering to himself as he tried to figure it out, while Natsumi giggled, unaware of something falling towards her from above. Shido looked and saw one missile was still about to hit her!

"Natsumi, above you!"

Natsumi stopped and looked, but was too late as the missile hit her and knocked her to the ground. Shido gasped as a smoke cloud went off and a green sparkle was briefly seen, implying Natsumi at least survived the missile.

"Oh no, are you OK!?!" Shido asked, waving to keep the smoke from nearing him. However, at that moment... his headset suddenly gave a flash as it stated [Category E] in bright red as Natsumi's emotional state suddenly dropped into negative readings in an instant. "What the, she's Inverting?"

Shido suddenly jumped back as dark green spirit power suddenly shot off, making Shido stare nervously as Natsumi suddenly came out of the smoke riding a more jagged and dark version of Haniel... obviously her Demon King. The Astral Dress she wore in her Inverse Form was also more than just more revealing, it actually became more terrifying as well.

The witch hat on her head now had glowing eyes and a mouth with a green glow inside, though it was motionless and didn't appear to be alive, while the glowing rim had turned green and had a spikier jagged edge. Her semi-transparent suit became black with dark red stair patterns, but now her skin was exposed to fully show her cleavage, her midriff, and most of her arms and legs, now being less a suit and more like a short sleeved tank top and shorts.

Her cape now had many holes on it, and was ripped near the ends, its color whitening the more it neared said end, becoming ghastlier in appearance. She now gained toe-less boots and dark green fingerless gloves on her hands. her hair had also gained a similar theme to Inverse Tohka, but rather than a lightening gradient, it was a darkening one.

What Shido noticed most however? Natsumi was outright glaring daggers at him, her face was blushed red for some strange reason as her looks of detest kept glowing out like a targeting light aiming at its target.

"...Did you see?" Natsumi asked angrily, making Shido blink confused. The smoke had been too thick to see... oh boy, now he was starting to get what happened. Whatever happened with that brief flash of light was what set off the Inversion.
"No! I didn't see anything, I swear!" Shido replied, waving his hands for emphasis, unfortunately for him...

"Don't play a fool! Just now my... my... YOU SAW IT!" Natsumi screamed, her eyes flashing red for a brief moment as the Amusement Park attractions all wailed and shook in response. "Now that you have seen it, I cannot afford it to end it like this... I will end your life!"

Shido's eyes widened at that.

"W-What, but weren't you and I-" Shido never got the finish as Natsumi's Demon King, Baal, shot the crystals that made its broom brush at him. They stopped only centimeters away from his face, making it clear Natsumi left him alive as a threat.

"Your days are numbered Shido Takamiya, I will never forgive you for seeing my secret!" Natsumi screamed, and just like that she disappeared somewhere with tremendous speed as his headset registered her as "Lost". The still transformed DEM wizards all walking around in animal form.

"What... just happened!?" Shido asked, looking up at the sky blankly.

Soon Shido was beamed back to the Ratatoskr base, where everyone else was just as shocked by what they had just witnessed with Natsumi and her Inversion, Maria was currently looking at the data she gathered from the event and was stumped.

"Oh come on..." Maria muttered, soon playing the video where the missile hit her and using every filter to try and see what the smoke hid. Unfortunately for her, whatever happened in it was blocked by the flash of light and Inversion too fast for even her abilities to identify. "No!"

Maria's hologram face faults onto the ground.

"Uh... Rinne, do you have an idea on what could have happened?" Yoshino asked.

"Afraid not Yoshino, the powers of Haniel don't work on Earth the same as they did back in my world. I think due to the fact this world isn't made of energy, her body's nature may have actually evolved its abilities." Rinne answered, scratching her head. "I'm as lost as everyone else."

Everyone sighed at that, with Shido looking at the video's feed of the brief flash, not seeing anything in the silhouette that fit this secret of Natsumi's she believed him to have seen. He bit his lower lip over this.

"Whatever freaked her out, it was clear that it wasn't until that missile hit her. So it had to have only been for that one moment." Tohka thought aloud, looking at Rio. "Rio, you gave her the crystal, do you think you have any idea what happened? Maybe her wish is related?"

"Rio doesn't see anything odd from what Rio remembers, if only Rio remembered Rio's last meeting with her 3 years ago." Rio replied, scratching her head.

Everyone sighs knowing this Spirit's saving attempt was gonna be just as hard as the rest.

"At this point, I feel as if we're in one of those long running manga stories where it seems like something's gonna be easy mid-way, but it somehow gets harder without warning." Rinne stated, suddenly causing a nearby wall to have the plaque hanging on it, which was labeled with the number 4 on it, fall over. "Huh? Why'd that suddenly break off?"
The next day at school, the attending Spirits, Mana and the other Ratatoskr agents who attended class were already in homeroom with everyone else, Shido on the other hand was running a bit late due to something he had to take care of related to Rinne and... well, apparently it had to do with her not being aware about something with the bathroom.

'I wonder how it must feel for Shido, it's like he's the actual parent and Rinne's his daughter with how out of place she is.' Origami thought mentally sweat dropping. At that moment, Shido walks in the door and gets her attention. "Oh, hey Shido, is your mom doing OK now?"

Shido looked at Origami, making her blink as she gave an odd face.

"Uh... Shid-Oh!" Origami exclaimed, feeling Shido suddenly grope her to her surprise. Kurumi suddenly flinched in surprise while the whole class reacted in some manner, especially the guys who all got extremely angry/jealous. "W-W-What are you doing!?!"

"Oh yeah, that's some splendid breast. The feeling of fondling a natural genius is different from that of an airhead." Shido replied, making Origami go red as she soon only became capable of muttering gibberish. "This time for one round, is it okay if I fondle directly? I will be gentle too."

Origami's head emitting steam at that.

"Shido, what are you doing? This isn't like..." Kurumi began, and soon saw Shido stare at her as she covered her chest. "...No wait, don't do it! I'm not ready for this sort of thing!"

Kurumi's pleas were unheard as Shido quickly sprinted over and groped her from behind, now the guys all seemed murderous.

"Shido, cut that crap out right now!" Ashley roared, only to notice her standing in front of her as she sweat nervously. "Uh... I know martial arts and I'll break your arms with them if you don't stop!"

"I understand you want to be looked after Ashley, but don't shout so much. Should I seal those lips of yours?" Shido asked, making Ashley instinctively try to kick him in the kisser, only for him to react with a counter movement. "Was that a yes?"

Ashley gulped and the guys all tried to jump at him, forcing the trouble trio to hold them all back.

"Hey, don't maul him! That's not solving anything!" Ai panicked, her feet skidding.

"Come on, don't be killers!" Mai gasped, barely holding them back.

"Can't... hold them!" Mii breathed, her limbs shaking.

Soon Hiroto walked up to Shido and let Ashley move away.

"Now, now Shido. No need to get crazy, just tell your old buddy Hiroto what's got you shaking." Hiroto asked, and Shido suddenly gives him an odd smile. "Uh... Shido?"

"Why Hiroto, I didn't know you felt that way about me. You wanna kiss?" Shido bluntly stated, and at that moment the mob of men stopped as they, Hiroto and the rest of the class all suddenly stared at Shido in shock... and then they screamed as any non-Ratatoskr affiliated students moved to the walls.

"N-no way... Shido's bi!?" A male student stated.

"Not just him, so is Hiroto?" A female student added, making Hiroto's eyes widen at that. "Such a scandal! That rumor actually was true!"
Hiroto quickly waved his hands.

"No! I do not swing that way, I swear! I don't know what Shido's doing!" Hiroto denied, his voice extremely loud as he flailed around. Everyone hadn't even noticed Shido leaving the class, and when they did, his eyes flashed green.

'The dominoes have tipped Shido, prepare to have your life utterly ruined!' Natsumi thought, chuckling while still in Shido's form and went somewhere else.

While short on breath from running, Shido began walking up the stairs after finally making it to school.

"Oh man, who knew it would be that hard to teach someone how to not flush a whole roll of TP?" Shido asked himself, soon walking into his class... only for everyone to suddenly glare at him angrily. "H-Huh? What are you all doing, why are you looking at me that way?"

Three of the male students soon walked up to him and yelled.

"How dare you came back here shamelessly Takamiya!"

"You should know what you have done!"

"Through the sense of pain, we will make sure you regret you were born!"

Shido gave a panicked look of confusion as he held up his arms.

"W-what are you talking about!?" Shido asked confused, and soon more of the class swarms him angrily, with Shido covering himself as they try to hit him.

"Don't deny your crimes! We saw you grope Origami and Kurumi, you sicko!"

"Then you tried to hit on Ashley, and made us all think you and Hiroto were gay for each other!"

"Enemy of all men AND society!

Shido kept holding his hands out, and soon tried to back away, only for Saya to kick him from behind and push him back forward as she came out of the neighboring classroom.

"Shido... I heard you groped my BFF without permission, I don't care how much she cares about you. Because you did that, I'm gonna rip your head a new one!" Saya roared, making Shido scream like a girl. As the class rampaged on him, the Ratatoskr allied students and Tamae all had their headsets react as Reine replied.

"Uh... OK, ignoring all that chattering and yelling, something you should all know. Shido didn't get into the school until just now. I don't know what, but whoever that was... it wasn't Shido, so something's up." Reine stated, surprising them. "Origami, lie up something scientific quick. I'll tell Shido to follow your lead."

Origami quickly nods and soon whistles loudly, getting everyone's attention. She feels some of Shido's body and makes a certain look at him.

"Hey, wait a moment... Mana, didn't you bring some cheap mushrooms back for the dinner Shido was making you two?" Origami asked, making Mana think as the former winked at Shido.

"Oh yeah, I did. You did say one seemed a bit too pale, didn't you?"
Shido blinked.

"Really? I didn't notice, I must have cooked them all too fast." Shido replied, playing along. Origami sighed at that.

"That brand of mushroom if not properly grown long enough, which makes it pale, can emit a hallucinogenic gas. Shido, you were acting so weird all of a sudden most likely because you ate that mushroom. It's no wonder you don't know what just happened." Origami explained, making the students all sweat drop at the situation.

"Everyone, we owe Shido an apology, this was a complete accident due to circumstances we couldn't control. Let's just take you to the nurse and make sure everything's cleared up so this doesn't repeat."

All of the students bow apologetically, while the Ratatoskr sighs at that in relief as Origami takes Shido to the nurse. Around that same time, Tohka began rushing over to Shido's school, carrying his usual bento box as her feet moved so fast, a dust cloud formed behind her.

"Come on Tohka, hurry! Shido's school starts lunch break in a few minutes!" Tohka shouted, managing to go faster. Soon she rushed past the gate and into the school building... and then crashed into someone, making her spin a bit. She blinked until she saw Shido was who she ran into. "Oh, sorry Shido!"

"Ow! What the hell Tohka, what speed were you running at, Mach 20!?" Natsumi replied, rubbing her head. Tohka bowed apologetically at that. "So why were you in a hurry to find me anyways?"

Tohka blinked and held out the bento box.

"You forgot your lunch, so I-" Tohka began, only to see Shido leaving the Nurse's office after a small talk with the Nurse about the 'mushroom' hallucinations, making Tohka blink as she looked at the two of them. "T-There's two of Shido!?!"

Soon the two Shido's look at each other, and point at each other, yelling at the same time.

"Why are you using my look!" Shido demanded.

"Me, I'm the real Shido, how dare you say it's your look you fake!" Natsumi countered, making Tohka even more confused. At that same moment, Origami came out and stared in shock before tapping the headset.

"Uh... guys, have Tamae call you out to help with something. You might wanna see this." Origami stated, paling at the sight from pure shock. "...I think my brain is broken."

Soon the others all walk as they carry some boxes from Tamae's sudden aiding task and noticed the same thing.

"Uh... we're all seeing this, right!?" Kotori panicked.

"I'm the real Shido, admit it you fake!" Shido and Natsumi stated in unison, making Mana faint into Ashley's arms. The two growled and looked at everyone. "Tell this phony I'm the real Shido!"

Everyone looks at the two, unable to find the real one out of the duo. The two waited, and then suddenly, everyone noticed Tohka sniffing both of them, making everyone sweat drop.

"Uh... can we help you?" Natsumi asked, a bit confused by Tohka's behavior.
"I know who the real Shido is!" Tohka declared, shocking everyone but the two Shido's, and soon... she points at Natsumi to the Mimicry spirit's surprise. "This one's the fake!"

"What? How do you know that, where's your proof!?" Natsumi demanded, and Tohka held up her finger.

"Shido always makes a lot of yummy and delicious food for us, so much that it's part of his unique scent now." Tohka explained, and Ashley sweat dropped at that strange logic due to its mildly gross nature. "Not only do you lack that scent, you smell to pretty. The kind of pretty smell... that only a girl should have!"

Natsumi's eyes go white as she flinches at that, if there was one chink in her ability to disguise herself, that chink was she couldn't mimic something so minor like smell. No one had a strong enough nose to be specific enough to notice the difference though, even a Spirit... Tohka however was an exception.

"Damn it!" Natsumi declared, smoke puffing as everyone saw her change back and reveal it was her. "You'll regret this for as long as you all live! Now you're all involved, all of you!"

"Quick, catch her!" Kurumi shouted, everyone tried to jump at her, only for Natsumi to turn Baal into a mirror.

"IZANAMI!"

She jumps in, teleporting out of the way as everyone's heads collided. Everyone's eyes became swirls from the result as they slowly got back up, holding their injured heads as they each give their own cry of pain.

"She... she got away, and now my head stings." Tohka said, rubbing the swell bump on her head. She soon blushes as she feels Shido pat her head.

"Thank you Tohka, if it wasn't for you then worse would have happened." Shido smiled, soon blinking a bit. "Oh yeah, why are you here right now?"

Tohka chuckles and holds up his bento to him, causing Shido to blush.

"Aw man, I forgot my lunch?" Shido said embarrassingly, taking it as Tohka giggled at him. Tohka soon began heading back to the Takamiya household as everyone headed back to class. As she did...

"That look in her eyes..." Tohka said to herself, recalling the moment she saw Natsumi's eyes up close. However, it wasn't the emotions or the expressions that they made she was thinking about... it was what she saw when she looked at them, what her eyes reflected. "...Why did they have so much pain?"

Tohka wondered this as she walked home, only for a sudden splash of dirty water to suddenly spray her as a car drove over a puddle right as she walked by. She coughed at the sudden soaking.

"Eww!" Tohka squealed, clearly disgusted by the end result. She soon took a look at her butterfly ribbon which got a bit dirty. "Aw man, now I've gotta have Shido clean this."

The day after the school incident with Natsumi, Ratatoskr was still searching for the Inverted Spirit of Mimicry, but with little success. Shido was yawning as he began cooking omelets for breakfast. Tohka was playing a video game against Mana, her ribbon flapping happily as it was now fresh and clean again.
"And take that!" Tohka exclaimed, cheering as she beat Mana who gasped in shock at her defeat. Right at that moment however, a package suddenly formed over her head and bonked her to her surprise. "Ow! What the, where did this come from?"

"Huh? What is it Tohka, what came from where?" Shido asked, finishing the last omelet. Everyone looked as Tohka held up a package. "A package? I don't think anyone ordered anything that needed one as of recently... no one did, right?"

Everyone shook their heads.

"OK, then what is it?"

"I don't know, who's this even from-" Tohka wondered, soon noticing a certain name on the side... Natsumi. Everyone paled as Tohka showed them this. "OK... I'm gonna open it since not opening might be dangerous if not more dangerous."

Everyone backs away, while Tohka, being the Spirit whose mana barrier came up naturally, opened the package. Luckily it wasn't anything big. Just some letter and a pair of 12 photographs.

"Hey, wait a second, these are..." Rinne stated, looking at the pictures. It was one of Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Mana, Kotori, Kurumi, Mayuri, Rio, Rinne, Reine, Kannazuki and Maria in some various situation where the person in question hadn't been aware that the camera had focused onto them.

Rinne blushed at hers, everyone seeing a picture of her trying to figure out how to use the toilet.

"Why'd she take my picture there!" Rinne asked, completely embarrassed and covering her face with her hands. Mana patted her back as Rinne cried a little. "That was mean, really mean."

"Hey, there's a letter too." Tohka mentioned, finally noticing the letter below the pictures. She opened it up and soon the message inside got everyone on guard.

[I am inside one of these. So, can you guess which one am I?]

You better hurry and guess right, because if you don't... then you and everyone here disappears.

~Your Enemy, Natsumi~

Everyone gained a sudden trickle of sweat from the message, getting worried.

"Rio's confused. If Natsumi took Shido's form while Shido was around, then wouldn't Natsumi take a non-Natsumi form when who Natsumi chose to become isn't around?" Rio asked, making her mother shake her head.

"I have to agree with Rinne on this, Natsumi's not stupid. Considering how that ended and the fact she knows that Tohka has a chance to see through the disguise can only mean one thing..." Mayuri began, looking at the others and sweating. "...One of these people is a fake, Natsumi swapped places with them."

Rio gasped, looking around at everyone in the photo, even herself.

"Worse than that, Natsumi was able to act so much like Shido when we saw the real him and his clone that even after seeing them together we couldn't tell them apart. Tohka being able to smell them was a lucky accident and one that only worked because it was Shido. I don't think she'll notice the
fake this time, and if Tohka is the fake she could easily lie."

"That means Shido has to find out who's the fake before Natumi takes him out and kills him, a dangerous hide and seek game." Mana gulped, soon blinking a bit. "I'm confused though... why did she choose only 12?"

Origami thought a bit.

"Well... this is only a theory, but maybe it's a reference to a clock hitting midnight? I do think one form of midnight can mean the end after all." Origami replied, sweating slightly as the idea. "Natumi clearly seems like a Spirit who likes to play tricks, and this shows how cruel of one it is."

[Ooh, seems like we've got a smarty here.]

Everyone looks to see the Izanami mirror floating before them, and Baal speaking to them before Natumi's silhouette is seen.

"I came to wish you some BAD luck Shido, I'm hoping you lose my little game. I'm already confident about it. Get ready to pay for learning my secret, I swear!" Natumi declared, the mirror disappearing.

"I didn't see your secret!" Shido replied, but the mirror had vanished before he could finish. "Damn it!"

Shido soon took a thinking pose.

'OK Shido, think... what do you need to pay attention to? What traits about each do you know? The ones I'm closest to are Tohka, Mana and Kotori so if it's one of them my chances are good. Though I don't know Mayuri, Reine, my mom or Rio that well due to circumstances so... if its them, Natumi's got me cornered. Especially with my mom's unfamiliarity with Earth. I hate to say it, but out of these 12... Natumi's knew what she was doing, I can't even believe that Tohka isn't the one she replaced now.'

Shido sweated at this.

'Looks like I've got no choice, I'll need to use this time to hang out with everyone and use it to try and discover the odd one out. Even Natumi can't be perfect, she'll likely be bound to make a mistake I'll notice... I just need to find it in time.' Shido thought, making a determined face.

Inside the dimension of the Izanami mirror, Natumi giggled as she watched her game begin and Shido already with a plight on who she might be, unaware of the surprise twist she had for him.

"Get ready Shido, the truth is the one thing you'll never be able to see coming. So, I hope you don't cry over this when... oh wait, you won't cry. Cause you'll be joining them!" Natumi stated before laughing loudly, making an aroused looking motion as she did. "The clock's counting Shido, and soon... there will be none."

Natumi aimed the Izanami mirror, and soon... focused on Origami as she held it closer.

"Now... then there were 11." Natumi declared, as the Izanami shined.

As she began thinking, Origami suddenly began glowing green to everyone's surprise.
"W-what!?" What's happening to me-" Origami asked, but her sentence would never finish as she disappeared in green sparkles to everyone's shock and horror. At that moment, Natsumi's voice is heard laughing like an actual witch to be mocking.

"Oh yeah, did I not mention this? For every hour that you fail to guess correctly, or can't make any guess at all... I'll be removing one of your candidates. Oh, and before you think this aids your chances, just because I take one of you away doesn't mean they weren't the right replacement." Natsumi explained, laughing further.

"It seems I was accidentally a bit late in sending that package, so you already lost an hour. You only have eleven, and now can't spend any time with your white haired friend to see if anything's off with her. Oh, before I forget..."

Natsumi has the Izanami mirror appear, showing Origami in a stasis within the realm shown inside the glass.

"Izanami has a wonderful ability I saved for the occasion, the moment that you fail... everyone inside the mirror will be absorbed into my Spirit powers, effectively erasing them forever! If you can't find where I am, then all of you will disappear!" Natsumi exclaimed with a smirk, making everyone's eyes widen. "Tick Tock Shido, before it's too late."

"Oh my god..." Shido muttered, and soon mumbling something to himself in fear.

Worse of all? He had every reason to, after all... the game had changed in mere seconds from this revelation. He had only 11 hours left to find who was the fake among the people closest to him, and one of the 12 would disappear each hour he failed, even if it was Natsumi.

The most chilling prospect was failure meant all of them and himself would be killed. Shido didn't have the time he'd normally need for a situation like this, in just one moment... Natsumi had caused his usual confidence to be pushed into doubt as his greatest strengths were now in an environment that acted as their mortal enemy.

"What do we do?" Shido asked himself, his eyes shaking as Natsumi's voice was heard laughing one more time.

And with a single move, this entire game of hide and seek that Natsumi's thought up just became even more dangerous... how will Shido find the real culprit? I'll tell you this, in canon the culprit was Yoshinon, but since she's not with them anymore, that makes the clues that Shido had once before less effective, even then a certain scene he had with Origami didn't happen in this story so that still wouldn't have happened. Just who among the twelve did Natsumi turn into?

Also, hoped you all liked the debut of Inverse Natsumi, she managed to Inverse so easily because she had been cheery and happy at first only for that sudden shift upon her thinking that her secret had been discovered. Shido wasn't going to hurt her and she knew that fact once she figured everything out... but that was exactly the problem. She knows the DEM wizards are bad and not to trust them, but she was actually trusting Shido in that short time, so seeing her secret was the equivalent of breaking that trust.

Oh, and that scene with Rinne's comment about long running manga (or a shonen manga if you wanna get technical) and the wall plaque falling? Yes, that was an indirect variation of "Breaking the 4th Wall" right there. Considering Rinne's only been part human for a short
time, she's quite out of place with everything, I felt a manga related comment was perfect for that moment, and then I wondered if there a way to pull off that joke without actually breaking the wall. That was the result :3

Wish Shido luck everyone, because with Origami taken out from the start of Natsumi's game... he's lost his harem's smartest member, and that itself makes things that much harder in trying to figure out the truth, however now that leaves an even bigger question. What did Tohka mean by seeing pain in Natsumi’s eyes, is this related to her secret or something else? What is Natsumi hiding, and is it an explanation to how she's acting now?

Find out next time, so until then... stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 86%
Origami - 80%
Yoshino - 78%
Kotori - 79%
Kurumi - 72%
Before we begin, to anyone who reads this story but also reads A Dragon's Heavenly Bonds... it may be a while before I can get another chapter up, my Grandma's funeral was the day I put up the previous chapter, and I went to pay my respects.

As a result, anything related to Christianity such as the DxD series is touchy for me right now, so I can't bring myself to update it for a while, meaning until further notice, this is the only story I will be updating. I apologize for this and hopefully the next chapter will be up eventually.

Also, here's an addition I had to make while writing because I didn't see it coming, but do any of you remember when I said that there were at least two fanfics that inspired me to have Tohka in her Inverse Form at the very start? Its fine if you don't, but... the author of one of those two stories actually found my story! *goes into fan girl mode* So I'd like to give a shout out to Jackie Avocado and his story "Date A Dreamer" which is one of the two said stories.

Anyways, for now it's time to see how Natsumi's murderous game of hide and seek will turn out, Shido's got less than 11 hours and Origami's already disappeared, and unlike canon we now lack Yoshinon as the one Natsumi disguised herself as due to her death in the previous arc, so that alone has already made it harder to pinpoint Natsumi's chosen disguise. I will say this however... in the last chapter, I actually gave everyone a small but hard to find hint :3

Now for a big surprise, we have a pair of guests coming in this chapter who we met two chapters ago. They'll be giving Shido some solid advice, and we'll be learning a few things about some characters who were unfortunately very inactive last season due to the Arbitel being under repairs. Now, without further ado... time to kick things into high gear!

Natsumi's hiding, and now we will seek her, and when she's found we'll find the answer to her little game B3

Chapter 29, S2: Natsumi Inverse, Part 3

Overhead in the skies of Tokyo Prefecture, a small two person ship currently belonging to Ratatoskr was seen flying overhead while hidden through the use of an Invisible Realizer, and riding inside was Elliot who was resting against a special seat that was made to hold his wheelchair while Karen was the one piloting the ship. The crater that housed Tenguu City soon entered the distance.

"Elliot, we will be arriving at Tenguu City in 5 minutes." Karen stated, causing Elliot to smile a bit. At that moment however, she noticed the ship's communication line ring and soon answers it. "This is Karen Nora Mathers speaking, what do you need?"

Soon Ryouko's face formed on the screen.

"This is Captain Ryouko of the AST speaking, we have a situation... and unfortunately, this one's incredibly serious. Bad enough that Commander Murasame and the Vice-Commander, along with all the Spirits and Maria have been forced to stay outside of all Fraxinus facilities until the time of 6 PM." Ryouko replied, catching Karen's attention.
"Right, allow me to explain. Right after the commander's call to you, we got a Spacequake alarm, and Spirit No. 7 made an appearance. Unfortunately, she has some secret she assumed Shido Takamiya saw and now she's put everyone I just mentioned in a dangerous game. She's replaced one of them, and should we not find the fake by the end of these 11 hours... everyone will disappear for good."

Karen's eyes widen slightly at that.

"That's not good, and I'm assuming that you have no idea who the fake actually is?" Karen asked, nodding in reply. "Understood. We're arriving in less than 4 minutes, we'll try and help out best we can once we make it. Karen out."

Soon the video chat ended, and Elliot hummed a bit.

"...It seems we've gotten caught in a difficult situation, haven't we?" Elliot wondered aloud. 'I think he can find a way though, after all... he is your son Seigo.'

~Natsumi's game countdown: 10 hours left

Shido sweated as he had kept going through all of his notes so far, trying to find some clue to who the fake was among the group which included those absent from the initial reveal so Natsumi was guaranteed to be away from Ratatoskr. Unfortunately, he had only been able to come up to one conclusion so far, it wasn't Tohka.

Even if Natsumi could mimic someone's skills, the fact he couldn't completely copy his scent gave him a good idea she couldn't mimic something body specific like one's sense of smell, so that at least lowered his options to the others still present or Origami who had already vanished.

'Come on, there's gotta be some other clue, or something like Tohka's that I can use to strike out someone else!' Shido thought, and soon at that moment... a clock sound rung off to announce another hour had, and the Izanami appeared once again.

"So tell me Shido, do you think you know or have you washed out this hour?" Natsumi asked, her silhouette's smirk could be seen in the mirror.

"...Tell me something, is it possible for me to tell you who I don't think you are?" Shido asked, sweating with worry.

"Hmm... you did miss the first time so I guess you could, but to make it fair you have to give me evidence to proof it. Otherwise you'll just waste your round." Natsumi replied, smirking at him. "So, who do you think I didn't replace?"

Shido looks at Tohka.

"It's Tohka, you couldn't change your scent when you took my form, so if you were Tohka then lacking her strong sense of smell would get you caught too easily. Whoever you are can't have something so obvious." Shido answered, making Natsumi sigh.

"Dang, unfortunately for me that's right. Though the fact you asked me about her tells me you still don't have a clue." Natsumi smirked, soon looked at the others. "Plus, since you still haven't found the real me, someone else has to go. The unlucky winner is... her!"

Mayuri suddenly saw herself glowing with green light and panicked before she disappeared, making Rio shake as she hugged Rinne tightly.
"Ten hours left Shido, you better hurry."

The Izanami mirror disappeared, and everyone sweated as now only 10 of them remained, with the only evidence they had being Tohka wasn't the doppelganger among them and that Origami and Mayuri, despite being sealed in the mirror, were still possible fakes.

"Shido?" Tohka asked, worried about what was happening. "What are we gonna do?"

"Tohka, I'm sorry but... I don't know" Shido answered grimly, as even he didn't know the solution. How could they defeat someone who could perfectly mimic anyone else? 'But now that I think about it... why didn't Natsumi make Tohka disappear first? She should have known the worry would have worsened my chances.'

Shido bit his lip as he kept thinking.

'Damn it... what am I missing? Who did Natsumi transform into!? She could have done it when the one she replaced was alone, so I can't use alibis to disprove or prove who she isn't. Even if Tohka smelled them, without Natsumi and the real present she might not be able to figure out. Damn it, Natsumi's figured out how to trap me completely! What can I do!?'

Inside the mirror realm, Natsumi laughs again as Shido's plight as she realized from his facial expressions that she had completely stumped him.

"He has no idea, and there's no way for him to figure it out. All that's left is to wait for the remaining time to elapse." Natsumi said, giving a giggle like chuckle at his frustrations while looking at Origami and Mayuri in stasis behind her. "And I have a very interesting reason on why I've taken away the two you least expected Shido."

Natsumi laughs again as the mirror briefly shows the culprit's head, but oddly seemed to focus on the head itself. The mirror's current timer saying 9:57:24

The personal ship that had Karen and Elliot soon landed inside the hidden docking bay of Ratatoskr, and soon upon landing, Karen grabbed Elliot's wheelchair and pushed him out of the ship as Ryouko stood before them and saluted.

"Chairman Elliot, Vice-Chairman Mathers, welcome to the Tenguu City branch." Ryouko replied.

"You can drop the formalities Captain, I think this situation you mentioned requires our attention right now." Karen asked, making Ryouko nod. "Alright, what's the current situation then."

"Right." Ryouko nodded once more, soon bringing out a tablet showing everyone in Natsumi's pictures, though currently Mayuri and Origami's were grayed out while a Ratatoskr symbol was placed by Tohka's.

"Currently, Shido's managed to confirm Tohka isn't the doppelganger, but every hour we fail she makes someone disappear. Once we reached 11 hours it was Origami, and just a few minutes ago we had Mayuri taken once the timer was left at 10 hours. The worst part of it? Shido can't figure out anything, and Natsumi could have replaced anyone at any time they were alone and we weren't watching, so we don't have an alibi for anyone."

Karen nods, soon noticing Tohka's picture.

"How did Shido confirm that Tohka wasn't the doppelganger if I may ask?" Karen asked.
"When Natsumi took on Shido's form the day prior, Tohka managed to realize Natsumi was a fact by realizing that Natsumi's scent didn't match Shido's and still smelled like a girl's. So it's very likely she can't copy something specific to an individual's physiology." Ryouko explained, making Karen think.

"And we don't know how much her Spirit powers can copy in terms of another spirit, so I'm guessing that doesn't help prove anything further?" Karen asked, making Ryouko nod. "I'm also guessing we can't risk the Murakumo since it might think Natsumi is her as well..."

Ryouko sighed, confirming Karen's thoughts.

"Seems like Shido's in a pickle, aside from Tohka and everyone not on those pictures, he has no way to prove who's real and has no one else he can trust. Not even the others can trust themselves or the other suspects. Hmm..." Elliot sighed, looking at Ryouko.

"While I can't give him any ideas or clues that may help, I do think I can at least give him something that should give him a push on where to go. Have him and Tohka meet me at Tenguu Park as soon as they can. Karen?"

Karen nods and pushes his wheelchair to a secret passageway, taking them both to the surface.

"...I hope what you tell him works. Shido, I wish we could do more to help you on this but... good luck." Ryouko told herself, holding a hand near her chest as tightly grabs her shirt. "We're not gonna get away on pure luck this time. Come on Shido, find the way before it's too late!

~Natsumi's game countdown: 9 hours, 30 minutes left

Meanwhile at Tenguu Park, both Shido and Tohka had both come over upon request of Ryouko who called them and asked them to head over, saying they may have something to help them in trying to find the culprit. At the moment, Tohka watched as her boyfriend kept pacing, his usual calm self anywhere but in Tenguu City right now.

"Maybe their Spirit powers are what... no, I don't have proof she can't copy those too! Even Kotori's healing powers could still work if Natsumi copies them!" Shido yelled aloud, scratching his head in frustration. "Wait, Reine can't sleep so... oh who am I kidding! To prove that I'd have to risk sleep medicine that could be too dangerous for her!"

"Uh... Shido?" Tohka called out, trying to get his attention, but to no avail.

"Maybe the whole thing about those she's taken away not being her is just a trick and... no! She was honest about her not being Tohka, she's still playing fair, if she said it then it's likely still true!" Shido screamed in a panic, shaking his head heavily.

At that point, Tohka sighed and walked up to Shido and grabbed his face.

"Shido, look at me real quick." Tohka said, making Shido do just that. After that... Tohka slapped him across the face multiple times like in a cartoon. "Calm down already and stop panicking and shout and stuff! Not only is it making me more worried, you're not helping anyone like that!"

Tohka stops, and soon sees how red she left Shido's face, having forgotten how incredibly strong she was.

"Ah! Whoops, I'm so sorry Shido!" Tohka panicked, though luckily Shido's healing ability lent by Kotori helped fix his face up really fast.
"No biggie, next time just use a newspaper or something." Shido replied, a little dazed from his head being shaken around. Soon at that moment, Elliot and Karen had come into the park. "Huh?"

Elliot waves at them, and Tohka gasps.

"Hey, that's... uh..." Tohka began, though she quickly sweat a bit as she realized she forgot their names. She looked left and right to Shido's surprise before she bopped her fist into her hand. "That guy who Reine says founded Ratatoskr and I totally didn't forget the name of and his lady assistant I also didn't forget the name of!"

Shido and Karen both sweated dropped at that, while Elliot lightly snickers at that. Tohka goes a bit red in the face as she realized what she just said.

"Uh... I'm so sorry!" Tohka bowed apologetically, and once Elliot got close enough, he pets her on the head to her surprise.

"Oh, don't mind it too much, we haven't exactly met too many times for you to automatically be able to know our names. Not to mention this is our first meeting in person." Elliot replied, making Tohka rub her head and giggle a bit.

"Hey wait, why exactly are you here Mr. Woodman, and Miss... Karen, right?" Shido asked.

"Your aunt Reine asked us to come, with recent developments we came to the agreement to make Tenguu City's branch the new HQ of Ratatoskr. I'm assuming that was the same day that Natsumi showed up so you never had the chance to be told about it." Karen explained, soon noticing Tohka staring at her. "Yes?"

Tohka blushed a bit and chuckled.

"Uh... sorry, I just noticed you look like this Ellen girl I fought while I was Inverted." Tohka replied embarrassingly.

"Well that would make sense, after all... she is my older sister." Karen admitted, making Tohka and Shido's eyes widen in response to that.

"Yes, you actually heard that right. We're quite similar yet different in many ways. While I'd be more of the Blue Oni to her Red one in personality, we're both the highest ranked wizards in our respective groups, the number 2's to our respective chairmen, and both married to them. Quite an odd list of similarities considering how our path divided."

Tohka's ribbon flapped in a flailing like manner from her shock.

"Wait, you're... but he's... and you're... and your last names are-" Tohka mumbled in shock, making Shido have to hold her steady.

"Don't let it fool you, like your aunt we stopped aging from the original wave of Spacequakes' residue. I'm only 32 biologically, and she's only 28!" Elliot chuckled, at that point Shido had to help Tohka sit on the bench to keep her from fainting.

"And the only reason we don't share a last name was to respect Seigo, he and Rinne never got to officially marry and share their last name. He was a great man, it only felt fair I'd honor him that way, so we kept our last names unchanged."

Shido showed surprise at that.
"Wait, you knew my father?" Shido asked, while he was sure Seigo was known by some of Ratatoskr's founding staff, Elliot had implied he knew him before that.

"I did, truth is we knew each other back from our High School years, I'm the one who convinced him that he should be an Explorer. So in a sense, you could say I'm the one that led him on the path to meeting your mother." Elliot revealed, scratching his head. "And by extension, the reason you and Mana were born."

"Aww! That's so sweet, thank you!" Tohka replied, hugging Shido close. He blushed in embarrassment at the situation.

Elliot smiled at the two, he remembered seeing them as children and the bond they shared before everything in the world had gone wrong due to Westcott. Seeing these two still holding their hopes, their smiles, and their feelings was proof that everything he made Ratatoskr for hadn't been for naught.

"Shido, I've been told of your troubles with Natsumi's little game. I can't give you any ideas to who the doppelganger is, but I can do something to help you, two pieces of advice that I think can help you relax and look at another angle for the answer." Elliot stated, making Shido nod.

"The first piece of advice, based on what I read on Natsumi's letter, there's something about the wording that strikes me as odd, like she hid another message in it. I'd take another look at it when you get the chance. For the second piece of advice, adventurers don't get too far in life by trying to act all cool, they get far by trying to stay alive."

"Huh?" Shido asked.

"I'm talking about how Seigo got where he did, he focused on growing and always being able to assure he'd be able to come back home for his sister's sake, most people don't do that or try too early to do something fancy." Elliot explained, making Shido's eyes widen a bit.

"It's always best to remember the reasons you took your path, focus on what you want to accomplish, not who to impress. Right now, that's what this game is about, finding the way to make sure you all make it back alive over impressing or trying to show up Natsumi."

"That's right. The people I care for are who are important to me, I can't give up on them. Thank you Mr. Woodman, I was so jumpy, but I think that's all I needed to hear." Shido smiled, making Elliot chuckle. "Come on Tohka, we've only got about 9 more hours, let's make sure we save everyone."

Tohka giggled at that.

"Yeah! Though do you mind if I meet you back at the house, I'd like to ask Mr. Elliot something real quick." Tohka replied, and Shido gave a nod before he headed back. Tohka soon turned at Elliot. "Hey Mr. Elliot, Ms. Karen... is it wrong to feel you're too weak to do anything to help the people you love and want to protect?"

Karen blinks before smiling.

"Tohka, I'd say that's one of the biggest signs of maturity." Karen replied, making Tohka look at her surprised. "Take Shido's mom for an example, she isn't perfect, and she became aware of that in a big way. There are times one will feel weak and there's nothing wrong with that. It's not accepting where you're weak that's a true weakness."

Tohka blinked and looked at Elliot.
"So, feeling I haven't done much is alright?" Tohka asked, making Elliot rub her head.

"If anything, realizing that your weak is how you grow stronger. No matter how weak you are, how many people make fun of you or how many times you end up falling, one thing never changes. It's the one who stands up after they're knocked down that get stronger, and that's why accepting where your weak makes you the real winner." Elliot smiled.

Tohka smiled at that, and nodded.

"Thank you, I'm gonna make sure I'll be strong enough for Shido and everyone else!" Tohka exclaimed, soon running back home to the Takamiya Household. 'And also... because I want to save Natsumi from that pain in her eyes.'

As she was running, Tohka's mind wandered a bit.

"Hey wait, if Ellen's actually married to that Westcott jerk... then does that make that her that Marina AI's mother?" Tohka wondered.

Ellen was sitting in a waiting room with only Marina's hologram keeping her company when she suddenly sneezed out of nowhere. Marina suddenly turned at that and blinked, Ellen rubbing her nose in surprise.

"Where did that come from?" Marina asked.

"I have no idea, I didn't even feel my nose itch or get funny." Ellen replied, grabbing a tissue and blowing into it. "I mean it's not like that thing about you sneezing if someone talks about you is true."

Marina gives an odd smirk at Ellen who raised and eye before sweating a bit.

"...Marina, why are you looking at me like that?" Ellen asked fearfully.

"Oh nothing, nothing at all... mother." Marina stated playfully, making Ellen flinch at that. "What's wrong mother?"

"Stop! I told you not to call me that!" Ellen shouted, covering her ears. Marina laughed at that before Ellen shook her head. "I can't hear you!"

Ellen goes "la, la, la, la, la" over and over to block out Marina's voice.

"Man, teasing you is so fun mother!" Marina laughed, her hologram pointing at Ellen as she kept trying to block her out. "I still don't know how father finds that attractive or cute, and that makes my teasing even better!"

Ellen slammed her head on the desk right as Jessica walked in, making the current Adeptus 2 stare at the scene for a few seconds before she slowly walked back out.

~Natsumi's game countdown: 4 hours, 2 minutes left

Shido sweated as he and Tohka looked at the information they had managed to gather so far. They had managed to conclude those Natsumi couldn't be were Yoshino, as she was still suffering slightly over Yoshinon's death, and it would be hard to completely mimic that accurately for Natsumi. Kurumi was also exempt, because Saya knew her too well and would have likely noticed.

Rinne and Rio were both exempted as well, due to how Rio was born, if one of them had been
replaced, then the other would have realized that Natsumi had switched with them instantly. Then
lastly, it couldn't be Reine because her lack of sleep led to random fainting spells, something Natsumi
would have trouble predicting. However, taking out 5 suspects didn't still wasn't enough to decide
who among the remaining six was their doppelganger.

"Just who could it be?" Tohka wondered, sweating a bit. In the last few hours trying to figure out
who the doppelganger was, Natsumi had kept making the others disappear until only herself, Mana,
Rinne, Rio and Kotori were left. "We're running out of time and it's getting harder with how many of
us are left."

Suddenly the clock sound rings again as the timer hit the remaining 4 hours, and the Izanami mirror
makes its reappearance.

"So, have you managed to figure it out? Or have I come to you with no answers in sight?" Natsumi
asked mockingly, and after no one spoke up for a while she sighed. "No answer then, well... then
goodbye to you!"

Mana soon saw herself glowing.

"Please everyone, don't give-" Mana said, but she disappeared before she could finish speaking.
Shido panics as his sister disappears and Natsumi gave a witch like laugh in response.

"Now then, I'll see you all again when-"

"WAIT!" Tohka called out, suddenly surprising everyone. "Don't leave yet, I actually do have a
guess so you let me use it before you leave again!"

Natsumi sighed in annoyance.

"Fine, go ahead. Not like it'll matter." Natsumi waved, yawning as the Izanami mirror floated higher
to avoid anyone reaching it. Tohka sweat a bit and soon breathed.

"OK... but before I guess, I want you to have this Shido!" Tohka shouted, taking off her hair ribbon
and handing it to Shido to his surprise.

"I don't want to think about it, but if the worst somehow happens... I want you to have something to
always remember me by! It's only fair, you woke up so early to leave it in my room after cleaning it."

At that moment, Shido blinked at that and rubbed his head confused.

"Huh? What do you mean by that? I didn't wake up until after you did, I was exhausted last night."
Shido stated, suddenly making Tohka's eyes widen at that before she suddenly gasped. "Uh...
Tohka? Are you alright?"

'Wait a second... Shido didn't wake up until after me today, and yet when I woke up my ribbon was-'
Tohka thought, soon rushing over to the letter and the pictures again. Re-reading the message left on
the letter.

[I am inside one of these. So, can you guess which one am I?

You better hurry and guess right, because if you don't... then you and everyone here
disappears.

~Your Enemy, Natsumi]
"I am inside one of these... guess which one I am." Tohka said to herself, a then that's when she remembered Elliot's words.

-Flashback Start-

Shido and Tohka looked at Elliot has he prepared to share his advice.

"Based on what I read on Natsumi's letter, there's something about the wording that strikes me as odd, like she hid another message in it. I'd take another look at it when you get the chance." Elliot's stated.

'A hidden message? What does that mean?' Tohka wondered.

-End Flashback-

"That's it!" Tohka shouted, surprising everyone as she turned around. "We've been focusing too much on one thing! Natsumi's message said she was inside one of these pictures, but where on this did she say she was one of the people in the pictures?"

"Wait a second, you're right! The letter didn't say that at all!" Shido gasped, and from the Izanami mirror... Natsumi's silhouette suddenly sweated.

'Oh no... wait, don't worry Natsumi! I mean yeah, they've found you're not a person. That doesn't mean they know what you actually hid as. I could easily be that little cat of theirs.' Natsumi thought, making Macaron blink as he scratched his ear. 'I'm still perfectly fine!'

Rinne blinks as she looks at the photos again.

"But... wait, doesn't this mean now we have less of an idea of who, or rather what she might be? I mean how do we prove she's any bit of furniture or something else?"

"We don't need to, because I think I've realized what Natsumi's been hiding as, and it's been around us all along! In fact... it's been on my head!" Tohka declared, reaching into Shido's pocket, only to pull out her signature ribbon! Everyone gasped as now there were two ribbons, and Natsumi silently gasped.

'NO!' Natsumi mentally screamed, knowing what was about to happen. 'Please, don't you dare say-'

"She's been the ribbon I've been wearing since this morning, Shido had my real one the whole time!" Tohka declared, soon looking at Natsumi's mirror. "So tell us Natsumi, am I right?"

The Izanami mirror kept shaking from its spot in the air, and soon... the timer stopped and glowed before vanishing, meaning that the guess had been correct!

"THIS ISN'T POSSIBLE!" Natsumi screamed, the Izanami mirror falling to the ground before shattering into pieces. It only took a few moments before everyone that Natsumi had trapped in the mirror all reappeared where they had been when Natsumi had made them disappear, all of them waking up the instant they did.

"Hey, I'm back... that means you solved it!" Mana cheered, and Tohka hugged her. "By the way you're hugging me I'm guessing you did, who was she?"

Tohka holds up her two ribbons, surprising Mana.
"What she was this whole time ended up being my ribbon, Shido had the real one in his pocket."
Tohka replied, and soon the fake one began glowing as Natsumi suddenly changed back to normal.
"And there she is."

Natsumi growled at everyone.

"This isn't fair you cheaters, there's no way you could have-" Natsumi began, only for her body to start glowing to her horror. She panicked to everyone's surprise. "No! Don't, don't release it here! Don't show everyone my secret!"

Suddenly Natsumi's body released a green light, and soon... everyone stared in shock and horror. Natsumi's secret had finally been revealed, and now Shido suddenly understood Natsumi's questions about her beauty, and why she was so angry about her secret.

Everyone looked to see Natsumi's true form was none other than... a little girl around the same age as Rio and Yoshino's de-aged form! She has a thin and small body with pale skin that was way too pale to be called anything but quite unhealthy.

Her eyes, which were still green, were distorted and gloomy looking, there were no traces of her other form's confidence in her expression. While her also same colored hair was still long, but not the silky hair that Shido remembered, being a messy mop of hair that hadn't been tended to.

However, the biggest change came from her Astral Dress... or rather its Inverted form. Her scary looking witch hat now had a more saddened look, a tuff of fur on its tip, and was a bit wrinkly. A small cloth wrapped around her chest was all that covered it now, and she was wearing what looked like a school's gym shorts with bat wings on each side, finally ending with shoe versions of her toe-less boots.

"That was her secret? That was actually wasn't an adult, is that what you forgot Rio?" Tohka asked, looking at the young Spirit.

"Hmm... Rio's not sure, Rio thinks its somethings else, at least... Rio thinks its is?" Rio said, for some reason seeing Natsumi's true form didn't click with her at all. "Rio thinks we should ask Natsumi-"

Suddenly everyone felt Natsumi's spirit power flare out, as Natsumi's eyes shook intensely. She was clearly enraged, but also extremely upset, if she hadn't been in the room then none of them would have seen the truth, the true form she hated so much.

"You found out... You found out! You found out! You found out! I can't believe you... found... out!"

Everyone stepped back a bit as Baal barely began flailing its broom crystals around the room.

"How dare you! How dare you do this, how dare you make me reveal my secret!" Natsumi screamed, though for a brief moment... Tohka gasped as she noticed tears. "I-I won't forgive you, I will never forgive you! Every one of you, I won't let any of you off the hook!"

Natsumi soon aimed Baal at everyone.

"Now, change them all Baal! Punish them! Let them see how it feels!"

Suddenly Baal fired off at everyone, and soon with the exception of Rinne because she was the First Spirit, and Rio because she was already a child... everyone was regressed to the same age as her, Yoshino looking like her de-aged form one again.
"Suffer as children forever!" Natsumi declared, soon changing back into her adult form and leaving the area instantly. Rinne looked at everyone and soon gulped as they all looked at her.

"Mom, I'm hungry!" Shido demanded, grabbing her left leg.

"Me too! Feed me!" Mana demanded, grabbing the right leg. "Give us food!"

Rinne began to sweat, soon seeing Kotori crying as Mayuri kept poking her out of unknowing curiosity.

"Miss Takamiya... I need to use the bathroom." Origami whimpered, holding her hands by her legs as she struggled to hold it in.

Yoshino and Kurumi ran away scared as Kannazuki playfully chased after the two of them, while Reine was sleeping on the floor, holding a white orb that was an infant Maria to the surprise of Rio.

"...Rio doesn't get it." Rio stated, confused about the younger Maria.

"Oh my god... I only know how to handle four of you at this age! What do I do!?" Rinne panicked, only being familiar with Shido, Mana, Tohka and Rio's habits at this age. That's when she suddenly noticed Tohka was missing. "Wait, where's Tohka!?"

At that moment, she saw Tohka had ran out of the room. She gasped and tried to chase her, but soon every kid that was still awake and moving, minus Rio who was just staring and Maria who couldn't actually move at the moment, ended up dog piling her and dragging her a bit.

"HELP ME!" Rinne begged, reaching for the door and then the phone in vain as the kids all pulled her away.

---

Natsumi panted as she reappeared in a random alleyway and made an angry face, holding her hand up to start a familiar alarm.

[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE!]

With that, everyone ran for shelter while Natsumi took a moment to slump on a wall and recover her energy.

"They saw... everyone one of them, I don't care how but I'll ruin every one of their lives!" Natsumi panted, her eyes tearing up and looking incredibly pained.

"Look at her, and you're proud to look like that?"

"Freak!"

"Go be with the other irregulars like yourself!"

"Be friends with us, don't lie! You just want to mock us with that form!"

Natsumi screamed and hit the wall as those memories came back, panting angrily as she managed to silence them.

"They're just like everyone else... everyone who made fun of me for my true form's ugliness!" Natsumi screamed, slightly crying with an angry face. "Now it's time I think of what I'll be doing to them next. Maybe I should-"
Suddenly Natsumi felt a shot hit her arm, and she yelled in pain before she turned to see Adeptus 4 had shot her, making her look in surprise. That's when she remembered... because the rest of her transformations dispelled alongside her own, they changed back to normal.

"Damn it, I forgot about them!" Natsumi winced, her arm still burning.

"You really thought we'd just stay down and trapped as animals forever? Poor little Spirit, you're so stupid." Adeptus 4 declared, readying her sword with the others. "Not even your Inversion will save you now. So just let us kill you and avoid the hard part."

"Never!" Natsumi roared, aiming Baal at them and shooting off her dark spirit power to transform them again. This time they all moved out of the way, and Natsumi dodged their incoming sword strikes and laser fire. "That won't hurt me! Now, it's time to face my Shiniga-"

Suddenly a bunch of ant-like automatons suddenly dropped from the rooftops and clamped onto Natsumi, surprising her as her movements were locked.

"What are these? Get them off me!" Natsumi panicked, but it was useless. The ant-like automatons, or Myrmidon units as they would be later known as, held on tightly as a stomping sound was heard. Soon a roar was heard from the opposing side of the stomps. "W-what is that?"

Before Natsumi could even react, the roar like sound neared her as a small quintet of bipedal bull like automatons suddenly appeared and swung their arms, equipped with axe-like sword blades as they smashed and slashed into Natsumi.

The Mimicry Spirit screamed in pain as she was shot through a few walls and caused some buildings. Once she did, she tried to get back on her feet, but soon she felt her transformation come undone again, her Inverse Form shook a bit before it suddenly reverted back to her normal form.

In her true form's normal Astral Dress, she now had a hat like her Inverse form's older Astral Dress, but with the tuff of fur present at a point where black bandages wrapped by it, and the rimmed areas of her hat were orange instead of green and had a necklace of sorts made from giant green emeralds and smaller bits of gold acting as the chain.

Her gym shorts were now normal shorts with overalls, and an orange cloth that wasn't as specifically attached to her body, but still was all that covered her chest, though now also with gold star emblems on the front, was wrapped around her, a few dark purple stitched mouth designs and edges on it and some sleeves made of light to cover her arms up to her hands. Finally, she had black and orange socks, the right one being longer, and witch like shoes.

"Oh? Hey everyone, look at this! The brat really is a brat!" Adeptus 8 declared, the other eight Adeptus wizards all saw and laughed at this as Natsumi began to tear up at the sight before her.

Tohka in her younger form, her speed being limited slightly by her clothes nearly coming off and having trouble holding them up, ran through the city in an attempt to find Natsumi before it was too late. She had gotten a bad gut feeling.

"Come on, I've gotta find her!" Tohka said, and soon she felt a bit funny as she glowed. "Huh, why do I feel-"

Suddenly Tohka nearly tripped as her age doubled and she became 16 again.

"Hey, I'm normal again!" Tohka exclaimed, only to gasp as she realized what that meant. "Oh my god, my gut was right! Where is she?"
Soon she got a feeling and stopped before looking left as some buildings broke.

"There!" Tohka declared, assuming her Astral Dress and flying straight at that area with every bit of speed she could muster. Sandalphon forming in her hand as she cut through some buildings herself.

Natsumi stared at the sight around her, the Adeptus wizards with their swords, the Myrmidon units and the bull like Automatons that would be later labeled Minotaur units surrounding her, finally ending with her hearing from the stomps from another automaton she couldn't see yet.

'What else would I expect from people who saw me like this? From assholes in the DEM like all of you, this feeling... this is fear, isn't it?' Natsumi thought, her hands shaking as she began to tear up. 'Then again, this is probably what I get for deceiving Shido... that's it, I give up.'

Natsumi lies immobile, no longer having the strength to move.

'Please Gods, tell me why... why was I made to be this way!?' Natsumi mentally begged, assured she was in her final moments. 'So tiny... so weak... so pathetic... so ugly! And worst of all... alone.'

-Flashback Start-

Natsumi in her true form was seen, in an alleyway and holding a single dandelion in her hands, dropping it in the water as its last petal flew off. Soon she noticed a local pub, and while inside she saw a table full of people, she walked over and held up her hands, making a man look at her.

"Aww, poor thing..." The man said, only to hit her into the wall before tossing a chicken wing at her. "Here, maybe if you eat that you wouldn't look so pathetic!"

Natsumi stared at the chicken wing with cruelty, and the next thing anyone knew, the whole pub went on fire and everyone ran out. Natsumi took any food and money left before and went somewhere else. She started scarfing the food as she cried.

"...Who needs friends, I'm better off by myself!" Natsumi yelled as she ate more, still shedding tears.

Natsumi soon walked through another city, and eventually saw some pretty looking girls at a photo shoot and how much the people snapping photos loved them. Suddenly taking a look at herself.

"Like them... yeah, I just need to look like that!" Natsumi told herself, soon using her powers to make the adult form she disguised herself as. "Yes... this is a beautiful me, the me I should be."

Natsumi walked around, many people adoring her looks... and yet Natsumi felt hollow each time.

'And yet... why does it feel so empty?' Natsumi thought.

-End Flashback-

Natsumi cried more.

'All I wanted... was to be needed by someone, and just when I thought I found that person...' Natsumi thought, thinking of Shido. Now realizing how stupid she had been. 'If I had just been able to stop my anger, I could have found it. Now I'm going to die.'

Soon the Adeptus wizards began to swing their swords down.
"After a lifetime of betrayals, stupidity, and loneliness... I'm going to die! I know I don't deserve this, I know of everything I've done, but please...' Natsumi thought, her eyes widening as the swords were about to strike. "...I beg of you, someone please save me!"

"SANDALPHON!"

Suddenly before any of the Adeptus Wizards realized it, a purple energy wave was slashed at them, causing Natsumi to stare in shock as a purple glow passed her eyes briefly. She lifted her head up to see Tohka holding Sandalphon in her hand.

"T-Tohka?" Natsumi breathed in shock, slowly getting up to see Tohka stare at the DEM forces with an angry look. 'No way, did she just...'

"What the hell, how'd Princes get here!?” Adeptus 11 questioned angrily.

"That doesn't matter! Myrmidon units, Minotaur units, by time for the Tarasque unit to attack!" Adeptus 6 declared, everyone rushing at Tohka at once. "Even she can't handle us all at once!"

Tohka shouted as she charged an energy blast, and in moments the Myrmidon units were all destroyed. The Adeptus numbers all soon were blinded by the smoke, and in moments... Tohka swung Sandalphon a certain way, and they felt all their CR-Units and weaponry get cut apart.

"No... impossible..." Adeptus 4 declared as she and the other eight DEM wizards fell to the ground with their damaged CR-Units sparking. "Damn it... retreat now! Let the automatons rip them both!"

They all growled and flew off, Tohka looking at them before turning back at the machines before her.

"OK, who's next?" Tohka requested, and soon all of the Minotaur units roared as they charged at her. Tohka rushed forward, skidding across the ground slightly as she slashed through the side of one. "They're not like Jabberwockies, they have the strength and speed, but no armor. I just gotta get through!"

Tohka spun and cut the first of the five Minotaur automatons down. Soon the next two came, and she held up Sandalphon to parry and pushed forward to knock them back. However, the other two swung at her, forcing her to move a hand to form a barrier against them.

"Not... this time! I... will not let myself... contribute to nothing here!" Tohka screamed, pushing her arms out, knocking three of the automatons away. As the last one charged her, Tohka yelled and stomped the ground... and suddenly part of it shot out as a sharp rock and pierced right through, making it explode to her shock. "What the? Did... I do that?"

Tohka suddenly gasped, remember what Rinne said.

"I do think Tohka's seismic waves and creating Sandalphon's throne from the ground are both clues to parts of her powers she might not be using. " Rinne's voice echoed.

"The ground... of course, that's why Sandalphon's throne forms from it! I have Earth powers!" Tohka exclaimed happily, giving a determined smile at the remaining three Minotaur units.

She jumped ahead, and tried something else, and soon she managed to create a rain of crystals that struck all three automatons, but only cut through one of them enough to make it explode. Tohka landed as looked at her hands again, and soon spun with Sandalphon, creating a sandstorm to blind the remaining two.
'Why is she fighting so hard? No, why did she even come here, why... is she trying to protect me?' Natsumi thought, unable to believe what she was seeing.

"To think I could do all this, energy and earth... now that I know I'm gonna use it fully!" Soon she manages to pierce one of one of the Minotaur's armor, soon digging Sandalphon into it more, and then twisting the blade, ripping it apart from within before it exploded.

Soon the last Minotaur and Tohka had a stare down with each other, the automaton got on its arms and prepared to charge Tohka like a real Ox, and Tohka ran at it shouting as she held Sandalphon out to swing at it.

"Tohka, no!" Natsumi cried out, knowing that was a bad idea. She was too late to warn her. However, to her surprise... Tohka stopped and released Sandalphon, causing it to crash into the Minotaur and throw him off.

[Now master!]

"Take this!" Tohka yelled, grabbing Sandalphon and slashing through the last Minotaur. Right afterwards, she heard stomping, and soon a giant turtle automaton came into view. This was the Tarasque automaton. "OK, last one... I can do this!"

-Flashback Start-

Tohka and Kotori were seen training, and Tohka was being pushed back as Camael's blade crossed with Sandalphon's, Tohka tried to hold it back but was slipping.

"Come on Tohka! This isn't all your capable of, call it out and use it! Now believe!" Origami shouted from the side, making Tohka look at her. "Believe in your Angel, believe in your power, and believe in yourself!"

"Believe..." Tohka muttered, soon standing her ground. "I can do this... I can do this!"

Tohka began, starting to push Camael back, surprising Kotori before she smiled.

-End Flashback-

Tohka ran forward, the Tarasque noticing her before attempting to stomp on her, smashing the ground into shards as it did. Tohka jumped to avoid it, and when its tail swiped at her, Tohka held up her barrier to block it.

"Amazing..." Natsumi breathed, watching Tohka rush forward and slashed at the Tarasque slightly, but couldn't cut though its thick armor.

"Dang it..." Tohka grunted, but soon got an idea as she noticed a nearby cable line above her and smirked.

She ran forward, and soon the automaton's tail got her... but she quickly used it to launch herself without the Tarasque noticing her real plan. She soon was flung by the cable line and grabbed it.

"Wait a minute, don't tell me. Is she going too..." Natsumi gasped, realizing her strategy.

"You told me to believe, right Origami?" Tohka asked herself, giving a focused look as the cable took the force that flung her the best it could. "Well be proud, because I believe!"
Tohka let go as she was flung forward, and soon thrust Sandalphon forward as she smashed the Tarasque's armor apart like a hot knife through butter. The automaton was still kicking though, and looked at her angrily.

"HALVANHELEV!" Tohka screamed, forming her throne and shattering it to make the giant broadsword in her hands. As the Tarasque jumped at her, Tohka shouted and swung Halvanhelev down on the automaton. The machine was cut in half, both halves flying past her and Natsumi before exploding. "I did it... I did it!"

Tohka cheered, soon realizing Natsumi was behind her and blushing with embarrassment. She cleared her throat and walked near her.

"Natsumi, are you alright?" Tohka inquired.

"How Tohka... how did you find me? How did you make it in time?" Natsumi asked.

"Well, when you left I had a feeling and my instincts brought me here. Then I noticed some buildings breaking, so I ran straight over. I'm glad I made it." Tohka answered, soon noticing Natsumi shaking. "Natsumi?"

Natsumi slapped her in the face.

"Why? Why did you come back to save me, you had every reason to let me die!" Natsumi screamed, surprising Tohka for the slap and scream. "I know you're not stupid! I tricked you, I tried to hurt your friend Shido just because I was angry! I turned you all into kids just because you saw I was really one! I don't understand!"

"Whoa... calm down-" Tohka tried to say.

"I can't! Why would you do this, Shido was nice enough to talk to me and I treated his kindness with cruelty! I barely knew any of you and put you in the same boat! I said awful and cruel things about all of you behind your backs and laughed at you like a criminal!" Natsumi screamed, grabbing Tohka by the shoulders.

"Don't you get it! I'm an awful person, I'm a terrible girl! I only lied, hurt, mocked, attacked, yelled and was completely jealous of all of you because you're all so beautiful and I'm just an ugly looking girl! My god!"

Natsumi soon began to cry.

"And despite all of that... despite all of that... you still saved my life! Why!? Why would you do that, tell me!"

Natsumi cried more, unable to understand it.

"...Because I know what it's like to feel alone." Tohka stated, making Natsumi look at her in shock. "I lost my memories, I had no name, no identity, and no one to be there for me. Not until I met Shido, and remembered he was always there."

Natsumi kept crying as she listened.

"And he was there even when I learned my parents were dead, that made me want to help you, I saw that same pain in your eyes. Not to mention you aren't as horrible as you think, because a good person cries when they feel guilty over what they've done."
"Tohka..." Natsumi sobbed.

"I wish I could have told you this earlier, but if you're ever in trouble just tell me. Because I will always be here for you. I don't care for what you look like, what matters is the person I see on the inside, and I see a girl who just wants a friend to quell her loneliness." Tohka smiled, and with that moment... Natsumi's wall finally came crashing down as she hugged Tohka and cried loudly.

"There you go, it's OK. Let it all out. You don't hold it in anymore, never again."

Tohka sat there, rubbing Natsumi's head as the latter kept holding her close, because for the first time in as long as she could remember... she wasn't alone anymore, and someone didn't care how ugly or beautiful she looked, she cared that she was just Natsumi.

Soon Tohka got up, carrying Natsumi in her arms.

"Now come on, time to head back." Tohka smiled, confusing Natsumi with her reply.

"Go... where?" Natsumi asked.

"That's simple Natsumi..." Tohka replied, soon walking as she held Natsumi close. "...we're going home, to my home and yours."

Natsumi's eyes got misty again, and soon she just rested in Tohka's arms as she closed her eyes and rested, finally finding a small bit of piece for the first time she could remember. Tohka smiled again, knowing everything worked out.

Murdoch noticed on a tablet of his the Adeptus numbers all had returned to the DEM, and he smirked smugly as the other board of director members all noticed his smile and gave a hopeful look at him. He turned and smiled.

"Westcott's attempt failed as usual, which means now it's my turn." Murdoch announced, surprising everyone.

"OK, but... what do you plan to do? How can we top what he just pulled?" Simpson asked, Russell nodded to show he had the same question. Soon Murdoch moved the screen on his tablet.

"Murdoch?"

Murdoch chuckled as he showed everyone the tablet screen on the table, shocking them all.

"We have a few Humpty Dumpty's sitting on a wall, so..." Murdoch smirked with a dark look, his teeth showing as his grin widened. "Since they're set to be disposed of, how about we have each of them instead have a great fall? Namely, a fall on Tenguu City."

Everyone stared at that and gasped, while Murdoch kept the same face as his master plan finally sunk in. After a while the other board of director members looked at each and then...

"...We approve." Russell answered for them all.

Aww! Now how's that for a sweet ending... followed by the grim premise of the second half of the Natsumi arc that is ^^^;

I did wanna show more of the Natsumi game, but unlike the Light Novel, that felt like it would be forced, plus Miku and the Yamai twins are absent so a lot of scenes weren't possible. That
hint I had mentioned? It was Tohka's ribbon, recall how I had the scene where it got dirty and needed washed? Exactly. That's why I even put it there.

Congrats for Tohka on finally picking up on the Earth half of her powers, Energy/Magic's still her main element, but now she's actually physically using the latter beyond seismic shocks when she gets too emotional. Also, is her and Natsumi's friendship will be stronger in this fanfic compared to canon? Why yes, yes it will, for now Tohka's the only one she trusts, so she's not able to be sealed just yet.

If you're not familiar with anything beyond the anime, know that Humpty Dumpty name is actually canon, and ironically its usage made that name a perfect choice. What they are? Well... I'll let you find out when we get there, just to help make things more exciting, for all you know I'm not making them the same as canon anyways so that might be one of my usual twists I pull :3

Now you may have noticed, I didn't show you how Natumi got her Sephira Crystal in the flashback right? Well the reason for that is simple. Because there's a spoiler for the second half of Natsumi's arc, so I can't show you it now, when I do though it'll make sense to why I hid it, so for now just be a bit patient on seeing how Rio gave her the Haniel Crystal ^^

Now get ready for next time, when we finally start the second half of the Natsumi arc and see how Natumi bonds with the others, so stay awesome!

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 86%
Origami - 80%
Yoshino - 78%
Kotori - 79%
Kurumi - 72%
Welcome everyone, to the second half of the Natsumi arc! The first half was called Natsumi Inverse, while this half will be called Natsumi Refresh, there's a double meaning to this title like how Inverse reflected both Natsumi's inversion and the fact Tohka has temporarily swapped the protagonist role with Shido for the fanfic's second season. The obvious part I can tell you though, its essentially reflecting Natsumi starting over with the group.

Also, to reflect how the light novels for two volume characters start at chapter 6 for the second half, despite Natsumi Refresh is a new name, it's part 4 of Natsumi's arc rather than a new arc despite Natsumi Inversion is over. Man, that'll get weird for the Yamai twins' arc since their story arc is only a single volume, and I don't think I can double up on that without stretching things out ^^;

The part you'll probably like best is Natsumi Refresh will be revealing the surprise twist I've made for Natsumi, a twist that explains why I didn't show how she gained her Sephira Crystal from Rio despite the scenes that left a good opportunity to bring up that flashback. Most of all, we're finally going to see Murdoch start his plans, that so called "Humpty Dumpty had a great fall" line he ended last chapter with B)

So, let's get this chapter started and kicking! *hits a button that plays off a crowd cheer* Man, I love what I think for the start notes sometimes! ^^

Chapter 30, S2: Natsumi Refresh, Part 4

Tohka and Natsumi, the former back in her original outfit and Natsumi having simply morphed her Astral Dress into a casual outfit to look more natural out in public. Tohka looked at her briefly which confused the Mimicry Spirit.

"What?" Natsumi asked, feeling a bit weirded out.

"Nothing, I'm just kinda surprised you didn't shift back into your older form before we came out in public." Tohka answered honestly, making Natsumi blush a bit. "Natsumi?"

Natsumi blushed a bit more before looking away and holding Tohka's arm close.

"...It's fine if it's just you and mine, I'll probably just change back when we meet the others." Natsumi mumbled, nearly making Tohka fail to hear it. The Energy Spirit giggled and pet Natsumi's head, and Natsumi's eyes widened a bit before relaxing and smiling a bit. "So... how do we actually get there?"

"Wait, you don't know? But didn't you tell me you could see the recent memories of someone you transform into?" Tohka asked confused.

"Well... I can, but I don't always actually look at them. I mean if I actually had, I could have... you know... probably realized Shido never saw my secret and avoided the whole mess in the first place." Natsumi replied, dropping her face slightly. "I'm sorry..."

"Hey, it's OK. I do always hear Origami telling Saya that anger makes you dumb as a warning. It isn't our fault you were a bit too pissed to check." Tohka replied, soon finding a hidden spot in the
alley. After looking to see if anyone was nearby... "OK, prepare to hold on tight."

Natsumi blinked as Tohka opened a secret passageway and pulled her in, after a few seconds she felt nothing.

"I don't get why I need to hold on tight." Natsumi began, only for the secret passageway to suddenly drop into the ground. She screamed as she held Tohka's arm tightly from the sudden drop. "I take it back, I get why!"

As they dropped down, a girl wearing spectacles watched the sight without being noticed from afar, looking intrigued as she held a book in her hands. She removed her glasses revealing whitened pupils hidden behind the lenses.

"So, Spirit No. 10 has managed to form a friendship with Spirit No. 7, I wonder..." The silver haired Spirit said, looking at the book she held which she opened to reveal it was blank. "Will they solve the true mystery behind her powers' origins? Her true story even she's forgotten?"

Soon text appears on the book, making its owner look surprised before smiling.

"I see, I guess the question is how will they do it?" The Spirit wondered before she walked off and teleported somewhere.

Soon they make it to the Ratatoskr base, and Natsumi wobbles out with a face as green as her hair, soon putting a hand to it as she nearly vomits. Tohka holds her steady as she tries to breath.

"You doing OK, or do you need a trash bin?" Tohka asked, Natsumi gives a shaky thumb's up as her face regains its normal pale skin tone. "That's good."

"Tohka!"

Tohka turns to see everyone else, all of them back to their normal age (minus Rio and Rinne who didn't change ages) and winced as she saw Rinne's hair without its braid and all messy from the brutal fight she faced against the child version of all the Spirits and her own children. Tohka and Natsumi gave the same reaction as the rest of Ratatoskr's member.

"Tohka, I can't believe you ran out and left me with everyone! I know you were a kid at the time but what were you thinking!?” Rinne complained, panting heavily from the stress she just had to deal with.

"Uh... Rinne, you do remember I'm only mentally 7 due to Rio's stasis field, right? I only got physically younger." Tohka answered nervously, making Natsumi's eyes widen before she blinked while Rinne's whole body went white. "...Is that a no?"

'That explains a lot of what I saw in Shido's memories.' Natsumi thought, soon hearing Rinne sigh as she just hung her head in defeat.

"Hey, don't feel too bad mom." Shido replied, patting her back. Soon he looks at Natsumi. "And good to see you too Natsumi."

Natsumi hid behind Tohka, attempting to transform to her older form, but Tohka stopped her with a petting.

"Come on, try to talk to them in this form just so they know you're truly sorry. You can always change after if you're feel uncomfortable." Tohka requested, Natsumi looked nervous for a moment
but nodded. Soon Rinne walks in front of the others.

"Let me start everyone, I have something important to say." Rinne stated, making everyone quiet as she bent closer to Natsumi. "Do you swear you'll never pull a stunt like the one you did ever again?"

Natsumi sweated a bit, but soon breathed.

"Yes, I swear. All of you and Tohka... you won't have to worry about it ever again." Natsumi answered, her eyes shining with her seriousness. "You see... Tohka saved my life, so I won't ever betray that trust."

Rinne showed some surprise at that, but soon nodded. Now she knew why Tohka left. Tohka had a sixth sense for this sort of stuff, and it explained how a Spacequake alarm went off.

"Fine, I'll take your word on it." Rinne replied, making Natsumi smile a bit before Rinne got closer "I'll be honest with you, right now I don't like you one bit."

Natsumi made a sad looking face at that.

"Why would I? You played us all for fools, threatened to kill us going by your words, and all because you were ashamed of being seen for what you really are. Not even explaining way and just assuming my son saw your secret despite he said otherwise." Rinne reasoned, making Natsumi turn away slightly.

"Now you're here, you have some nerve you know. Also, what's with that face? Oh wait, I bet you feel guilty because Tohka won't blame you, she's not stupid but she's definitely naive. So if she won't hold you responsible then I'll have to. I am the First Spirit, so I have the bigger right to anyways."

Natsumi shook at that, and soon closed her eyes, Tohka was about to interject when...

"I order you to protect Shido and his harem from now on, that includes Tohka." Rinne stated, making Natsumi look at her in shock. "You make sure the both of them and everyone else here stays safe."

"What, but... why would-" Natsumi asked, and Rinne sighs.

"Because I know my children and everyone else here too well, and if no one's watching them..." Rinne began, soon starting to tear up. "...If no one's watching them, they'll fall into something dangerous! Besides, you're only one who can get rid of your guilt. If you truly have had a change of heart, prove it not by what you say, but with what you'll do."

Rinne smiles.

"Can you promise me that?" Rinne asked.

"Yes, I will First Spirit... no, Rinne Sonogami. I won't waste this chance you've given me." Natsumi replied, sniffing a bit as she smiled. Tohka sighed in relief before she smiled at the sight.

'I should have known, you're not the kind of person who brings others down Rinne.' Tohka thought, still smiling brightly. "Guess it's official Natsumi, your part of the family now."

Natsumi blushed a bit, rubbing her arm bashfully.

"Now we've just got one last thing to take care of, sealing away her powers so the DEM won't be able to search for her anymore." Reine stated, making Natsumi confused.
"Seal?" Natsumi asked.

"Oh right, guess we should explain this. Me, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori and Kurumi all had our powers sealed by Shido." Tohka explained, soon thinking for a second.

"Though I think sealing in this case would be more like blocking out evil spirits. As you saw with me, I can still use my powers, but officially they're inside Shido's body and he can use them too. Though if a DEM automaton sees me or someone tries to sense my Spirit powers, they won't be able to register it as me."

"So basically, it's like cloaking device?" Natsumi asked, making Tohka blink before nodding a bit. "OK, so... how do we do it?"

All of the Spirits suddenly go quiet, and Tohka suddenly chuckles oddly to Natsumi's surprise.

"Well... you sorta, kinda, have to... fall in love with Shido and then kiss him." Tohka replied, sweating a bit as she did. Natsumi stares for a moment... and screams so loudly the entire base shakes.

"WHAT!?"

One of the faculty at Raizen High was stacking something, when suddenly...

"WHAT!?" Natsumi's voice echoed.

It falls over to his surprise, wondering where that sound had suddenly come from as she somberly picked up the fallen pieces of his formerly stacked worked.

Natsumi breathed as everyone either rubbed their ears or unplugged their fingers form it.

"I have to fall in love with this guy, the one who's your and four others' boyfriend!?!" Natsumi repeatedly hysterically, pointing at him. "Seriously!? Was that the whole reason he was there when I first met him? This sounds like something out of a cheesy anime, yet its real!"

Natsumi pants, and soon Tohka blinks as she kneels by her.

"...Did you get it out of your system?" Tohka asked.

"Yeah, I'm clear now." Natsumi replied, soon looking down. "Why would it matter though, I mean... I'm ugly, who'd wanna fall in love with me?"

Everyone blinked at that.

"She really thinks she's ugly? She looks cute to me, and I mean it." Kurumi stated.

"Yeah, and plus she's like me. We're cute with small boobs!" Mana said, making everyone sweat drop as she bought up that subject again. Natsumi hung her head down at that and made Mana realize how much smaller she was. "Oh... sorry about that. Didn't realize you had that complex too."

Natsumi held her complete absence of a chest.

"...Stupid 69cm bust line." Natsumi muttered too quietly to be heard.

"Yeah, she's adorable... I'd be willing to marry her if she was a boy." Yoshino replied, making Mana
and Kotori stare at her in shock. Natsumi even blushed a little after she heard it and her face emitted some steam.

"...You're all just saying that, I know I'm ugly." Natsumi stated, surprising everyone by how much she couldn't see herself as anything but ugly.

"Uh... Natsumi, is there a reason you think that?" Tohka asked curiously, making Natsumi throw her head on her abdomen. "By that reaction, that's a... yes?"

Natsumi nodded.

"Proof is why I think that, everyone always called me that." Natsumi admitted, surprising the entire group. "They said it, hurt me, and payed attention to other girls. See? I'm ugly, don't try to hide it."

"...OK, now I think her reaction to not wanting anyone to see her like this is more justified. She has a psychological scar in her mind. One that made her feel a trauma based panic attack if it was seen, and likely why she stayed in her older form." Reine said, rubbing Natsumi's head.

...So that's why she was so lonely." Tohka said sadly, hugging Natsumi. "I bet she so happy to meet Shido until that one moment, she was so afraid to experience it all over again. No wonder she inverted."

Natsumi sniffled a bit, and Tohka rubbed her back. Rio thought for a moment, and soon gasped as she got an idea.

"What is it Rio?"

"Rio has an idea! Rio thinks if Natsumi doesn't think she looks pretty right now, let's show her how pretty she can look!" Rio said cheerfully, making Reine think.

"It won't solve the problem, but maybe a small makeover might help if she sees her current form differently. We'll try it." Reine replied, making Rio giggle and hug Natsumi to the latter's surprise as she was knocked to the floor. "Looks like Rio's happy her idea can help."

Rio nods and smiles.

"...Rio is happy! Natsumi, Rio may not remember how Rio gave Natsumi a Sephira crystal, but Rio's gonna Natsumi now." Rio said cheerfully, confusing Natsumi.

"Uh... what are you talking about? I got my powers by someone calling themselves Phantom."

Natsumi corrected, making Rio look at herself.

"Oh right, Rio forgot about that!" Rio giggled, soon putting her noise mosaic up to Natsumi's surprise. "(Recognize me now? My normal identity is Rio Sonogami, but as enigmatic the holder of the Sephira Crystals, I was known as the Phantom!)

Rio removes the mosaic and giggles before Natsumi suddenly faints.

"...Did Rio break Natsumi?" Rio asked worriedly.

"No sweetie, that's what we call fainting." Rinne replied, sweat dropping with a smile at the scenario that just happened.

Natsumi soon felt herself regain consciousness on a massage table, blinking oddly at the sudden location she had appeared in and sweating worried.
"Uh... hello? Where am I?" Natsumi asked, shaking. "Tohka?!"

"Over here!" Tohka called out, making Natsumi look as Tohka rose up from the side of the massage table. "Sorry about that, I think I fell asleep waiting for you to wake up. My bad."

Natsumi sweat dropped at that.

"Uh... so where am I exactly?" Natsumi asked.

"You're still in the Ratatoskr base, we just shifted to some hidden alternate room that... they had for some strange reason." Tohka replied, realizing the oddity of what they were in as she did. "Anyways, just relax for right now. We're gonna help you make you feel more confident over how you look."

"Huh, how are you-"

Suddenly Natsumi feels something cold on her back, and looks behind her to notice that her Astral Dress had been dispelled (courtesy of Rinne) and she wasn't wearing any clothes, making her turn slightly red.

"Sorry about that, but I can't properly do this if you're wearing clothes. Don't worry, this is some good aroma oil." Tohka replied, and soon Natsumi felt the Energy Spirit's fingers dig into her back. Natsumi twitched briefly before suddenly collapsing as she felt strangely relaxed.

"W-why does that feel so good?" Natsumi asked quietly, almost like in a trance.

"Wow, I knew you'd have muscle knots but... ouch." Tohka noted, Natsumi's true form already showed she had trouble with, couldn't or didn't take care of it, but she didn't think it would be this bad. "Don't worry, Tohka Yatogami swears on her honor to untie every one of them!"

Natsumi suddenly felt herself struggling to stay awake as Tohka dug further into her skin. In moments, she suddenly felt herself pass out and fall asleep. After about another 30 minutes, she felt her cheek getting poked and woke up to see Tohka doing it.

"Huh, what? Who is..." Natsumi said, still all groggy. Soon she blinked and shook herself awake. "Did I fall asleep?"

"Yeah, that'll happen. Either way I think you should see you skin now." Tohka said, holding up a mirror. Natsumi's eyes widened a bit as her skin didn't seem so dry and rough anymore, she felt it and it was smooth like a baby's bottom. She was still pale skinned, but now it didn't look unhealthily pale. "Ta-Da!"

"H-How did..." Natsumi stuttered, shocked at the sight until she felt Tohka wrap the blanket she had over her around her. "Huh?"

"Come on, now it's time to get you a haircut." Tohka stated, making Natsumi blink in surprise and confusion.

Tohka lead Natsumi into the next room, where Origami was wearing a barber's outfit and had her hair tied into a ponytail.

"So you're doing this Origami? I didn't know you knew how to cut hair, that another 'super genius' thing?" Tohka asked.
"Eh... kinda, I know a little on how to do it." Kurumi answered, suddenly making a face at that last part to Tohka's confusion. "Guess it's kinda hard to believe since my hair's long though, so I don't blame you."

Tohka giggled at that, and soon Origami joined her as the former seated Natsumi the barber chair.

"So Natsumi, do you prefer your hair long or do you want it short?" Origami asked.

"Uh... I guess I'm used to it being long, though this is too long." Natsumi admitted, and soon she felt Origami pour some water on her hair before lathering it. "Wait, what are you doing?"

"I'm gonna wash and lather it first, gotta make it nice and most so I don't cut any unnecessary locks." Origami answered.

Natsumi covered her eyes a bit as Origami began digging her hands onto her scalp, Natsumi winced a bit before it felt oddly relaxing, like her head's weight had its equilibrium adjusted. After that, Origami rinsed her hair before drying it off and grabbing the scissors.

"Alright, now time to get off all that extra hair." Origami warned, making Natsumi close her eyes as Origami quickly began snipping as a lot of unnecessary hair fell off Natsumi's head, soon all the split ends, certain hair tips and heavy bundles were all on the floor. Origami dried it off and soon... "There we go."

Natsumi soon opened her eyes to look at the mirror, and to her surprise her hair looked pretty similar, but didn't reach to knees anymore, just above her waist. It also seemed normal rather than a tangled mess of bed head. It was if Origami knew how she'd prefer it if she could have fixed it herself.

"I'm gonna read that as you being satisfied." Origami smiled, looking at Tohka. "Alright Tohka, while I clean all this hair up, you go take her the boutique."

"Aye, aye!" Tohka saluted, making Origami blink and tilt her head at her. "Eh... sorry, I don't know why but I got the feeling you were speaking like military personal with that. Just ignore me."

Tohka takes Natsumi ahead while Origami shrugged and began sweeping the hair up.

Soon Natsumi and Tohka appeared in a room full of clothes, almost like a small store, and Kurumi was seen humming as she was considering the clothes options and then noticed the two come in.

"Oh, Origami finished faster than I expected. Well welcome to Boutique Kurumi where I'll be helping you with clothes." Kurumi smiled, Natsumi and Tohka suddenly snorted at that and soon laughed. "Hey, don't laugh. I thought that sounded cute."

Kurumi pouted playfully until they finally stopped.

"Alright, let's see how these clothes work. Come on in Natsumi." Kurumi said as she took Natsumi by the hand, and soon Tohka heard the latter scream.

"Tohka, save me!" Natsumi exclaimed, reaching her hand out as Kurumi dragged her back in. Tohka panicked at how she should respond.

"Uh... I will, just let me figure out how I'm supposed to do that here!" Tohka sweated, unsure how to react without Kurumi catching her too. She breathes and soon prepares to rush in... only for the dressing room cover to open up. "...Or be too late cause Kurumi finished."
Tohka sees Natsumi had a bag over her head.

"Why is there-" Tohka asked, but Kurumi held out her hand.

"I figured she should see it together with all of us. Now come on, it's time for us to make the grand reveal." Kurumi smiled, a small giggle ending her sentence. She and Tohka guide Natsumi back into the main room. Origami soon left the barber shop rook, which left everyone in a single room together.

"Uh... am I allowed to take this off yet? I'm having trouble breathing in it." Natsumi said, and soon enough Kurumi grabbed the bag before taking it off. At that moment, she saw herself in the mirror before her. "What the? Is... is that?"

Natsumi had reason to be shocked, there wasn't anyone else in Ratatoskr that had green hair but herself, and she lost her words in an instant. Her hair which was once bulging uncouthly was beautifully settled with the natural habits remaining and was dazzling from the bathing light.

As if she was mistaken with her skin, her skin with bad complexion was glossy and was coupled together with cute clothes. Her appearance made her think of a young woman prided with grace. No matter how she looked at the mirror, she couldn't say this was just a screen projecting another image instead of a mirror.

"T-this is... really me?" Natsumi asked, almost to try and confirm if she was dreaming or not.

"Yep! Without a doubt, that's you see in the mirror Natsumi!" Tohka smiled cheerfully.

In a manner of looking at something unbelievable, Natsumi kept touching the mirror while muttering dumbfounded, Shido then placed his hand on her small shoulder. As if to continue from that, the others gave their own opinions.

"Y-you're really pretty!" Yoshino stated, blushing a bit.

"It's lovely, you look nice Natsumi." Origami smiled.

"I give it a 10 out of 10!" Kotori said, raising her first up for emphasis. "If I could vote higher... 100 out of 10!"

In a certain extent, she felt that only one person was dazzling in her eyes compared to the others but, Natsumi was standing rock still there dumbfounded and still unsure of what she was seeing.

"How is it Natsumi?" Shido asked.

"Yeah, the one who set up everything we had to do was Shido. Kinda strange he knows so much girly knowledge." Kurumi giggled, making Shido blush.

"Hey! That's not funny, I grew up raising Kotori and my sister! It's not like I have some secret fantasy to be female!" Shido exclaimed, and Kurumi only giggled at that as he gave a playful annoyed look. "Stop teasing me Kurumi!"

After saying that, Shido looked at Natsumi's eyes from the mirror... and Natsumi heard herself gasp unintentionally. Just now for an instant, Natsumi thought of the girl in the mirror, of herself, as... cute.

'I... I...' Natsumi thought, however at that moment.
Natsumi's eyes spun round and round, and her legs trembled. She should be happy. She should be in joy. She never would have thought that her appearance which she has hated a lot would change this much... but her mouth and mind refused to cooperate.

Was it just because within that short time, and because of such an unexpected event that just happened, that she was unable to process the situation in her mind.

"Uh... Natsumi?" Tohka asked, worried about Natsumi's silence.

"U-a-a-aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhh!"

Natsumi suddenly began crying, surprising everyone a bit by her choice of a reaction.

"Uh... is that a good or a bad sign!?" Rinne asked.

"I think that's an... overwhelmed sign?" Mayuri replied, unsure of herself. "Maybe we're crowding her too much? I know, everyone clear the room a bit!"

Everyone does so, soon leaving the room and leaving only Shido, Mana and all the Spirits with Natsumi as her cries died down.

"What's wrong Natsumi, do you not like it?" Tohka asked worriedly.

"No, I do... I really do, but I can't bring myself to say anything good about it. All I can say is I'm not ugly." Natsumi sniffled, rubbing her eyes. "I... I don't understand why, am I scared? Am I lying to myself? I... I can't tell what I'm saying now!"

Rinne looked at Natsumi and put a finger to her mouth as she looked up and began thinking. After a bit... she gasped and went to get Reine, confusing everyone. Reine soon checked had Maria check Natsumi's readings.

"Let's see..." Rinne said, looking at them, and then noticing what she had expected. "Ah! There it is, I think I see an irregularity in Natsumi's Sephira Crystal. The Haniel Crystal's causing some side effect we can't recognize, I'm not sure why... but I think it may be representing something about Natsumi's confidence."

"Huh?" Natsumi asked, confused.

"Well, for some reason the Sephira Crystals sometimes cause strange side effects in us based on situations." Tohka explained, scratching her head. "Some of us have had it, so... guys?"

Everyone looks at Origami, making herself get nervous.

"Why am I always the first when it isn't Tohka?" Origami said, biting her nails a bit. "Uh... well, when I first Inverted, Rio locked my powers away for a bit. Yet if I sensed Spirit mana they flowed back and I instinctively tried to purge it... and led to Tohka's inversion. Yet we ended up best friends after."

Tohka smiled and shrugged at that, making Origami shake her head and smile a bit.

"Uh... well, for me I made a second personality named Yoshinon because I felt alone unconsciously. She was a rabbit puppet I wore on my left hand." Yoshino shyly admitted, surprising Natsumi a bit since she never had that result despite feeling lonely. "It made me 5 years younger though, and after I
made friends... Yoshino eventually died."

"Oh my... how long ago?" Natumi asked.

"The day before you met Shido." Tohka answered, making Natumi's eyes widen as she looked at her. "Yeah, not kidding there."

Kotori noticing Yoshino was getting a bit somber cleared her throat.

"I had my past possessor's consciousness stuck in mine, so Rio had to lock up my powers too." Kotori quickly stated, Natumi stared at her oddly. "And now she's alive again, and with Ratatoskr too. You know Saya, the girl with brown hair and three braids? That's her. She tried to take over my body, didn't work... and now this just got awkward."

"Mine was more artificial, but the guy who runs DEM attached an automaton to my back, changed my powers and he influenced me in a bad way... OK I can't talk about it anymore." Kurumi said, soon shaking her head. Natumi soon looked at herself.

"...Is it wrong I feel mine is the normal one?" Natumi asked, and Tohka shrugged. "Close enough, so... do we have a room here or do I just go somewhere? Cause I need to think."

Everyone saw Natumi about to walk off, and Tohka grabs her hand.

"It's not here, but we do have a room we can give you." Tohka answered, soon noticing Natumi's hair and then Kurumi's. "Why'd you give Natumi your hairstyle?"

Natumi's eyes widen before she looks at Kurumi funny, and the Shadow Spirit looks left and right before whistling and heading to where Saya went. Mana rolled her eyes as Nasumi removed the scrunchies from her hair.

At the DEM headquarters, Marina was seen in her android body as she was looking up information about Murdoch's plan to show the others via a tablet connected to the DEM's archives, and soon her eyes widen.

"Oh my god! Father, that man is a lunatic... and I thought you and I were the only ones who I could define as that!" Marina exclaimed, making Jessica look at Westcott oddly as he simply shrugged at that.

"So, what makes him a lunatic out of curiosity?" Jessica asked.

"Remember the old Humpty Dumpty trio that we've recently decided to decommission?" Marina asked, everyone nods. "...You know what, saying it doesn't do justice. Just read the tablet."

Marina slides it over to Ellen, after reading it she suddenly spits her drink out and soaks Marina with the spray.

"...Thank you for spraying your carbonated beverage on me. You know what, for that I'm only calling mother from now on." Marina said, making Ellen about to say something until she turned to Westcott. "You have a problem with it father?"

"Nope." Westcott said, making Ellen stare at him. "What? Its technically correct since she calls me father, and you and I are legally married despite the different surnames."

"Ike!" Ellen groaned, Marina laughed at her before she threw a pillow at her. Marina blocked it
easily. "Stop laughing at Marina!"

Jessica looked at the situation before grabbing her latte and just walking out of the room again, Westcott just ignored the event as he read the local newspaper.

The following morning in the Takamiya House, Natsumi was seen already with her room filled with her all her stuff, Tohka knocked on the door.

"I'm awake, and have been since 6. Come in." Natsumi replied, making a socked Tohka walk in.

"Wow, talk about an early- Holy!" Tohka shouted, seeing everything in the room. "Did you either transform the room, or did you somehow get all this in here while we weren't looking?"

Natsumi holds up Haniel's mirror form.

"Oh yeah, I forgot there's a pocket dimension in that. Dang! Why are all the good not combat abilities part of everyone else's powers?" Tohka asked herself.

"Why, what are yours?" Natsumi asked.

"...None." Tohka admittedly sadly, and as Natsumi tried to mention her strong smell. "No, that didn't come from my powers. Not did my strength for that matter. I think I accidentally broke the fridge in my house when I was 5."

Natsumi stared at that.

"...OK, I'm just gonna take your word for it." Natsumi replied, looking forward worriedly. "So, why'd you come in?"

"Thought you'd wanna know Shido made breakfast, its salad and pancakes." Tohka replied, and Natsumi nodded before Tohka frowned a bit. "What's wrong?"

"I don't know, I mean... it's nice to have a place and friends, but I just feel like something's gonna go bad or wrong at any moment." Natsumi sighed, falling flat on the bad. "To tell the truth... I just can't think of something good, my mind just feels the need to always assume the worst."

Tohka blinks at that, unsure of what to say.

"It can't be that bad, can it?" Tohka asked.

"Tohka, I once heard someone say while I was present that they got dizzy." Natsumi stated, making Tohka confused. "I went from that, to thinking 'To get dizzy... Meaning: Close to collapsing from dizziness', then 'I am about to collapse from dizziness by looking at you!', and finally end on 'I feel sick just by looking at you, ugly!' somehow."

Tohka suddenly blinked.

"...OK, I guess it is that bad." Tohka thought, looking to the side as she tried processing that sentence again. "OK, I'm not the brightest or smartest. I don't even go to school for one. Though what I'm getting based on what you're saying, you're afraid that you might wake up and suddenly you lost all of this?"

"...Yeah, I think that's a good way to define it." Natsumi sighed, holding a stuffed bat plushie of hers close. "I sometimes get the feeling it relates to my lost memories."
Tohka suddenly flinches at that before turning, getting Natsumi's attention.

"Wait, you don't remember a period of your life? When's that exactly?" Tohka asked.

"Well... to be honest, I don't remember up to a certain point after I became a Spirit. The only things from before then that I do remember are that Phantom... or I guess Rio gave me the Haniel Crystal, that I was human once, and that my wish when I agreed to take the crystal was 'to be accepted by the world', the rest is a blank."

Tohka thinks on that a bit.

'She doesn't remember meeting Rio in her Phantom disguise, and yet she knows she did. Something about that just doesn't add up.' Tohka thought, soon thinking a bit. "Hmm... I think I know how to help you ease your worries. For now, let's get some breakfast."

Natsumi wanted to say she wasn't hungry, but her stomach grumbled and made her blush.

"I knew it, a stomach doesn't lie." Tohka giggled, making Natsumi blush more before she followed Tohka to the kitchen.

**Meanwhile at DEM Industries,** Murdoch was watching a video feed showing Tenguu City, while also a secondary feed from deep in space the sight of three satellites moving was also being watched while a data screen had him set and control their movements.

"Alright, it's time to begin. Sorry Tenguu City... I have to wipe you off the map and the face of the Earth. I hope all the innocent people living inside don't mind I'll be sending them to their demise."

Murdoch said, soon giving a cruel smirk.

'You'll thank me when Westcott's only link to power is severed. The word needs a Demon to burn into it so they can destroy the gate that summons the Devil before he ever comes. Sometimes you must sacrifice others for the sake of many more. I'm not afraid to do it.'

Soon, Murdoch sees the satellites fly over position... and presses the drop button as the parts latching them in orbit fire off, sending them to the ground before the atmospheric grip of gravity pulls them in.

**Meanwhile in space,** a familiar blonde Spirit opens her eyes as she turned to look and see the Humpty Dumpty satellites as they began falling towards Earth.

"Hmm... how strange, what oddity am I witnessing?" The emotionless Spirit wondered as she watched, soon quickly ignoring it and resuming her endless drifting. "It seems that there is an unfortunate fate that shall befall the world below that location."

She closes her eyes once more, resuming her endless drifting in her curled position.

Natsumi stared at her breakfast, blinking as she saw Tohka devour her 15th plate.

"Uh... Natsumi, you might wanna start or she may eat your share." Mana chuckled, soon getting closer. "And yeah, she eats that much almost daily. I think it's the fact her elemental power is energy."

"Yeah, I think I saw that when she saved me. That was before she started kicking stones, throwing crystals and blowing sand." Natsumi sweat dropped, soon taking a bit of her pancakes as the others
all looked at Tohka.

"Oh, did I forget to mention that? It turns out I also have Earth powers too!" Tohka giggled, making Rinne bop her head lightly and chuckle.

"That's what I forgot about the Sandalphon region spirits! Of course, can't believe I forgot that. There was already fire, water and air, there had to be earth too." Rinne giggled, rubbing her head. "Sorry I didn't realize that earlier Tohka, but I guess figuring it out on your own helped your confidence."

Tohka blushed a bit, and soon Natsumi shook a bit as she teared up.

"This food... it's delicious." Natsumi cried, having not had anything so yummy in years. "And you cooked these Shido?"

"Yeah, glad to see you're enjoying them." Shido smiled, Natsumi blushed lightly before looking away. "Oh yeah, Reine wanted me to ask you this. Do you have a last name Natsumi?"

"Uh... no, why do you ask?" Natsumi wondered.

"Well, we need to register your citizenship status and you'll need a last name to avoid looking odd. We just wanted to make sure you had one first." Shido answered, soon thinking. "I guess we need to give you one, but what should it be?"

As everyone thinks, Tohka raises her hand.

"I'm guessing Tohka's got an idea, let's hear it." Rinne giggled.

"Right! I'm thinking her last name should be Itsuwari, it has a few meanings that relate to her powers. Those are False, Fiction, and Fabrication." Tohka stated, holding up her three fingers.

"She can be someone else which makes her a false version of them, when she transforms something she makes it a fabrication, and her powers are pretty much able to make something fictional real if she wanted. So... how about it Natsumi?"

Natsumi blinked for a moment and then...

"Natsumi Itsuwari... that name feels, right." Natsumi stated, soon smiling. "Yeah, I like it. My new last name."

"Didn't we name Yoshino a similar way? Eh, what the heck, if she's happy with it then why should I care about that detail?" Mana stated, waving her hand at her earlier comment. "Hey Natsumi, are you ready for what we've got planned today?"

"Uh... that depends, because I don't know what it is?" Natsumi asked, suddenly Mana snickers which worried Natsumi. "...Why do I suddenly have a bad feeling about this now? Mana, what are you planning to do!?"

Rinne sighs and pinches Mana's ear.

"Ow! Mom, stop it! It's not like I was trying to scare her into thinking it was something evil!" Mana cried, soon falling over as Rinne releases her ear. "OK, maybe that tone of laughter was kinda unnecessary."

"It's simple Natsumi, Shido's going to take you out on a date." Mayuri replied, finishing her salad. "That's all there is to it, the sooner you get your powers sealed the sooner the DEM loses all ways to
trace where you are."

Natsumi blushes at the date aspect.

"OK... this is gonna feel weird, I don't think I'm ready for it." Natsumi stuttered, soon looking at Rio, Rinne and Mayuri while blinking. "Hey, wait a second... Tohka, didn't you say the only ones sealed were you, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori and Kurumi?"

"That's right, why?" Tohka asked.

"Then what about the rest of you? Rinne, Mayuri and Rio are all Spirits too." Natsumi inquired.

"We're a bit different Natsumi, I'm sorta technically sealed but not exactly due to Shido. Also, my seal is an actual limited. I can't really aid the others' in a fight right now if I wanted to." Rinne answered, loon petting Rio's head. "Rio here was born from my power, so she doesn't have a Sephira Crystal to seal."

Mayuri soon focuses her powers to show her disfigured and oddly shaped artificial Sephira Crystal inside her.

"And my Sephira Crystal was artificially made by Rio, so it's not like the ones you and the others have. Only the ten Spirits born from the genuine Sephira Crystals can be sealed, they're also the only Spirits that the DEM cares about." Mayuri answered, making Natsumi feel her heart where the Haniel Crystal was present.

"Is that why you're so important Haniel?" Natsumi asked.

[Aye Master, I'll go whatever road you want, but I would prefer you were safe. I don't want to see another host of mine die on me again.]

Natsumi smiled at that, no matter what she always at least had Haniel with her for all her years as a Spirit. Soon she noticed Mayuri and Rio both get up, Rio piggybacking on Mayuri's back.

"A little warning next time?" Mayuri winced, her back slightly in pain. "Well we're off Miss Rinne, hopefully we'll visit again soon once we actually get a clue on where Zodiac's at. By for now everyone!"

"Bye mama! Bye everyone, Rio and Mayuri promise to come back soon!" Rio smiled, waving as she and Mayuri disappeared.

"Huh?" Natsumi wondered confused.

"Rio and Mayuri are looking around the world for the remaining four Spirits, they found one but the one they're trying to find seems to have disappeared. They only come back home every once in a while." Shido answered, making Natsumi blink.

"...I guess I'll believe you on that." Natsumi replied, soon scratching her head. "So, uh... what are we doing for our date?"

Aww, that's so sweet! Natsumi's finally gotten on a somewhat friendly relationship with the others, but right now it's still awkward for her unless she's talking with Tohka, let's wish her luck in overcoming this everyone. She's already made some progress by being willing to stay in her true form around everyone, even though it's clear she's uncomfortable with it.
So it seems that the Haniel Crystal has an irregularity right now that's affecting her confidence and apparently making her only able to have doubts and negative thinking regardless of a situation, and at the same time that Natsumi claims she can't remember a period of life that includes the exact scenario of when she received her Sephira Crystal. How peculiar, what does this mean? Only I know... for now :3

Now it's time for Shido and Natsumi to begin their date, and yet at the same time we just saw Murdoch drop the Humpty Dumpty satellites over Tenguu City, how will Shido and the others deal with them once they finally get close enough to threaten the city? Worse, how will they do it now that Mayuri and Rio have left to resume their search for Mukuro who they still don't know actually isn't on Earth?

Hey, wait a second... was that Nia we just saw present in Tenguu City? We've seen her cameo a few times already, but we never saw where she is, just what is that Spirit up to? Not to mention how come no one's aware she's in there, something smells fishy right now with her, but for now it doesn't seem like we'll be getting any answers about what her reasons are.

Well, guess we'll see where things go next time as the remaining questions about Natsumi slowly come to light and everyone fights to stop the satellites from destroying the city. Oh, and yes, Marina calling Ellen "mother" is going to be a running gag from now. *chuckles* No offense Ellen, but you did kinda walk into that ^^;

Until next time everyone, stay awesome!

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 86%
Origami - 83%
Yoshino - 78%
Kotori - 80%
Kurumi - 75%
Chapter 31

Here we go everyone, Shido and Natsumi are going on their date and the Humpty Dumpty satellites are about to reach Tenguu City leaving everyone to somehow destroy all three of them before they smash onto their home and destroy everything and everyone in it. So, I guess it's pretty accurate for me to say that this is the final chapter of Natsumi's arc.

I hope the date seems nice, it felt a little tricky due to Natsumi's personality at the moment, not to mention despite how she and Shido first talked, she's still feeling all awkward over her whole overreaction to mistakenly believing he saw her true form. I think I did well, but that doesn't mean I don't feel it might be a bit awkward for situational reasons.

The time for Natsumi's hidden secret, and what the Haniel Crystal has been doing all this time to cause the irregularity in her confidence and why it did (the one thing I'll confirm now is that it was doing it for Natsumi's benefit), and just what is this secret? Well... I guess you'll learn that soon enough, but maybe some of you have already realized it ^v^

Now, let's bring this arc to an epic finale it can be proud of!

Chapter 31, S2: Natsumi Refresh, Part 5

Shido was currently waiting at the Tenguu Station's statue area, which by this point could effectively be the official meet up spot for Shido and his harem whenever they went out on dates. Shido was looking the time as he waited.

"I hope she's alright, she's gotta be nervous about this." Shido said to himself, crossing his arms a bit. "Not that I blame her. Usually the dates happen before the Spirit moves in and after she's already been sealed, but this time it's between the two periods."

"Um... Shido?" Natsumi called out.

Shido turned and saw Natsumi had finally arrived, she was wearing the same little dress that Kurumi had put her in during the makeover from the other day. Though this time rather than having the same hairstyle as Kurumi, she had her hair tied up in a ponytail, her face was blushing as she struggled to not make direct eye contact.

"...This outfit looks bad with the ponytail, doesn't it?" Natsumi replied, only to feel Shido pet her head.

"Not at all, it actually suits you." Shido smiled, making the Mimicry Spirit blush a bit and fling the ponytail over her eyes to hide it. Shido chuckles a bit and moves it back "Hey, no need to hide it. You look fine."

"...OK, I'll take your word for it." Natsumi answered, nervously taking Shido's hand as they walk somewhere. "So where are we going, and what are we doing exactly? I mean with how I look, aren't people gonna give us weird eyes?"

"Not to worry, back when Yoshino was still de-aged, I treated any dates we had like I was taking my little sister out. No one's gonna stare at someone for that." Shido answered, making Natsumi look forward with a look of awe.
"Huh, that's actually pretty clever. Guess being small has its own tricks." Natsumi admitted.

Soon the two walked into a small festival area where people were playing a lot of games at stands, mostly for some cheap prizes kids would like, but it still got some older kids playing as well just for the kicks and due to the grand prizes available.

"A festival?" Natsumi asked.

"I wasn't sure what you'd like, so I figured I'd get a good idea through here... I hope you don't mind?" Shido asked.

"It's cool, I haven't exactly been social with anyone but Tohka so far." Natsumi answered, the two soon walking over to one of the game stands. The said stand had BB guns to shoot targets with. "I wanna try this one first."

Shido placed some yen on the table.

"Alright, go ahead-"

Before Shido or the stall keeper could properly prepare a reaction, Natsumi had already shot every target in seconds right in the bullseyes. Soon Natsumi points to one of the items on the grand prize shelf.

"I'd like that PS7 console." Natsumi asked, the stall manager sweated at the result before giving it to her.

"Natsumi, how did you do that!?" Shido asked surprised.

"Oh yeah, guess I didn't ever tell you guys that part." Natsumi realized, the two heading to the next stall she wanted to try. "When I copy someone's form, I gain their skills. You can't really be a master of disguise if you can't truly act like the person in every manner."

"So... you once disguised yourself as a sniper?" Shido wondered.

"An archer technically, though shooting arrows and guns isn't too hard to adjust for." Natsumi answered, making Shido's eyes widen as they reached a goldfish catching stall. "I think I've had too much free time."

Shido chuckles as that, soon seeing Natsumi catch a total of 20 goldfish in a bowl to the surprise of everyone watching. Soon she placed it and pointed to the grand prize shelf like at the previous shelf.

"Can I have the tablet?" Natsumi asked, making the stall manager give it to her, still in shock.

'Well at least she's only trying for one prize per stall.' Shido thought, worried they'd get kicked out if Natsumi tried to get every grand prize from a single stall. "Which one next?"

Natsumi points to one where you had to pull out water balloons without popping them.

"Oh boy, that's a hard one... Mana and I always kept popping them as kids." Shido chuckled nervously, only to notice Natsumi had already pulled out a dozen without any effort. "Huh!? H-How are you doing that!?"

"All in the wrist." Natsumi answered, soon getting 30 out to the stall owner's surprise. She pointed at the grand prize shelf once more. "I want that special realizer please."
Soon Shido and Natsumi were on a bench, the latter holding one grand prize from each stall she played at. After she saw no one was looking, she had Haniel transform into her mirror form and stored them all inside.

"That explains all the stuff you got your room set up with, I can't wait to see what you'd do when you try to bargain." Shido chuckled, making Natsumi blush a bit. "So... are you at least having fun."

"...Yeah, a little bit." Natsumi said, taking Shido's hand to the latter's surprise before he smiled. "I kept worrying about the worst, and yet so far nothing bad's happened between us. I just wish I could feel this way all the time."

Shido looks at her, and soon scratches his head a bit.

"Hey Natsumi, this may be a bit too much to ask, but what exactly did you go through to make you feel how you do about your appearance?" Shido wondered, making Natsumi gasp a bit. "You don't have to tell me if you don't to. I know I'm already asking a lot, I don't wanna force anything."

"...Tohka keeps mentioning how good a person you are, and I trust her. So, I'll be willing to share that story with you. At least, what I remember of it." Natsumi replied, making Shido look as she breathed and looked up.

"I know I was human once, and... as long as I could remember, I've been alone. I don't remember having any parents, but the place I used to live in before I could teleport places as a Spirit looked like it was in ruins."

"Ruins, do you think that..." Shido asked.

"Yeah, I think that was a hot spot for Spacequakes at the time, so it's likely my parents were casualties when I was still too young to remember them." Natsumi confirmed, soon resuming her story. "I barely had food, or even money to get it. Sometimes I'd try to see if someone would spare a little of either... guess where that ended up going?"

Shido gave a sad look, considering how she was so sure her current formed had looked ugly before her makeover, it wasn't too hard to realize what had happened to her. Not to mention Tohka had been able to tell she was in pain just by looking at Natsumi's eyes.

"I was constantly abused, beaten, and ripped off. Eventually I couldn't convince myself their words were just lies. Eventually... I started lashing out in the worst ways against those kinds of people, I didn't consider anything I did as taking it too far." Natsumi continued, shaking as she barely kept herself from crying.

"Eventually I met your younger sister and became a Spirit, I don't remember everything about our meeting. I do know that sometime after that, I saw a lot of people taking photos of what were likely models, I figured in that form I'd finally feel like I was accepted instead of treat like... like I was just trash."

Shido held her hand tighter, making Natsumi look at him as he gave a sad look.

"I'm guessing it didn't work like you thought it would?" Shido asked.

"Yeah, it didn't. I finally got what I was looking for as people looked at me like an actual person. Yet, no matter how often I got a compliment or was told how nice I looked... it was hollow, empty, blank. Eventually it became clear to me, because I knew I'd never look this way, especially after I became a Spirit." Natsumi continued, her lip quivering.
"I kept trying, hoping I'd find someone who could tell me that and make that feeling genuine, but it never happened. Then I met you and you knew I was a Spirit and... I wondered if maybe this was finally that time. Yet all I did was lash out, and we're here now, you didn't care and forgave me... but I still feel as empty. Maybe I've suffered too much to feel true happiness."

"Natsumi, don't-" Shido began, hoping to make her feel better... but Natsumi soon quickly teleported off the bench and suddenly began running off somewhere. Her eyes shedding tears the whole time she did.

"Natsumi!" Shido shouted, running after her.

Natsumi kept running, wiping her eyes as she did, unaware of where she was going as she did due to her teary eyes blinding her a bit. Though by this point wherever she had run to was far away from where she had left Shido.

'It won't last! I know it won't, no matter how good things are right now I'll just end up back where I was! Every time I think I've found my place, I learn just how wrong I was!' Natsumi thought, still crying. 'Even if Tohka accepts me now, one day she'll-"

Soon Natsumi suddenly ran into someone and fell back, she held a hand to her face as it began to sting with pain.

"Ow..." Natsumi winced.

"Well look at that, who thought we'd see her here!!"

Natsumi's eyes suddenly shook, she recognized the voice she heard all too well, she looked up as she saw a few High School boys she remembered as part of a group who had abused her during her earlier years as a Spirit. They got closer and gave cruel smiles at her, and Natsumi just sat there frozen in fear.

"Look at that, did you try getting a makeover? Do whatever you want, but that won't change what you really are under it!" One boy began, laughing at her. Natsumi just shook and did nothing as they insulted her. "Hey, are you listening? You should be, because...

The same boy suddenly hit Natsumi across the face, sending her across the ground as she held her cheek in pain.

"...We're talking to you!"

Natsumi only cried more as they get near her, another of the boys suddenly grabbed her shirt's collar. she looked around hoping someone was seeing this and would stop it, but once she saw where she was, it was clear no one would come here unless they intended to.

Without even thinking, she had let her emotions cause her to run away from Shido and end up into the territory of these horrible men, and now she was at their complete mercy. While she could have acted, fear had fully taken her over and she couldn't move, or even speak.

"Stop your whining already, the truth is the truth after all!" The main boy chuckled as he walked up to stare at her, and Natsumi could only cry and shake which annoyed him before her. "Not good at listening to instructions? Fine then, I'll make you shut up and listen myself!"

Natsumi closed her eyes as the boy prepared to punch her, when suddenly...
"You leave her alone!"

The boy suddenly stopped, and Natsumi's eyes opened as she saw Shido walking towards them, and his face clearly showed he seemed angry.

"Oh look, if it isn't the class Casanova!" The one boy growled annoyed. Natsumi's eyes widened a bit at that, and after focusing for a moment... noticed a lot of the guys present were Shido's classmates she had seen when disguised as him. The others who weren't likely still attended Raizen themselves.

"You got some nerve coming here, are you trying to win another girl's attention for yourself!?"

"I'm here because you're attacking my friend! Now put. Her. Down." Shido said, his expression more serious than Natsumi had ever heard it.

"Oh please, you think we're just gonna listen? You've already got that girlfriend who visited during that one event and you've got Kurumi, Origami and even Kotori wrapped under your thumb!" The same boy yelled, the other guys in the group giving similar looks and scowling. "Maybe we should take care of you now, you want me to kill you!?"

The guy smirked as he took out a knife, hoping to threaten Shido with it and making Natsumi shake at how close it was to her. The rest of the group gave similar smirks, thinking Shido would back off.

"...Alright, if you wanna kill, then go ahead and do it." Shido replied, no hesitation or signs of fear, in fact he smirked at them. Natsumi gasped while all the guys suddenly became afraid, it had been only a mere threat, and yet Shido had actually told them to really do it? Shido walked towards the boy holding Natsumi who shook as terror overtook him.

"S-Stay back, I will use this thing! This isn't a joke-"

Suddenly Shido's hand shot out and grabbed the boy's hand before he wrangled the knife out of his grasp.

"You'd do best to learn this lesson, knifes aren't for threats. If you draw any kind of weapon you have to be ready to face the consequences of using it. Now..." Shido replied, giving an intense look. "Put... Natsumi... down!"

"Y-You... you'll regret this Takamiya!" The boy screamed, dropped Natsumi as he and the others all ran away. Natsumi stared at the situation, completely flabbergasted at what she had just seen. Shido breathed and soon looked at her as he checked out her injured cheek.

"I can't believe they actually did that, I always thought they were just jealous but to think they were actual jerks? Can't believe so many students at Raizen behave like this." Shido stated, soon taking out a small cloth and rubbing Natsumi's her cheek to lessen the pain on it. "At least you're safe now Natsumi, that's what matters most to me."

Suddenly, Natsumi began to whimper and tear up.

"Natsumi?" Shido asked, soon feeling her hug him and cry.

"I'm so sorry!" Natsumi cried, hugging him closer and sobbing more. "I shouldn't have run off like that, my worries got the better of me and I nearly paid for it! Yet you followed me, you... you came to save me! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

Shido returned her hug, and held her close as he rubbed her back.
"Y-you... you actually came for me, I ran away but you didn't just let me go. You came... you came back!" Natsumi cried, hiccupping slightly as she did. "But why? Why did you follow me when I ran, why did you... why did you-

"Natsumi, didn't we tell you already? You're not alone anymore." Shido answered, making Natsumi's eyes widen. Shido rubbed her head as he continued.

"I don't understand everything you've gone through and I might never will. What I do know is that I, and neither will any of our friends judge you just for how you look, what matters to us is who the person in your heart will become."

"Shido..." Natsumi breathed.

"Long ago I met Tohka when we were both only 7, I had no idea she'd grow up to be a beauty. What made me fall in love with her was who she was. She wasn't the smartest, nor the strongest, she wasn't the bravest either. Despite that she was always so cheerful, full of life, she made me smile and she never gave up."

"That's the girl she was back then, and the girl she still is now. I know it's been hard for you... but you have the right to look forward. Whatever you were and dealt with back then? You don't have to be it if you don't want to, because you can choose who you get to be now."

Natsumi whimpers more, and soon her quivering mouth smiled as she cried again. Shido held her close as she let everything out.

'I was so stupid... the place I've been looking for, it was here all along. I was just too afraid that I'd lose it all. So afraid, I never realized they didn't want to let me go either.' Natsumi thought, sniffling as for the first time in her life...

...She felt someone tell her something good, and this time she didn't feel hollow from it, she felt Shido's words truly reach her.

"...Thank you, thank you so much Shido." Natsumi replied, her sniffles dying down.

"You're wel-" Shido began, but soon a familiar alarm sounded off to their shock and the entire city began evacuating to the shelters.

[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE!]

"What? Is there another Spirit coming, are we in danger!?" Natsumi asked worriedly.

"No... I don't think so, there's one other way for a Spacequake alarm to go off. Either one of the others sets it off so civilians aren't caught, Ratatoskr itself activates it, or the DEM uses it to prepare an attack without anyone seeing it." Shido explained, making Natsumi gasp. "The question is, which one is it?

Soon Shido hears his headset beep and taps it.

"Natsumi, put you ear by my left ear, you'll need to hear this." Shido requested, and Natsumi nodded as she did. "This is Shido and Natsumi, what's wrong?"

Maria soon appears on the headset's screen.

"Shido, we've got bad news! So bad I can't tell you it here! You need to get back to Ratatoskr's base
now, right now we're facing a fight that may be as dangerous as the battle with the Deus!" Maria answered.

Shido gasped, while Natsumi was confused.

"The Deus?" Natsumi asked.

"You know those automatons the DEM make to attack Spirits, right?" Shido asked, Natsumi nods. "We've dealt with some supersized ones before. The Deus was the worst of the worst, it was dangerous enough if it had even stepped on the city the damage would leave casualties. We almost failed to stop it in time."

Natsumi's eyes widen at that.

"...And now I'm officially freaked out by what could be just as bad as that." Natsumi whispered worriedly, grab's Shido. "Let's go!"

Before Shido could mention a nearby secret passageway, Natsumi teleports the both of them.

Everyone sees Natsumi and Shido teleport into the Ratatoskr base, with Shido's eyes spinning briefly before he hits the side of his head and readjusts them. He stands on his feet and looks at everyone.

"Alright, we're here now. So what are we dealing with?" Shido asked.

Maria nods before her eyes glow and reveals that high above Tengu City, there something rapidly descending onto the city. That's when everyone gasped to see the three Humpty Dumpty satellites.

"What the hell is that!?" Saya shrieked.

"Based on the data, they're a trio of realizer based satellites owned by the DEM that share the code name [Humpty Dumpty], and I think this situation tells us exactly what they're meant to be doing... they've been dropped above the city!" Maria declared, making everyone nervous. "We only have 10 minutes before the first one makes impact!"

"No way, is Westcott that desperate to take us out!?" Rinne asked, everyone looked trying to figure that out.

"This isn't Westcott's doing."

Everyone turned to see Karen and Elliot come in, the latter's wheelchair being pushed by the former.

"The DEM's involved, but it seems someone else has their own agenda. I do believe we're still the reason for it... but Westcott has no part in this, he's the kind of man who wants to see those who oppose him suffer. Our deaths would be too quick and too merciful." Elliot answered, making Reine sigh.

"What's scary is that makes complete sense, so its likely true." Reine answered, soon looking at everyone and whistling. "OK, listen up everyone! We've never had to face a threat like this before, but the danger is as real as the Deus. Maria, bring up the schematics!"

Maria nods and reveals the Humpty Dumpty's designs and abilities.

"The three satellites are dropping one after the other, so it's likely that if one gets destroyed, the next will take its power. They'll be using Realizers to defend themselves, and possibly there's a weapon system or various automatons stored inside to guard them." Reine began, soon swapping to another
"So our plan will work like this, we'll deploy the AST to attack the first of the Satellites and destroy it. Once that's done, the second one will take its power most likely, so the Fraxinus and all the Ratatoskr's vehicles will all focus their weapons to destroy it. That's when the third satellite will become the biggest threat."

Reine turns to the Spirits.

"Shido, Mana, Rinne, Tohka, Kurumi, Origami, Kotori, Yoshino, Natsumi... it'll be up to you to destroy it. At this point we'll likely be exhausted taking out the first two and you're the strongest we have. If we fall... Tenguu City and all its people are going to die."

"Don't worry, we can do this! Come on everyone, let's save this city!" Rinne declared, and all of Ratatoskr's members rush off to prepare. Only Shido, Mana and the Spirits, Elliot, the still recovering Artemisia and Karen were left.

"It's been a while since I've been in action, time to make it count." Karen breathed, soon slightly undoing her color. "Time to clean up this mess."

Karen walked off towards to where the AST went and got ready.

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**Humpty Dumpty 1, time until impact: 8 minutes**

Meanwhile high above the skies of Tenguu City, the first of the Humpty Dumpty satellites followed by the other two of the group falling above it a noticeable distance. Ryouko and the rest of the AST soon fly into view of it.

"This is Captain Ryouko Kusakabe! The AST has reached the first Humpty Dumpty's vicinity, we'll be beginning our attempt to destroy it now!" Ryouko replied though her CR-Unit's headset. She soon brings out the Cry-Cry-Cry and gets her serious face on, smiling viciously. "AST, attack and destroy the enemy!"

"Roger!" Everyone declared. Saya and Cecile fly towards the bottom area of the satellite, and Saya grabs the latter tight as she formed the Salamandra's energy barrier.

"Hang on Cecile, I'm breaching an opening for you!" Saya declared, screaming as she accelerates and smashes her barrier into its tip. Soon she throws Cecile up. "Get ready, here it comes!"

Saya grabs Tyrfing and thrusts it forward, causing a burst of fire to shoot out at the tip of her barrier, Cecile flies towards it as she taps the Humpty Dumpty's tip.

"Thanks Saya! Now... Territory Jamming Field, activate!" Cecile shouted, causing the Longma's wings to shake and vibrate, while the entire territory on the satellite wasn't dispelled, many hexagons that formed its barrier disappeared.

"Alright, let's smash this thing apart!" Ashley smirked.

Ashley shot herself forward, and all the Asura's arms began slashing and striking the Humpty Dumpty, at that moment some small turrets began to fire as many Bandersnatch were released and flew out of openings formed at the sides.

"Katie, shoot those automatons down!" Leonora ordered, making the latter nod as both began firing at them.
"Mikie, sneak around and deal with those turrets!" Katie yelled, and Mikie nodded before tuning invisible and flying at them. "Come on, we can do this!"

As the Bandersnatch prepared to swarm the group, everyone suddenly heard Ryouko laughing as she tore them to shreds with the C-C-C's bullet hell, smiling the whole time she was doing it.

"You mechanical freaks think you can destroy our city? Well, then prepare to say goodbye to the scrap heap because we'll be sending you to machine hell!" Ryouko grinned with a fierce smirk, soon tossing some grenades she had on hand at them, and hundreds of Bandersnatch got swallowed by the explosion.

"Oh boy, the captain's crazy again." Katie sweat dropped.

Meanwhile the turrets began to fire at the AST members, however one was suddenly ripped apart and the others all turned to the spot of the unseen force that destroy it. Mikie's invisible form smiled as she ran, causing the turrets to attack each other and miss her entirely.

"Everyone, fire around the spots of the destruction line!" Ryouko ordered, and everyone fired their guns at the turrets, destroying a whole side of them in mere moments. Mikie soon jumped off and regained her visibility.

"This is Mikie, you're all clear Karen!" Mikie replied, smiling.

"Roger." Karen stated.

Soon from far below, everyone saw Karen fly up from the ground at sonic speeds while wearing her CR-Unit, the Valkyrie, as she prepared her sword energy unique mana sword and focused her eyesight.

"One strike is all it'll take... Mjolnir!" Karen shouted.

Karen dug her blade into the side of the Humpty Dumpty that had been skinned clean of its turret, and her body and blade shook as she cut through the armor plating like butter.

"Everyone, attack the opening I've made now!" Karen declared, soon jumping off as she gathered all the used mana in the air around Mjolnir. Everyone nodded and focused their attacks at the area while Karen herself sharpened her eyes and thrust Mjolnir forward to discharge all the power in it... and the first Humpty Dumpty satellite exploded!

"Yes! The first satellite's been destroyed!" Saya exclaimed victoriously, and at that moment everyone saw the remaining power suddenly being swallowed up by some of the second Humpty Dumpty's realizers. "And the second one's definitely sucking up all that first one had packing, get ready guys!"

All of the AST, now fully exhausted from destroying the first satellite, quickly begin flying down back to the base as the next phase of the retaliation against the satellites began.

Murdoch watched as an alert for the first Humpty Dumpty being destroyed reached him.

"So they got one, but everyone knows the first plan doesn't work." Murdoch smirked, looking at the second one become stronger. "That's why a backup plan, and even an alternative are needed."

The second satellite's speed suddenly got faster as the power transferred.
The Fraxinus EX-Celsior took off into the sky, while everyone else began getting ready with the other Support Vehicles and ships. As they began taking flight, Maria suddenly noticed something and gasped.

"Commander Reine, we've got a situation! The second satellite... it's starting to accelerate! The ETA of impact has been reduced!" Maria shouted worriedly, getting Reine's attention as she looked at her.

"What? Maria, what's the new ETA?" Reine asked.

Maria began to calculate and soon the end result she got stated that it was...

"We only have 6 minutes!" Maria stated, making everyone gasp at the revelation. "We gotta hurry, otherwise the last satellite may accelerate too fast for the others to stop in time! In fact, let's try to attack both and hopefully push the final Humpty Dumpty back enough to buy us more time!"

"You heard her, I authorize the use of... the Ragnarok!" Reine declared, making Maria pale a bit. "We have no choice Maria, can you handle it?"

Maria nods.

"I can, I was more surprised that you actually authorized it. Everyone, begin attack and push the satellite back, we're firing the Ragnarok!" Reine shouted through the speaker, surprising everyone as they prepared themselves.

The support vehicles began their attack, while the Gemini focuses on the Fraxinus to help accelerate its charging and reduce the time needed to fire the Ragnarok. The Sagittarius moves into position and prepares its own magic canon.

"FIRE!" Mildred declared, causing it to blast the satellite. The second Humpty Dumpty shook as the force ripped its turrets and stored Bandersnatch units apart, the force even hit the third Satellite and pushed it slightly back.

"Charge complete!" Maria declared.

"Alright, motioning for Ragnarok Cannon blast!" Reine declared, looking at Kannazuki. "Get ready to fire at the weak spot!"

"Of course, if requested of me I could shoot an apple of someone's head blinded folded while still on the ship." Kannazuki nodded, putting on his headset as he aimed. "Firing the Ragnarok Cannon! Activate parallel driving force, shift into fully blaster form!"

Soon the Fraxinus' Yggdrafoliums move and attach to the cannon area as the ship opened up to its mobile form before further bending its frame to shift itself into a cannon built from space. Soon the normally light green-blue beam began to prepare itself before shaking and taking an erratic vivid blue color.

"FIRE!"

The Fraxinus unleashes the beam, and all the nearby ships suddenly feel the recoil push them as it smashes into the second satellite, ripping it apart as it hits the third and knocks it back even further
before exploding. Soon everyone saw the third resume its descent as it absorbed the second satellite's power.

"That's it, the second one's down... Shido, it's up to you and the others now. The rest of us have used up everything we had." Reine replied, panting a bit from the adrenaline rush fading.

Murdoch watched as the second satellite met its demise as well, and soon only one was left.

"And now... time for the real game to begin." Murdoch stated.

Murdoch prepared some buttons and disabled the turrets before replacing them with a program he installs moments after, changing the last satellite.

"Prepare to face true terror, because this time... victory is guaranteed." Murdoch smirked.

The screen showing the third Humpty Dumpty turned red as it announced the upgrade had completed itself, and Murdoch chuckled darkly.

~Humpty Dumpty 3, time until impact: 11 minutes

Inside the Ratatoskr base, Artemisia noticed the second satellite disappear.

"Alright guys, that's your cue!" Artemisia cheered, turning to them with a smile as her encouragement. "Now go smash that satellite apart!"

"We will, come on everyone!" Shido declared, and everyone began running to the secret passageways and going outside. "OK, here we go!"

The moment they reached the surface, Shido held out his hand and jumped up.

"I call to the power savage force rampaging inside my will, now break the dimensional boundaries before me... and create a new potential in this reality!" Shido shouted, while inside his body the sight of black, blue and white mana stretches throughout his veins as it reaches his mana core. "Zadkiel! Zafkiel! Metatron!"

Natsumi gasps as Zadkiel appears under Shido while he holds Zafkiel in his hand and the crown of Metatron rests over his head, the pillars surrounding Zadkiel.

"Wait, is Shido holding..." Natsumi asked surprised.

"Yep! That's his Spirit Ascension, it lets him use up to three different Spirits' powers to aid him." Tohka smiled, making Natsumi gasp. "He can even fuse the Angels he's using for an attack."

"Whoa... sounds like my Kaleidoscope form, but better." Natsumi blinked, soon following Tohka as she took to the sky. "Still... I'll give it all I've got!"

As the others fly after, Mana looks at her mother real quick.

"I'll be right there, first time I've tried it." Rinne stated, and Mana nodded as she flew after the others. Rinne soon breathed as she held out her arms and placed one fist atop the other. "Come to me, the little power I have left! Grant me the strength I need for this one moment! Elohim Da'ath!"

Rinne's hair and eyes transform back into her Spirit form while her Astral Dress overlays with her
current clothes as it takes its Limited Astral Dress form. Rinne spreads her fists apart as she forms Uriel in her hands.

"Alright, I'm probably only around Yoshino and Natsumi's levels of strength, but I think this will be enough!" Rinne smiled, soon flying after the others. Soon the satellite began swarming out all of its Bandersnatch units at them.

"Alright guys, go for it!" Shido shouted.

Everyone nods.

"Adonai Melek!" Tohka shouted, assuming her ballgown shaped armor, and forming Sandalphon in her hand.

"Ehyeh!" Origami shouted, taking on a similar outfit to Tohka’s but in a wedding dress like appearance, Metatron's crown formed before her pillars appeared around her.

"El!" Yoshino shouted, her new... or rather True Astral Dress forming as a green and white outfit with a hat that had a pair of bows shaped like bunny ears. (A/N: Think her outfit on the Encore 2's cover, but more fanservice-y, cloth made of light and green boots) She landed on Zadkiel as the mechanical rabbit puppet manifested.

"Elohim Gibor!" Kotori shouted, a kimono with flaming sleeves forming on her and showing some of her cleavage. Camael burns into existence as she stretched out her right arm.

"Elohim!" Kurumi shouted, spinning as shadows swirled around her into a fancy rich girl's dress, she crossed her arms as one of Zafkiel's guns appeared in each of her hands. She soon makes a post and winks at the situation. "The Spirits are here!"

Natsumi sweat dropped a bit before shrugging, deciding to just go with it.

"Adonai Tzabaoth!" Natsumi shouted, her unique witch girl outfit forming before she falls back and lands on Haniel who flies right under her. Rinne and Mana soon catch up to them, and the Bandersnatch all prepare to attack. "I've got them!"

Natsumi grabbed Haniel and spun before shouting, sending out green light that turned all the Bandersnatch before them into eggs. Said eggs all fell the ground and cracked apart, effectively destroying them.

"Well, that's one way to beat the eggs." Rinne replied, making Mana groan at her unintentional use of a joke. Soon she held Uriel forward and charged a beam from it. "Let's take this thing down now!"

The beam hits the satellite and clashes with this territory, but then... the rocket suddenly ignites and it accelerates faster.

~Humpty Dumpty 3, time until impact: 7 minutes~

"It just got faster! Hey wait... guys, notice how this one didn't fire its turrets at us?" Origami asked.

"Yeah, that did seem kinda odd, not to mention the AST did have to deal with them." Mana noted, suddenly looking at the satellite before gasping. "Wait, are you saying?"

Origami nodded.
"Yeah, I am. I think this one had its turrets disabled and replaced with something else. A realizer of some sort that must take the mana we hit it with to reactivate the rocket at the top. Its gonna accelerate each time we attack it!" Origami shouted, making everyone gasp.

"Then we need to hit it from below, any second we can buy we need to take!" Shido reasoned, and everyone soon began to fly under the satellite. "Try attacking it at once, it may only register the increase by hits!"

"Right!" Everyone replied.

Tohka shouts and spins, swinging Sandalphon to unleash a storm of crystal shards, Yoshino shifts her arms and Zadkiel fires out a typhoon of water and ice, and Kurumi blasts a shadow blast using Zafkiel's Bahamut form.

"Take... this!" Rinne shouted, crossing her arms and unleashing a storm of pink orbs that blast beams as they flung themselves at the final Humpty Dumpty.

Origami spins Metatron's pillars around before using the Artelif formation to fire a simultaneous beam attack from all of them, and Kotori pulls out toe Megiddo to unleash a beam of fire. Natsumi soon holds up Haniel.

"KALEIDOSCOPE!"

Haniel's form glows before becoming a copy of Sandalphon, Natsumi swings the copy Sandalphon down and creates a green slash wave. Mana soon shifts her blasters and charges them to create a powerful burst of multiple cyan laser blasts.

"Here goes!" Shido declared.

Shido soon jumped onto the real Zadkiel and his copy breaks before he attaches the shards around both of the copy Zafkiel's guns, soon breaking Metatron's crown in half, the Metatron pillars begin spinning so fast they created a ring of light and darkness from their rotation.

"Twilight... BLIZZARD!" Shido screamed, and fired Zafkiel's guns, causing them and the pillars to create a black and white blizzard. All the attacks hit the satellite together, doing some damage... but not enough, and it keeps falling with new speed.

~Humpty Dumpty 3, time until impact: 5 minutes

"Damn it, how much more is it gonna take!? At this rate, it'll be too close for stopping it to matter!" Rinne sweated, and Natsumi shook before she gripped Haniel and reverted it back to normal. She screamed as she flew at the satellite.

"Natsumi!" Tohka called out, the Mimicry Spirit soon got close to the satellite and aimed Haniel at it.

"I will stop it... for the sake of everyone, for... the people who've finally accepted me! Taken me as I am!" Natsumi shouted, soon firing off a green light to try and transform the satellite... but a powerful energy surge soon counters it and Natsumi gasped before she was suddenly flung to the ground.

'I... I couldn't do anything, I'm... sorry Shido. At least, I chose who... I wanted to be, even if it was right before the end.'

Natsumi soon smashed into a building, making Tohka and Shido look in horror.

"NATSUMI!" Tohka screamed.
As Natsumi lay on the ground unconscious, Haniel began to glow.

[Master... master... you finally get it, so please... remember! Remember who you are and what I was trying to teach you!]

Natsumi's unconscious form had her hand twitch.

---Flashback Start---

It was late at night, and while the shadows were hiding her form from visible view, a crying Natsumi was seen as she sat on the ground as she cried her heart out. She didn't even notice a certain mosaic covered being walk by her until she spoke up.

"(What's wrong?)" Phantom asked, causing Natsumi to look around for her to no success until she tapped her shoulder. Natsumi turned and gasped at the sight. "(Calm down! I know this seems weird, but I'm not here to hurt you. I saw you crying and was curious why you were sad.)"

"Who... who are you?" Natsumi asked.

"(I don't go my real name right now, but you can call me the Phantom.)" Phantom introduced, bowing a bit. "(I'm walking around here trying to find a specific person, but no luck so far. So, I'd like to listen if you don't mind.)"

Natsumi stared at her for a moment, and soon patted the ground next to her as Phantom sat herself down.

"I... I was just trying to be nice, to be friends with some people. I never had an ulterior motive, and yet... and yet..." Natsumi began, sobbing some more. "...just like always I'm rejected and insulted! Just because of how I look, it's not fair! I hate it... I hate it!"

Phantom showed surprised at that, and took a closer look at her appearance.

"(Wow... that's the whole reason they push you away? That's cruel, but it shows that even if the Spacequakes brought everyone together, there are still some people who refuse to change for the better.)" Phantom replied, feeling anger at the way Natsumi had been treated. Suddenly she blinked. "...(Hey Natsumi, what's your greatest wish?)"

"I... I just want to be accepted, that's all I want. People who will accept me. I've never had any friends, I don't even have a family. I just... want a place that accepts me." Natsumi answered honestly, and Phantom soon pulled out the Sephira Crystals she had on hand. "Huh?"

Natsumi looked at them as she saw the green colored one light up, and at that moment... the glow revealed Natsumi's form.

Surprisingly it wasn't the child like form that Natsumi had come to know in the present, it was her older form, albeit not as tall and at a teenage age rather than an adult one, but her proportions, curves, that ideal form she had her adult form adult? They were pretty much one and the same.

"What is that?" Natsumi asked.

"(This is a special gem called a Sephira Crystal, I'm tasked with watching them until I can find Humans willing to bond with them. The Haniel Crystal wants to bond with you. This crystal... can make your dream come true.)" Phantom explained, making Natsumi gasp.
"(There's a catch though... there are people who want this power, the DEM, and they will hunt you if you accept it. If you don't want to accept that risk, then you have the right to deny that path now. If you are willing to risk it... touch it and take it. The choice is yours.)"

Natsumi stared and soon reached out to touch it, bonding with the Haniel Crystal as she's transformed into a Spirit.

Natsumi walked up to some of her classmates at school who were talking about something they'd be doing, and she walked up to them, feeling confident now that she had the Haniel Crystal.

'That's right, my wish... Phantom said it'll come true.' Natsumi thought, soon walking up to said students who noticed her. "Hey... I heard you talking about something, is it alright for me to join in?"

"Oh look, the pompous pretty's trying to weasel into things again through her looks. Back off and go away you freak!" A girl suddenly claimed, making Natsumi look distantly as she heard that... again, just like before.

The world around Natsumi felt like it was going black to her, and she only stared at the blackness before her.

"Again... they pushed me again, just because of my looks? Why?" Natsumi breathed, her eyes shaking. "Why does everyone think just because of how I look I want something from them? That I'm trying to abuse them, I... I just wanted to have fun alongside them, experience what they do together."

Natsumi began to cry.

"Why does no one accept me!" Natsumi screamed.

Soon enough later that day, Natsumi ran through the rain as she soon found herself in an alleyway and curled up against the wall. Sobbing more as she shed every tear she had in her body.

"I've been blessed with a beautiful body, but it's nothing but a curse! If that's all it is, then... then I don't want it! I'd rather look like a child, I'd rather look ugly! Maybe then, at least a single person will accept me!" Natsumi screamed, yelling loudly at the sky... and then feeling herself getting woozy. "W-what's going on?"

[Master... forgive me, but you'll only hurt yourself more if don't help you, you need to see... you have to see it!]

Natsumi soon fainted onto the ground, and the Haniel crystal soon shines as Natsumi's true form shifted into the childlike one she had today. Natsumi soon woke up, and looked around.

"Huh? Wait, did I fall asleep here?" Natsumi wondered.

-End Flashback-

Natsumi soon gasped as she woke up in her mental landscape, looking around as her missing memories finally revealed themselves.

“That was... no way, then I'm really...” Natsumi breathed, looking at herself before seeing a green light representing Haniel. "Haniel, why? Why did you make me a child? What were you trying to do?"
"What do you mean?" Natsumi asked, Haniel's light representation flew closer to her.

As a child, you only looked different in age, and yet people didn't accept you just because of that. They simply changed their definition. I admit, maybe my method wasn't the best, but you saw it didn't change anything, subconsciously you began using your old form and feeling accepted... but it never felt right until Shido spoke those words to you.

Natsumi gasped.

That's right, who you choose yourself to be. People can sometimes push you away for stupid reasons, and maybe you can somehow keep running into them... but you should never let that change who you are. Natsumi, your kind, sweet, and while a bit teasing you're so full of cheer. I was scared of you losing that, but... Shido, and Tohka, they showed you just that. That true beauty is in the inside, and that a truly beautiful person is someone who's personality shines not for their sake, but for others'.

"Haniel... I get it, the reason you did all of this." Natsumi gasped, suddenly crying. "All this time... you were looking out for me the best you could, you wanted me to realize I shouldn't be ashamed of how I look because of what others told me."

Soon the small bit of memories she formed with Shido and the others began to shine, shattering through all the bad memories she had. Haniel's spirit swirls around her and makes her body glow.

"I can... do it... I can do it! No, I will do it!" Natsumi declared, and Haniel's light orb goes in her as she feels herself glow.

~Humpty Dumpty 3, time until impact: 3 minutes

Everyone stared as the satellite got close.

"We're not gonna make it!" Rinne screamed in horror, and everyone sweated at the grim situation before them... and then out of nowhere, some of the buildings turned into large masses of strong fiber threads and began pushing against the Humpty Dumpty, and its descend was forcefully changed into an ascent.

~Humpty Dumpty 3, time until impact: Unable to calculate, ERROR

"Wait a second, isn't that..." Tohka breathed, soon looking to see from the rubble, Natsumi's small hand shook as she held up Haniel which glowed green. "Natsumi!"

"She's giving us a chance, we need to break this satellite before those threads give out!" Origami shouted, soon getting a message from Reine on her headset. "Reine, what is it?"

"I think we found a way to finally shatter that satellite. Tohka, Natsumi, Shido and Rinne, by combing two Sandalphons with Uriel, the force of their strikes might just be enough break through and destroy the satellite." Reine explained.
Shido looks at Natsumi's weakened form.

"Natsumi can't do it, she's too weak. There's no way should could-" Shido began, only to see Haniel suddenly tossed at Tohka as it changed into a copy Sandalphon again as they saw Natsumi make a fist to tell them to go for it. "Natsumi... OK, let's try this! Mom, think you can remove my recharge time?"

"Yeah, I'll try it. If we wait for the after effect of using the Angel Fusion Overdrive to vanish naturally we might be too late to save Tenguu City." Rinne nodded, she touched Shido and focusing her power... manage to dispel the block on his Spirit Ascension. "Yes!"

"Alright!" Shido exclaimed as he felt his power flow again, Shido screamed as he used his Spirit Ascension with Tohka's powers to form a copy Sandalphon in his hands, he gripped it tightly as he gave a focused look. "Alright, all at once!"

With Tohka holding both Sandalphons and Rinne holding Uriel, all of them swing their blades before giving a mighty shout as they swing at the final Humpty Dumpty, smashing all the force they could into the satellite.

"Come on... come on! We can do this!" Tohka exclaimed, shouting more as she tried pushing more power into her blades.

Meanwhile on the ground, a certain silver haired Spirit walked into view and noticed the satellites, and looking at them she opens her book again as she turns to the falling satellite in the sky.

"Raziel, how likely will they stop the satellite from falling?" Nia asked, soon seeing the text reveal the answer as {0%} before vanishing from the page. "Hmm... I don't like that odd, and this city has grown on me, let's alter those odds."

Nia suddenly grabbed a unique pen from nowhere and began writing in the book. She left a single message in it that said...

"The final Humpty Dumpty suddenly gains a fatal crack where it was hit by the four swords, and this crack makes the satellite vulnerable enough to destroy."

"So now how likely will they destroy it?" Nia asked, and smirked as she sees Raziel state {100%}, and just like that... the Humpty Dumpty gains a crack in that very spot!

"Hey guys, look!" Tohka shouted, making them notice the crack.

"I see it, that might be it! Tohka! You've got the most power out of us three right now, smash it! Smash it to pieces!" Rinne ordered, and Tohka nods as she flies towards it.

Tohka flies forward at the satellite, and with a mighty swing of Haniel-Sandalphon leaves a huge gouge before preparing the real Sandalphon.

"This! Is! It!" Tohka declared, shouting loudly that she didn't even notice the crystal edge of the blade glowed for a brief moment, and finally she struck the Humpty Dumpty hard... causing the entire thing to glow with purple cracks as it began meet its destruction. Though at that moment... Tohka's eyes widened.

"The sight of Tohka's Form stood in Tohka's landscape, her eyes shadowed before she slightly lifted her head up and showed her left eye glowing brightly as the other covered her right eye behind it."
"Humanity... they must pay! All of them must pay for destroying our world, for destroying us!" Inverse Tohka screamed.

She grabbed Nahemah and swung down, causing the area to be enveloped in a bright purple flash.

Tohka blinked as the scene that flashed in her mind faded.

'What the... that was my Inverse Form, but it wasn't me either.' Tohka thought, watching the final Humpty Dumpty explode. 'Who was it that I saw just there?'

Soon enough, everyone flew to Tohka and cheered for her as they gave her a hug.

"You did it Tohka, you just saved us all! We stopped all three satellites!" Origami cheered, realizing she could think about what she saw later, she smiled and nodded knowing for now this victory was all that mattered.

"Yeah, it was... wait, Natsumi!" Tohka gasped, flying to where she crashed.

Nia watched as Tohka flew close, and soon she turned to look at Natsumi's downed form as it glowed and soon walked away.

"Hmph... so for that one second you channeled your true power Spirit No. 10, hopefully you realize what's held you back soon." Nia stated before she teleported away, Tohka soon landed on the ground and began moving the rubble away.

"Hey, Natsumi! Are you OK?" Tohka called out, and soon Natsumi managed to get up out of the rubble. Tohka showed surprise when she did however.

"Yeah, I guess I'm sturdier than I thought I was." Natsumi chuckled, rubbing her head. She noticed Tohka's stare and blinked. "What?"

The others landed as well, and also showed shock to what they saw, Rinne had to grab Mana who suddenly began shaking at the sight. Realizing they were staring at herself, Natsumi looked at herself and gasped.

She was once again in her 'older' form, with only her height being different as she was much shorter and closer to Shido and Tohka's heights, though it actually seemed to make her more attractive (and told her Mana's reaction was clearly cause her assets didn't shrink from it).

Though the biggest surprise was her Astral Dress, rather than any of the forms it had taken before, it was now a hot witch outfit that kept the spiky rims of younger form's hat and the emerald/gold belt, but that was all that was the same. (A/N: Think the outfit she wears in Encore Vol 6's Spirit Offline story, but with the bottom rim of her true Astral Dress' hat up to the par with the emeralds)

At that moment, she felt her memories and her mental talk with Haniel flow back into her head and she gasps.

"I remember now... I remember why I couldn't remember how I met Rio, this is my true form!" Natsumi gasped, making Mana pale.

"Wait, huh?" Tohka asked, Rinne kneeled by Haniel and listened to it whisper to her.

"That was the irregularity! Haniel made her true form the child form because of her past, and through
it learn she should be proud of how she looks and not let how most see her destroy her kindness."
Rinne answered, soon chuckling at everyone's surprised faces. "Man, at this point I guess the Spirits are all really gonna be teenagers."

Rinne soon sees Mana shaking, and Shido gasped in horror.

"Oh no, everyone cover your ears!" Shido shouted, making everyone do so as a loud noise came out of his sister's mouth.

"NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

Meanwhile at DEM industries, Murdoch had brought the video feed to show everyone their victory... only to see the final satellite destroyed to their shock. Murdoch shook at the result as he dropped the very decide he had holding his leverage against Westcott, making it slide towards the door.

"Impossible! They destroyed three satellites empowering each other on the prior's destruction! This is an outrage, there's no way the Spirits should have defeated that!" Murdoch roared, smashing his hand on the table. "Forget this, I'll just-"

"Sorry, but I think you dropped this?" Marina said, making everyone look as she held the leverage device in her hand before crashing it. "Sorry, you played your game and lost. So now... I'm about to give you all your punishments."

Marina's Astral Dress formed as she constricted everyone and sprayed venom to reveal a secret prison.

"From this moment, DEM Industries is run by my father alone, and you're all both fired and now forever imprisoned for your treason. I hope you're all proud, father only wants me to spare you because he's impressed. Had he not been, you'd all be dead." Marina stated before dropping them and soon tapping a button to repair the hole.

"And that's taken care of, so... ready to make things official Adeptus 3?"

The girl that Westcott had his eye on walked in, and soon nodded with her unseen face.

"...Yes, and I shall kill those Spirits myself if I have to." She replied with a cold stoic voice.

Soon back at the Takamiya household, everyone watched as Natsumi snuggled against Shido close, making the latter sweat slightly.

"Uh... Natsumi? Is there a reason you're doing this, just out of curiosity?" Shido asked.

"That's a silly question, but since you don't seem to get it..." Natsumi answered, soon kissing Shido surprising everyone by how sudden it had been. "I'm only trying to show my new boyfriend some tender love and care."

Everyone stares before Kotori suddenly giggles, and Shido struggles to find his coat.

"What?" Natsumi asked, soon noticing her clothes vanishing as Shido got the coat on her. Natsumi blinked at the sight. "Wait, so when you seal a Spirit this happens? I don't see the problem. I mean remember what I did when we met?"

Kotori suddenly begins laughing, while Shido just blushes as Natsumi snaps and uses her powers to
transform the coat into the same outfit she had just been wearing.

"Well, I guess that makes haremette number six." Kotori giggled, while Tohka scratched her head in confusion at the whole situation.

"Hey Shido?" Natsumi sang, making him look at her... only to see a handcuff attached to his hands as Natsumi suddenly assumed a sexy police outfit with her powers. "You're coming with me downtown, for a personal date! No one else allowed."

The others all went wide eyed as Natumi ran out of the house with a panicked Shido, all staring and blinked.

"She... she just stole Shido!" Tohka finally screamed after a delayed reaction, her ribbon flapping like crazy.

"After five sweet Spirits, we have one who's a bit bolder and possessive apparently." Rinne stated, chuckling a bit. The other Spirits all pouted at that. "3, 2, 1..."

"AFTER THEM!"

The other Spirits all rushed out to chase Natsumi, the Mimicry spirit giggling from far away. Things were looking brighter for her and she finally got her wish granted. Finally, she had a place that she belonged.

And that's a rap! There you have it, the secret was connected to what I said about aging up Yoshino and Natsumi way back in the start notes for Kotori's arc! Natsumi's powers were perfect for pulling it off, I just made it so her older form had been her true form, though I did shave off her height, otherwise she'd be taller than everyone and look older than a teenager. *chuckles*

Poor Mana, once again she's in last place... and I'll say right now Nia will NOT subvert that, I think by now some earlier chapters have shown that firsthand, not to mention what Rinne said about why Mana might be a late bloomer. Well, now this arc is done and the Yamai twins are finally gonna appear! Also, why is Nia showing up so much? Well... sorry, but for once I'm not telling you guys anything! *giggles* ^w^

Now the DEM is under Westcott's entire jurisdiction, and he's got his new Adeptus 3 officialized. Things are going to get more serious from here, and we still don't know what Westcott might want with Shido other than it isn't good. I think the biggest question of all however? Why did Tohka see a brief flash of her Inverse Form, and why did it speak like someone else was the one speaking? Worse is the familiarity of her words...

Well if you wanna find out, the Yamai arc may just give you those answers. So until next time everyone, stay awesome!

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 86%

Origami - 83%
Yoshino - 78%
Kotori - 80%
Kurumi - 75%
Natsumi - 40%
Alright, time for the tenth story arc and the seventh Spirit, or I guess Spirits in this case considering its our favorite Spirit twins, of this story... Yamai Clash! Kaguya and Yuzuru are flying in, but not to Tenguu City. They'll be meeting everyone on their school trip to... Okinawa! That was actually where the school originally planned to go in canon, but the DEM had a group under them change it at last minute in an attempt to capture Tohka.

Unfortunately for them, due to the Date AST Re:Strike story arc, the base on Arubi Island was destroyed and it's already been compromised, so now they've gotta play by different rules. Good news is that those not in school won't be excluded at home, but I'll let the chapter show you why they'll be able to come rather than say why. We'll also finally see Ellen back in action with her new CR-Unit and reveal who the new Adeptus 3 is.

What I can say now is she's both canon AND non-canon, more specifically she uses a canon character design, but everything else about her I made myself aside from her CR-Unit's name and weapon. You might be surprised on who's character design I went with. Also, we have another surprise guest, but I don't think I need to say who it is since last chapter's already showed you a certain individual keeps following Shido's group in a sense.

Now, let's see the Yamai twins' data sheet before we show how Shido deals with double trouble now, shall we?

Oh! I should say this before I forget, most likely you'll see Natsumi say things that Yoshinon would have said if she was still present, sometimes it feels like she does that in Yoshinon's place when she and Yoshino are together.

-Kaguya Yamai & Yuzuru Yamai, Code Name: [Berserk]-

Angel: Raphael, the "Hurricane Knight" - Raphael is a powerful futuristic bow that shoots out powerful bursts of wind that shred territory barriers like cutting a cake, however due to the nature of being owned by two individuals, its manifested as two bows instead of one. The two bows aren't able to attack one another due to one of Raphael's alternate forms, so they only use them when fighting together.

- Alternate Form: El Re'em, the "Piercer" - The alternate form of Kaguya's Raphael, by absorbing the rest of the Angel's body into the bow's frame, Kaguya transforms it into a giant lance. She tends to call its main attack the "Sturn Lanza" for some unknown reason.

- Alternate Form: El Na'ash, the "Constrictor" - The alternate form of Yuzuru's Raphael, by absorbing the rest of the Angel's body into the bow's frame, Kaguya transforms it into a pendulum. This pendulum however turns into a spike tipped chain the moment after its summoned.

- Alternate Form: El Kan'aph, the " Thing That Shoots the Heaven " - By combining both of their Raphael's while in their original forms, Kaguya and Yuzuru create a three-pronged bow that manifests their combined power together. They can each shoot an arrow from their side
separately, or pull all three strings to fire a single arrow that could destroy an entire ship its territory barrier wasn’t pulled up to defend against it.

- Powers: The Yamai twin's elemental affinity as Spirits is Air/Wind, their manipulation of the element is so powerful that their arrival causes a hurricane faster than normally possible... from each of them! Such forms of wind manipulation include offense strikes, gale barriers, and as a tag team they can even form a cyclone if they wanted. Despite being a single spirit sharing a Sephira Crystal, they've been confirmed to each be as strong as the past wielders of the crystal, meaning they're technically counted as two separate Spirits sharing the same power source.

Risk Factors: AAA

Spacequake: AA

Spirit's Astral Dress: B

Angel Rank: AA

-Kaguya’s Stats-

Strength: 180

Consistency: 140

Spiritual Power: 179

Agility: 240

Intelligence: 69

-Yuzuru's Stats-

Strength: 140

Consistency: 180

Spiritual Power: 179

Agility: 240

Intelligence: 114

Chapter 32, S2: Yamai Clash, Part 1

Everyone stared at the large spread of food was seen on the table for breakfast, with Natumi standing by it and wearing an apron while holding a ladle in her hand and give a look of triumph despite her closed eyes.

"Whoa, you made all of this Natsumi!?” Kotori asked.
"I did, disguising myself as Shido around the time I came to Tenguu gave me his cooking skills. Since I did kinda steal Shido for a date the other day, I figured I'd make this my apology for that." Natsumi answered, and soon Mana takes a bit. "Well?"

Mana's eyes widen and smiles.

"So good, it really is like big brother's food!" Mana exclaimed, spinning happily before stopping to give a thumb's up. "Two heads are definitely better than one for cooking!"

Natsumi smiles at that, and at that moment, everyone looks to see a tired Rio and Mayuri teleport into the house.

"Rio? Mayuri? You're already back?" Rinne asked, soon catching the former as she nearly fell over. "Poor things, you look like your about to faint. What happened?"

"Nothing much, we just finally got tired of trying to find Zodiac and just went to visit Sister again and ask if the other Spirits were OK and then decided we'd just have Ratatoskr help us figure out Zodiac's location. We probably should have done that in the first place." Mayuri said, shakily sitting at the table before noticing Natsumi.

"Oh hey Natsumi, using your older form again I see."

Natsumi blinks before looking at Mayuri as she ate, she scratched her head briefly as she thought of how to reply to that and then decided to just say it.

"Uh... I'm not using my powers right now Mayuri, this is what I actually look like." Natsumi answered, causing Mayuri to start choking and forcing Origami to give her a Heimlich in response. After getting back into her mouth, Mayuri swallowed it normally.

"What!? But you... we saw... how did... huh?" Mayuri muttered confused. Rio looks at Natsumi, and gasp as she bopped a fist into her hand.

"That's what Rio was forgetting! Rio met Natsumi when she looked like this, that's why Rio didn't notice anything when Natsumi was kid sized." Rio replied, making Natsumi and Rinne sweat drop.

"Did Rio repeat the obvious Mama?"

Rinne nodded a bit and chuckled.

"Well good news is since you're here, you can join us on Shido's school trip now!" Rinne smiled, soon holding up a pamphlet to their vacation spot. "They're all going to spend the next few days in Okinawa!"

"Okinawa? Rio's never visited there, Rio's excited!" Rio replied, jumping for joy as her previous fatigue disappeared in an instant. "Didn't Yoshino visit Okinawa once?"

Yoshino chuckled oddly at that.

"Yeah... to run away from the DEM, and then freeze them." Yoshino blushed embarrassingly, making everyone suddenly drop the subject. "I wouldn't be able to go anyways, I'm not a part of Shido's class."

"Aw man, for once not going to school became a bad thing!" Tohka groaned, Natsumi had a similar dark cloud form above her. Rinne suddenly giggled and wagged her finger.

"Who said you guys couldn't go? True normally students are, but chaperones are allowed to bring
non-students guests with them if they get permission." Rinne answered, suddenly making everyone look at her. "Oh yeah, did I not mention that yet? Got permission the other day."

-Flashback Start-

As class had ended for the day and everyone had heard about the School trip, Rinne suddenly opened the door to the class' and Tamae's surprise. Reine on the other hand just cleaned her glasses as if expecting it.

"Ms. Okamine, I'm here to sign up as a chaperone for the school trip to Okinawa!" Rinne exclaimed happily, holding up an application.

"Hey, that's the girl who came to our class a while back!" One of the boys in class said. "Chaperone's are adults, no school kids! Don't weasel your way into the trip."

Rinne tilts her head.

"What do you mean? I'm am an adult." Rinne replied.

"That's a load of bull!" The same boy shouted, making Rinne sweat drop and soon groan once she realized he was the one boy that Shido told her from about the other day.

'Of course, that's the asshole who hurt Natsumi. If only there had been video proof to get him and the others expelled.' Rinne thought, hearing him yell more. 'Someone make him shut up, I may find humans fascinating, but the small minority who are like him? They're nearly as much of monsters as Westcott!'

Tamae panicked a bit, and before she could try calming things down.

"Wait, I know what this is... you're another girl who's gotten under Takamiya's thumb!" The boy declared, and soon Mana threw her shoe at his head. "OW! What was that-"

Mana suddenly got in his face, freaking him out.

"Don't be gross you jerk, that's my mom you're talking to!" Shido exclaimed, making the non-Ratatoskr allied members of the class go wide eyed.

"Your mom!?"

"Everyone, they're telling the truth. She may look as old as all of you, but that woman is indeed their mother." Tamae answered, hoping to quell the chaos. The boy in question fainted as Mana smirked. 'I... guess that's a sign that things have calmed down?'

Rinne hands the application to Tamae.

"Can I get this and the guests I'm allowed to bring approved now?" Rinne ask, making Tamae nod and take it as she sweat dropped over all the crazy she just went through.

-End Flashback-

Tohka gasps happily at that.

"So that means we get all get to go to Okinawa too!?!" Tohka exclaimed, her eyes sparkling.
"That's right, so I'd start packing right-" Rinne began, soon noticing Tohka had already ran into her room and left a dust trail. "...now. Wow, she's good!"

Natsumi giggles at that.

"Well that's Tohka for you, definitely the Energy Spirit." Natsumi replied.

Meanwhile at the Ratatoskr base, Reine was suddenly speaking to Elliot about something.

"About the Cross Travel group that's working with the school trip?" Reine replied, after hearing Elliot's question about it. "Yeah, the school told me about it. Originally, they were going to change it from Okinawa until sudden events forced the original plan. What about it?"

"I've checked the files and that changed location was going to be Arubi Island, which had a strong DEM base that Mana and the AST all destroyed. I think it's clear who this agency is a subsidiary of." Elliot replied, making Reine bite her nails slightly. "The fact that agency is still supporting the trip means they've got something planned."

Maria soon manifests her hologram by the two.

"I even looked around the satellite debris for any surviving data. Seems that they were dropped by some DEM board of directors to off Westcott... that means now he's likely in full command. Imagine what he might try now?" Maria added.

"No choice, we'll have the Fraxinus fly around Okinawa to be safe, and just in case... Maria? We have that new channel open, right? If might not work as well, but we may need it to have any contact should things go south." Reine reasoned, making Maria nod. "Thank you."

Maria soon vanished, and Reine looked forward.

"It seems the DEM has fully come guns blazing, this is the point where we'll now likely be faced on more equal grounds." Reine breathed to herself, taking a huge gulp of her usual coffee. "I do wonder though... is it really us they're after, or something else?"

A few days later, a plane was flying from Tokyo prefecture towards a beach area of Okinawa prefecture, everyone was flying inside the plan with Origami, Shido with Rio sitting on his lap, and Tohka sitting in row from the isle to window seat respectively.

"This is amazing!" Tohka exclaimed, smiling as she looked out the window.

"Oh yeah, I forgot that this is your first plane ride. Just make sure you mention if you get airsick." Shido smiled, soon looking at Rio who had shifted her Astral Dress into a white and blue dress. "Are you excited Rio?"

Rio nods.

"Rio's happy to spend time with big brother." Rio smiled, and one of the female students who was friends sees this before turning to her.

"I didn't know you two had a younger sister, wish I had one." The female student said.

"Yeah, Rio's so adorable." Mana replied, making the student confused. "Though sometimes her silliness is a handful"
The two girls giggle before suddenly notice a flash as their picture was taken, they turned to see a young attractive female with amber eyes, and short, golden-brown hair arranged in a bob cut which had her stoic expression clear on view, but she was still cracking a small smile. She was wearing a staff uniform for Cross Travel, a subsidiary under DEM industries.

"Pardon the candid camera, but I had to capture such a priceless moment." She stated, soon walking off. Soon making Rinne turn at her daughter.

"Mana, who was that?" Rinne asked.

"That's the photographer that the travel agency sent along with us, I think you were trying to get food from the snack machine when Tamae introduced us to her." Mana answered. "I think her name was... Chinami Mikazuchi?"

Once far enough, Chinami took out a slip of paper showing the portraits of Shido, mana, and all 9 of the present Spirits on the plane as she gave a dark look.

'The Spirits, all of them. Soon they'll be dust in the wind-' Chinami thought, soon getting the attention of a particular trio as they stared at her camera. "Huh? Why are you all-"

"Man, that camera's making me PB & Jelly!" Ai said, staring at it.

"I think that model's top of the line, probably costs thousands! Which one is it?" Mai asked, making Mii adjust her glasses which shined.

"Why it's a-" Mii began, soon causing Chinami to sweat as she was crowded by them. All of them spouting out things about her camera until a certain announcement saved her.

"[Attention ladies and gentlemen, please put your seats and tray tables in the upright and locked positions and prepare for landing.]" A staff member said over the speaker, making Tohka look as she saw Okinawa.

"Wow!" Tohka gasped.

Soon everyone left the airport and Rinne waved a flag as she helped Reine and Tamae keep the class' group together. Tohka was staring towards the beaches and the ocean with Shido by her side, the former's eyes sparkling.

"I finally get to see the Ocean up close!" Tohka cheered, making Shido circle it on his list of things Tohka had yet to see. Suddenly, he noticed Tohka looking at the sky with a serious look. "Shido, something doesn't feel right... it's odd, but I get this feeling we're being watched."

"Really? You're sure it's not the camera lady?" Shido asked, Chinami snapping some camera shots.

"No, it's not her... it doesn't feel like one person." Tohka answered, making Shido curious to what was watching them. Neither of them were aware that overhead in the sky, the repaired and upgraded Arbitel was flying around without anyone, including the Fraxinus crew which was doing the same, noticing it.

"Incoming from Adeptus 3, they've reached Okinawa." Marina replied, her hologram projecting from the main camera. "Targets confirmed at Naha Airport, Camera Number 6 at North district."

The sights of everyone on their target list came into view. James noticed Rinne, the only one who didn't fully match her image.
"Hmm... that's strange, the older pink haired one doesn't look like [Ruler], are you sure that's her?" James asked the black haired AI, causing Marina to turn to him.

"Don't let that appearance fool you, her wavelength matches Ruler's, even if it's been heavily dampened and weakened. There's no doubts to my readings that is definitely the First Spirit we're seeing." Marina replied, showing said wavelengths and slowing the former to prove it. "Adeptus 3, do you read?"

Chinami tapped her headset.

"Adeptus 3 here, I'll report again later. For now, everyone's about to be on the move." Chinami replied, soon hanging up.

Marina sighed, and everyone resumed their watch... only for the Arbitel to pick up something.

"Hmm? What's this?" Marina wondered, soon getting a reading. However soon it was... two, and yet also one. "Wait, what is this? That can't be right... wait, this is-"

What she would say next wasn't heard as the sight of Rinne blowing her chaperone whistle on the surface was seen.

"OK everyone, we got the word our luggage has arrived so we'll be stopping at the record's office first!" Rinne shouted, making all of Class 4 groan.

"Seriously?" Ai commented.

"That's so stupid lame!" Mai added.

"Well... better we get the work done now than later so we only have room for fun." Mii finished.

"Yeah, then I can spend time with my girl." Hiroto agreed, holding up his phone with his current dating sim girlfriend. "Am I right sexy beast?"

The four SSS wizards all sweat drop at that.

"No one wants to see you make out with your phone, put it away." Saya bluntly stated.

Rinne blows her chaperone whistle three times in a row, and Shido notices.

"We'll figure out who might be watching later, for now let's just follow everyone." Shido replied, but soon notices Tohka not moving as she gave a worried look. "Tohka?"

"...Something's coming, and I think what I felt was watching us!" Tohka said.

Suddenly Rinne noticed some storm clouds forming, but way too fast to be normal. Strong wings begin to blow to everyone's surprise. From nearby the group, a certain silver haired Spirit adjusted her spectacles at the sight before her.

[Master, it seems they've arrived here as well.]

"So they have, interesting. I wonder how things will develop for Shido this time?" Nia wondered, smirking slightly.

"What is this?" Rinne asked.

"This is bad, these winds can only be one thing... a hurricane." Reine replied, making the students
panic. "Everyone stay calm, get inside the nearest building ASAP before the wind gets too intense."

As everyone did, Tohka grabbed Shido as they tried to follow.

"Something's wrong here! This wind is coming too sudden, a hurricane can't form this fast!" Shido shouted, and right then the wind became too strong for Shido and Tohka to move. "Quick, get down!"

Rinne notices this, and motions to the other Spirits.

"Reine, get the others inside! I'm going after them!" Rinne replied, Reine nods and no one noticed the other Spirits breaking off to go aid them. Soon all of them helping Shido and Tohka. "Rio, we need a barrier!"

"Right mama!" Rio said, forming one around the group as they begin pushing against the wind. "Mama, what are those things-"

Rio didn't get to finish as two trash cans, and somehow a refrigerator hit her shield, the third one's force causing her to be disoriented as her barrier dispelled and she fainted.

"Aw crap, we're dead now!" Natsumi commented, soon noticing something orange flash. "Wait, is that orange lightning?"

Everyone looked and saw it, however soon the orange streaks began colliding with one another. That made it clear that what they were seeing wasn't lightning.

"That's not lightning, it's... hey wait a second!" Tohka gasped, suddenly seeing there were two eyes of the hurricane, as if two of the said storms had been overlapping. "Mana, didn't we once see a news report about two hurricanes forming and disappearing in barely any time at all back before Origami's powers were sealed?"

"Yeah, I think you're right... wait, that's when we saw the report that would be about Yoshino! Then does that mean-" Mana paled, realizing what those orange lights must be. "Oh come on, during our school trip!?"

Soon the two orange bolts of lightning flew to the ground, and everyone ducked as they crashed near their current location. When the dust settled, everyone minus the still unconscious Rio saw a sight that shocked them all.

On the right, a girl with orange hair and purple eyes that had the body of a model, and had a lean figure, yet also seemed characteristically delicate body to the point she looked like she'd break if hugged too tightly. Her hair was in a braid that hung over her left shoulder with locks of hair curled like cyclones, and she had a determined expression.

Her Astral Dress was... well it was honestly hard to describe it, it was pink-red with some races of purple and the lower half of it possessed a half skirt around her waist which drops to the knees and opens around her thighs. It almost seemed like a super hero outfit designed for fanservice, but was still considerate enough to be practical.

On the left, a second orange haired, purple eyed girl stood with an identical body, though it wasn't as lean, but it was still shapely. Her hair was the exact same but was combed and neat rather than her twin's messy hair, but her braid stayed behind her head. She also had a much vaguer expression and her eyes seemed half closed.

To keep the similarities between them going, she had the same Astral Dress as her counterpart with
the only different being it was blue with some traces of light blue and cyan and parts of the cloth and design slightly altered. Also, rather than a skirt, she had a small cape hung across her arms, nearly touching her shoulders.

"Spirits... and two of them?" Kurumi breathed.

"Not just any Spirits either, the orange spirit mana... they're both using the Raphael Crystal's power. This doesn't make sense though..." Rinne stated, because she was seeing something impossible.

"...How can a pair of twins both be using its powers?"

Maria gasped at the sight she got on the video feed compared to the readings they had no the Fraxinus. Everyone showed equal surprise to what they saw.

"That's definitely [Berserk] we're picking up, but... this can't be possible!" Nakatsugawa commented.

"There's two spirits sharing the same powers, this is the first time I've ever seen this." Kannazuki added, trying to think of something. "Anyone have some possible explanation?"

Everyone just stared at the screen, and Kannazuki sighed.

"Guess we'll have to-" Maria began, soon seeing the feed cut off. "Ah damn it, we're being jammed now! Looks like Commander Reine was right to ask me to set that other channel. Hope this storm clears up soon so it gets through."

Everyone stares at the twin Spirits of wind that had appeared before them, all of them unaware that the hurricanes had vanished. The twin wearing pink chuckled like a stereotypical anime character, even holding a hand to her head in such a manner.

"Not too bad Yuzuru, although I expected as much from my other half. Too bad your crusade will all be in vain!" The pink twin replied with vigor.

"Rebut. Much has been learned from our 99 battles, the advantage is clearly mine Kaguya." The blue twin, now known as Yuzuru, countered in a calm manner.

"Hmph! Such said prattle, we both know the only one of us that's been deemed worthy of the true Yamai's successor is moi!" Kaguya replied, holding her hands up near her face for emphasis.

"Negative. I am the one who will persevere, the name Yamai does not fit one as lowly as you." Yuzuru countered.

While their talk continued on, everyone's heads turned back and forth at their talk.

"Uh... should we interrupt or something?" Mana asked.

"No, let them talk for now. Better get an idea what's going on so we know how to handle them and stop another hurricane from forming. We won't be able to fly if they cause another to stop them." Rinne answered, gulping as she shook a bit. "That and the fact there's two of them scares me."

Kaguya smirks at Yuzuru's claims.

"Your words are hollow, my Devil sight has already seen the end! A vision where your proud of mighty form breaks to pieces as you get stabbed and begin dying!" Kaguya declared, making Yoshino flinch slightly.
"Doubtful. Your Devil sight has never been accurate before, nor is it real." Yuzuru bluntly stated, making Kaguya sweat a bit. "Confirmation. Your face is proof enough."

Kaguya growled.

"Shut up! It is so real and has so worked before, don't you dare make fun of me!" Kaguya roared, soon getting into a fighting stance. "Perhaps I should prove it by skewering you with my Sturn Lanza!"

Yuzuru slightly smiled.

"Request. Provide the combat capabilities of this Sturn Lanza technique." Yuzuru asked, making Kaguya smirk.

"Hah! The very font of language dries up trying to explain the scope of its awesome power. Tangible, yet intangible! Visible, yet unseen! It only sates its thrust by stabbing and piercing its enemies!" Kaguya declared, and Kurumi blinks.

"...Oh my god, I think she's a Chuunibyou!" Kurumi gasped, soon sweating a bit. "And I can't believe I actually said something that."

Yuzuru simply stares at Kaguya.

"Summary. It is completely devoid of meaning, much like your talk." Yuzuru stated.

"IT DOES HAVE MEANING! Perhaps you can't comprehend its immense power because you're just too stupid to understand its unearthly strength!" Kaguya screamed angrily, some spit flying out of her mouth.

"Derisive. Your bluff is laughing, so I shall laugh at it." Yuzuru replied, soon moving to make a laugh like expression. "Ha."

Kaguya's spirit power soon spikes out.

"HOW DARE YOU!" Kaguya shouted, her power flaring more. "To punish you for such insolence, I'll rip that smirk off your face right now! El Re'em!"

A red lance forms in Kaguya's hands, and a sudden gust of wind blows out around her.

'Wait, not Raphael?' Rinne thought, confused why she didn't hear the Angel's name as she and the others shielded themselves from the wind striking their bodies.

"Annoyance. You react with violence, then I have no choice but to counter." Yuzuru claimed, soon holding out her hand. "Response. El Na'ash!"

Soon a chain with a pendulum like chain formed in her hands, confusing Rinne more.

"We're gonna get caught in the middle! We gotta leave now!" Shido declared, and everyone prepared to do that... except for Tohka.

"Sink into darkness!" Kaguya shouted, rushing forward.


"STOP!" Tohka shouted, surprising everyone... and making the twins stop as they turned at her.
"...Wait, is that a human?" Kaguya asked.

"Wondrous. I cannot express my surprise." Yuzuru responded, making Tohka blink.

'Maybe it's just the situation, but apparently they can't tell I'm a Spirit. That might be a good thing for now.' Tohka thought, soon waving at them nervously. "Uh... hi there, I'm Tohka. Nice to meet you?"

She sweats as they stare at her.

"Why have you brought our sacred fuel to a standstill human, and what are your intentions for us? Depending on your answer, we'll... uh..." Kaguya began, sweating before looking at her twin and whispering. "...Yuzuru, what do we do again?"

"Negative. I don't believe we've ever been in this situation." Yuzuru whispered back, making Kaguya groan in response.

"Dang it! At this rate, we won't resolve anything." Kaguya noted, and then noticed Shido before smirking. "Unless..."

Shido gulped as she realized her stare was aimed at him.

"Yuzuru, I think I found the way we can finally settle things." Kaguya smirked.

"Curiosity. What do you have in mind?" Yuzuru asked.

After some time, the class got worried when the others never came back, so Reine went to the door to see if the storm had ended and saw it had.

"The storm's over, it's safe to come out." Reine answered, she walked outside and everyone soon followed her. "The others didn't come back, so we need to try and search for them, hopefully they-"

"Hey look, there they are." Katie stated, pointing at them. Everyone turned to see them. "Hey, wait a second... who are they?"

Everyone saw the group with the Yamai twins hanging their arms around Shido's, both now in Raizen High uniforms of the sweater variation as Shido noticed the stairs. A certain group of boys all gave angry glares.

"Hey, we're back... and found some other students." Shido replied, sweating a bit. "...Please help them off me."

"There's no denying it, I'm obvious more lively and charming than my sister." Kaguya said, hugging her breasts into Shido's left arm and making him blush.

"Disagreement. I'm more romantically mature, don't fall for her deceptions." Yuzuru replied, doing the same to Shido's right arm. Chinami looks at the situation and raises an eyebrow.

"I don't want to know." Chinami sighed.

Tamae looked confused until Rinne walked up to her and cleared her throat.

"It seems these two are transfer students, according to them, it seems they somehow snuck onto the plane because they had transferred too late to be allowed on the trip. I doubt the school noticed they came with us. At least, provided they're telling the truth." Rinne stated, winking to tell Tamae they...
were Spirits.

"Oh, I see. This might be sudden but do you think you could focus on them for me?" Tamae asked, and Rinne nods. "Thank you."

Soon after dealing with the Records Office and getting to the residence they rented for the trip, the wing lent to everyone allied with Ratatoskr had said group stare at Shido's situation as the Yamai twins kept up their charming attempts.

"So Shido, all you have to do is make a simple little choice." Kaguya replied, rubbing her finger across Shido's chest. "Say 'Kaguya, you drive me wild! Let me give myself to you. body and soul forever!', come on now."

"Wrong. Kaguya is a poor choice, she is quite needy and childish. I would strongly recommend me." Yuzuru countered.

Artemisia looked at Shido's expression, and kneeled a bit closer to whisper to him.

"Feeling a little smothered?" Artemisia asked, sweat dropping a bit. Shido nodded at that. "Rinne was right, I think Natsumi hinted your harem's gonna get crazier from here."

Shido hung his head down, remembering how they got to this point.

"Putting our feminine wiles to the test!" Kaguya exclaimed, causing all of Shido's harem to go white eyed in surprise. "Truly the true heir of the Storm Spirit Yamai would possess the charm and grace to make creation itself quake in jealousy!"

"Acknowledged. I believe I follow your logic, it is an attribute we have not put into a competition. Where is our standing in it again?" Yuzuru inquired.

"In our 99 trials, we've both siphoned 25 victories, yet our wills were equal the other 49 times. The list to events to compete in has already dried up deeper than the vastness of the Grand Canyon. So one last trial, the one who makes this man fall in love with her is the winner!" Kaguya challenged.

Mana's jaw dropped.

'The Spirits want to fall in love with him from the start this time?' Mana thought, holding her head. '...I need an aspirin.'

"Oh boy..." Rinne sweat dropped, soon sighing as she walked up to her son. "We'll figure it out once we talk to them, but just agree with it and avoid the trouble of another storm."

"Not like I have a choice." Shido groaned, soon shaking his head. "Alright, if you wanna make me your tie breaker then I'll do it. Just do it on human terms, will you?"

Kaguya smirked.

"And the game has begun, of course my victory is certain!" Kaguya said confidently.

"Disbelief. I am the cutest, there is no chance you could ever beat me. TO be frank your looks are average at best." Yuzuru countered, making Kaguya form a vein on her head.

"What do you mean by that!?" Kaguya yelled, only to get a loud throat clear from Shido. "...It doesn't matter, this is our decisive battle. Now tell us human boy, how should we blend in when we grace the populace with our presence?"
As Shido kept hanging his head down, Tohka suddenly realized something.

"Uh... we probably should have asked this earlier, but why are you guys fighting for the 100th time?" Tohka asked, making the Yamai twins stop and blink.

"Did we forget to mention that?" Kaguya replied, making everyone face fault. "Oops."

"Apology. As the arbitrator, you have the right to know the details behind our long standing competition." Yuzuru stated, getting everyone's attention. "Explanation. As you've likely noticed, we are twin Spirits, but this is because Kaguya and I were once a single spirit."

Everyone gasped at that.

"A single spirit... wait, so Raphael had an irregularity too? Hey Rio, does that ring a bell?" Rinne asked, making the young Spirit think.

"Rio definitely remembers giving only one girl the Raphael Crystal, but Rio saw two right after she took it." Rio answered, and then nodded. "Rio finds it familiar."

Rinne blinks.

"Oh good, that suddenly explains everything odd I was thinking on how there were two of them." Rinne sighed in relief, sitting on a chair. "OK, continue either one of you."

"The name of the Spirit was Yamai, hence our last name. However, we'll eventually be a single Spirit again at some point, for their can only be one." Kaguya answered, sighing a bit before continuing.

"However, our personalities can't co-exist, and the original Yamai's personality is beyond recovery. So either Kaguya or I will have to replace it. Hence our many duels, it's how we're picking who should get that right. We've had competitions like a fist fight, foot race, kondama, eating contest, hair washing, hair cutting, instrument playing..."

Everyone sweat dropped before Shido cleared her throat.

"I think we get the point, and you really are running out considering the last few weren't as dramatic." Tohka chuckled oddly, but then blinks. "Wait, so what happens to the personality that loses?"

"It will die." Both aid together, making everyone gasp.

'So only one can survive? Damn, this is a brutal ultimatum for Shido... can he make that choice?' Rinne thought, then stood up near the two. "And you're sure there's no way you could both live?"

Both shook their heads.

"Crap..." Rinne groaned, falling back in her seat. "This is nearly as bad as me nearly dying."

"Wait a second... I knew your voice was familiar! You're that girl we heard. So you didn't actually die?" Kaguya gasped, making Rinne look at her oddly. "What?"

"...I don't want to know how you heard that." Rinne stated, and suddenly Natsumi whistles as she faces the wall. "Wait, no... don't tell me! Oh my god, is this what TV refers to as public
humiliation?"
"Hello?" Reine answered.

"Oh thank goodness the channel works, we've got a problem. The DEM is definitely here and jamming all other communications, so aside from normal conversation we can't help you." Maria replied, making Reine sigh. "Oh, and we-

"If it's about the Berserk twins, we've already met them. In fact, they're in the same room as us." Reine answered, making Maria blink. "Just keep an eye out, we'll try to take care of things on our end."

Reine soon put the channel on silent.

"Well, looks like we'll unfortunately have to wing things here. I guess the question is which Yamai's the one you'll choose in the end."

"...Yay." Shido replied in an exhausted manner, he didn't like where things were going already.

"OK then! Kaguya, Yuzuru, I'd like you to follow me. My son's exhausted from the plane ride and needs his rest, I'll tell you the right way to do this so you don't give him a heart attack." Rinne replied, grabbing the two and dragging them out of the room. "You're welcome in advance!"

Shido sighs in relief.

"Thank you mom, I needed that." Shido sighed, soon falling on his side. Tohka pulls his head up and rests it on her lap.

Shido soon began heading to the bath houses that had been lent to the students, once he arrived however... he screamed in surprise as the Yamai twins were present alongside his mom who was fixing up a green sign area that had the kanji for 'specially reserved' on it.

"Oh! Hey girls, uh..." Shido stated, soon looking at Rinne and whispering. "...That green door is co-ed, isn't it?"

Rinne chuckles nervously and nods, making Shido groan.

"Shido, you have permission from the incarnate of Kama Sutra to cleanse the impurities of your mortal body with me!" Kaguya smirked.

"Confirmation. Please feel free to enter the bath." Yuzuru replied.

"Oh boy... now I'm basically in a living soap opera." Shido replied, hanging his head as he entered the green sign door. The Yamai twins followed him while Rinne gave a nervous chuckle again.

"Sorry!" Rinne called out, soon looking away worriedly before following them. "If it weren't for the fact Spirits are involved, I'd be dead last for the Mother of the Year award."

Soon in the bath, Rinne stares as the Yamai twins clung to his arms again.

"Seriously, is this going to be a thing with you two and me!?" Shido groaned.

"Duh, how else will you go crazy for my pixie like charms?" Kaguya asked rhetorically, making
Yuzuru stare at her.

"Scornful. Feminine charms you say? You should have bought some here, because you didn't bring any with you sister." Yuzuru bluntly stated, making Rinne silently gasp as she gave a 'oh no you didn't!' face to that. Kaguya had a vein form on her head.

"I'll make you pay for that later you cow!" Kaguya replied, and Yuzuru soon had the vein form.

"Fury. Bring it on." Yuzuru stated.

Shido began to sweat, worried he had been forced into dangerous territory. Soon the Yamai twins' eyes gleam and he shook.

"Better prepare yourself stud, I'll make you realize you can't ever be satisfied by anyone but me." Kaguya said in a flirty manner, her breasts hugging against Shido's left arm.

"Prideful. Just think, there's only this flimsy white tell separating our flesh." Yuzuru replied, also in a flirty manner. Rinne say his face go really red as Yuzuru did the same to Shido's right arm.

"Yikes, my son's sandwiched between two girls with 90cm bust lines... wait, what's that look of his?" Rinne thought before gasping, pointing at him. "Shido, don't you dare let your-

"Mom, if you finish that sentence then I'm not making your favorite breakfast ever again!" Shido exclaimed, making Rinne gulp as she shuffled back toward the bath edge. "Seriously you two, can you try something that's not physical contact? Please!"

The two pout and let go.

"Alright, prepare to have my heavenly winds blow your chances away before they even begin! Victory is mine Yuzuru!" Kaguya said, soon standing up and giving what she thought was a foxy pose. Everyone stares at her. "...What?"

"Eh... I give that a 3 out of 10?" Rinne admitted, making Kaguya turn white before Yuzuru giggled and Shido just looked confused. "Why'd you have to be so specific!? Couldn't you have just said it could have been better?"

Yuzuru chuckles again.

"Mockery. Just as expected, your feminine charms leave something to be desired." Yuzuru smirked, and Kaguya growled at that.

"What did you just say? Says the boring billboard, as if you could channel the passion of Aphrodite! Actually, prove yourself before you give the foggiest notion to me!" Kaguya countered, making Yuzuru glare.

"...Falsehood. My best would still be better than your worst, and I will prove it now." Yuzuru declared, soon standing up. "Hi handsome."

Yuzuru blows a kiss, making a heart fly past Shido.

"Uh, Yuzuru... since you missed him and didn't really put any emotion in that, I'm gonna have to give that a 1 out of 10." Rinne replied, making Yuzuru freeze up as Kaguya went hysterical with laughter.

"And to think I was actually worried, you sure fooled me!" Kaguya mocked, making Yuzuru form a
"Livid. I am not interested in your opinion." Yuzuru exclaimed.

The twins glared at each other, sparks flying between them.

"Your childish figure isn't as effective as my curves." Yuzuru countered.

"Nonsense, we're identical twins, you and I have the same curves." Kaguya countered, making Rinne nod.

"Counter. Even if the measurements are the same, they feel completely different. My skin is softer than yours." Yuzuru threw back, making Kaguya smirk.

"So what? You think I care how smooth my skin is?" Kaguya said, soon posing again. "You underestimate the attractiveness of a fit body."

Yuzuru trickled a drop of sweat at that, but didn't stand down.

"Haughty. Change the words all you want, but that doesn't change the said truth that your so called slender body is second to mine." Yuzuru replied.

"Heh! Oh, so you think I'm second to you just because I lack your healthy pudginess?" Kaguya countered, making Rinne gasp at that claim as Yuzuru trembled a bit with anger. "How'd you like that you cow!?"

Shido quickly inches closer to Rinne as the twins begin arguing.

"Shido thinks I'm cuter than some fatty like you any day of the week! No if, ands, or buts!" Kaguya declared.

"Wrong. Your chicken bones don't appeal to men, without your breasts, you'd be mistaken as a boy." Yuzuru countered.

"I'm thin from muscles, not chicken bones! Don't ever call me chicken bones!" Kaguya yelled.

"Rage. Don't call me a fatty." Yuzuru stated angrily.

"You smell worse than I do!" Kaguya shouted.

"Fury. You have more split ends then me, messy hair isn't cute." Yuzuru glared.

Shido and Rinne blink before blinking at each other and then blinking back.

"Uh... how long do you think it'll take before they notice they're arguing and not trying to charm me anymore?" Shido asked, sweating at the sight. Rinne shrugged and just kept watching.

"Puffity fatty fat puffball!" Kaguya shouted.


Soon Tohka opened the curtain and jumped in.

"Cannonball!" Tohka shouted, making everyone turn as they saw her come in, only to be suddenly splashed by the bath water. She surfaced and shook some exceed water off and her eyes still closed. "Ah, I love being first in the bath."
Suddenly she opens her eyes, and suddenly sees herself staring right at Shido, the Yamai twins and Rinne both edge away as the two suddenly registered that Tohka's towel was floating to the side and Shido was seeing Tohka's breasts with only her hair covering them, at that moment... both of them screamed loudly.

"Huh?" Kotori blinked, hearing Tohka's scream from in the changing room. "What was that all about?"

Tohka quickly covers herself with the towel and sputters gibberish while blushing red.

"Tohka, why are you in here? Didn't you see the names listed on the reservation sign!?!" Rinne panicked, causing Tohka to look at her.

"I did! My name was on it, but Shido's wasn't!" Tohka answered, making Rinne blink surprised.

"What? And how did that happen!?" Rinne asked.

Suddenly in the changing room, Natsumi looks towards the door to the bath and snickers a bit. A metaphysical arrow saying 'guilty' pointing at her. Meanwhile Shido freaks out, and before he could get away, all the other girls come in. With the exception of Rio who didn't get it...

"Three... two... one..." Rinne gulped as she covered her ears.

Screaming was heard throughout most of the island, catching the attention of Reine who turned to it.

"...I don't even wanna know." Reine sighed, realizing who caused said screaming.

Soon by the time of night, Chinami looked around before tapping her headset.

"This is the Arbitel Neo, status update?" Ellen requested, causing Chinami to take a jack from the camera and link up the pictures from the headset.

"Adeptus 3 speaking, the unexpected readings you mentioned have been confirmed." Chinami answered, showing a pic of the Yamai twins. "For reasons unknown, the current [Berserk] has become two beings sharing their powers. Based on my readings, this has actually doubled the power their Sephira Crystal rather than splitting it between them."

Ellen paused for a moment before resuming.

"Understood, so the readings weren't wrong. You understand the mission, right?" Ellen asked.

"I do, capture the Half-Spirit known as the boy Shido Takamiya and only kill the Spirits if they interfere." Chinami confirmed, soon blinking a bit as Ellen sent her a new detail. "Wait, there's an exception for Berserk?"

Ellen smirked.

"They're still the odd ones out, as long as he doesn't get to them first..." Ellen answered.

"I see, then ready the Einherjar units. Get them standing by and ready to move." Chinami stated, soon closing the connection and smirking darkly.

Well that's one way to stir up a storm, in multiple forms no less! *chuckles* And yes, I did slightly change up Kaguya's hair... and bumped her bust line to her twin's size (once again,
remember what Rinne said in Natsumi’s arc), to pull off that opposite twin things. Don't get me wrong, I love Kaguya's canon design, but if you can't dare to be different in a fanfic, then it's hard to succeed in making twists.

Also for their Astral Dresses? They still have their canon ones, they'll just be used for their Inverse Forms since I have no idea how to make those any more revealing. I mean, how do you work with that? The two of them were dominatrix based outfits! 0_0 *clears throat* So to work around that problem, I just went backwards, and yes, I do think their outfits kinda look a bit like a superhero outfit.

In case no one figured it out what I meant about the Adeptus 3 being canon and non-canon, I'm gonna explain it now since I don't want anyone confused. The bob cut hairstyle, the name that has both "-ami" & "-chi" at the end, and the intensity to wanna harm a Spirit? Chinami's design is basically an older version of old timeline Origami. So... surprise!

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 86%
Origami - 83%
Yoshino - 78%
Kotori - 80%
Kurumi - 76%
Natsumi - 42%
Alright, before we get to anything, I have something to tell everyone. Today, or June 1st to anyone who reads this chapter after the day passes... IS MY BIRTHDAY! *blows a noise maker* I'm excited! First thing I say, no one ask me how old I am, you never ask a girl her age. All I'll say is I'm my early teen years, or is it early-mid teen years now? Meh, details. It's my birthday and that's what I'm excited about!

Dang it, I did it again! I forgot to say the emotion of the arc, at this rate I'm going to say it every second arc chapter for this season and possibly every third in the next season! DX *breathes* OK, let me fix that now, the emotion is Desire. Like with Natsumi's arc it is kinda obvious, and the only real difference I can really say about is that while the Yamai twins still had a desire in canon and still do here, it's how that desire exists that's different.

Alright, with that cleared out, usual author talk in the start notes is a go! It may be my personal opinion, but I think I actually amplified that argument between the Yamai sisters compared to canon, maybe it's because I have firsthand experience in that area? *shrugs* Well, that was round one, now rounds two and three are about to pop off and Tohka like in the previous arc starts taking center stage to deal with the problem that'll result from this.

Now things will be similar to canon at first, but... that makes the sudden twist all the more exciting when I drop the bomb! Wait... should I have said drop the mic to be more dramatic? Eh, who cares, I already said it anyways. One thing I can say that's changed from canon is the Yamai twins bonded to three Spirits each, not just Tohka and Origami. Joining Kaguya there's Natsumi and Kotori, and with Yuzuru its Yoshino and Kurumi.

So now that we've got all that said, time to begin round two of this clash! *hits the gong* Yamai Clash part 2, begin!

Chapter 33, S2: Yamai Clash, Part 2

Everyone on the Fraxinus was doing something on their seats out of boredom, with Maria both playing a game of Tetris and trying to find the DEM's source of their jamming to re-establish contact with everyone on the surface. Kannazuki was even rubbing against Reine's chair like a cat.

"It's such a chore to work up any enthusiasm when there's nothing to do. Right now, I'd even willingly get a scolding form the Commander just to have something, but here we are without her... not to mention with the worries down on the surface, we still don't have a clue." Kannazuki sighed.

"And as expected... he's useless right now." Kawagoe stated, sweat dropping a bit.

"Hey Maria, any luck yet?" Minowa asked, almost begging. "We'd all like to be able to not listen to that."

Maria gives a thumb's down.

"Maybe we should try contacting Commander Murasame later?" Shiizaki wondered.

Everyone gave a collective sigh.
Soon back inside the reserved housing the class rented for the trip, everyone was doing their own things for the night. In Yoshino and Natsumi's room, the two were both watching one of Yoshino's usual Soap Operas. The scene they were seeing currently got a little... bold to speak.

"Oh my..." Yoshino breathed, her hands covering her eyes and yet not covering them.

"This is steamy, way steamy!" Natsumi gulped, taking a handful of snacks and some juice as they kept watching it.

Meanwhile in another room, Tohka and Origami were both asleep, though Origami suddenly woke up as she heard Tohka tossing and turning too loudly for her. She got up and formed a light with her powers.

"Tohka?" Origami asked, soon getting close enough to see Tohka's face all restless and sweating. "Wait, are you having a nightmare?"

Origami got closer, trying to get a better look.

Tohka found herself in some dark realm with dark purple energy everywhere, looking around lost and confused, she soon realized she was somewhat familiar with the realm she was in... it was the gate between the destroyed Spirit Dimension and Earth she had gone to when she disappeared from the world.

"No way, but why am I here again? I shouldn't be able to come here anymore." Tohka asked herself, confused to why she was here.

"They must pay!"

Tohka gasped and turned as she heard a voice somewhere, but she couldn't find it no matter where she looked. After a while, she suddenly saw a dark flash behind her as she saw the sight of Inverse Tohka form, slowly walking towards her.

"M-my Inverse Form... but how?" Tohka gasped in fear, soon falling on her butt as she slowly crawled back as her dark half neared her.

"They must pay, Humanity... they must pay!" Inverse Tohka screamed, in a voice that sound like Tohka's but somehow clearly told everyone who heard it that it wasn't Tohka's voice at the same time. "All of them must pay for destroying our world, for destroying us!"

Tohka tried to back up more, but suddenly felt herself bump into an invisible wall.

"W-what are you talking about?" Tohka asked, confused by what her dark half was even talking about.

"Why... why do you help them? They don't deserve mercy, they made us pity them... and then killed us all! They must all die!" Inverse Tohka screamed, soon swinging down Nahemah at her.

Tohka narrowly managed to dodge, and soon tried running in some other direction, but her dark half soon appeared before her with glowing us.

"There is no escape, you will do it... you will be the messenger of our rage!" Inverse Tohka screamed, soon slashing Nahemah again... and this time Tohka couldn't get away, making her scream as the slash wave struck her.
Tohka suddenly screams as she wakes up, suddenly slamming her head against Origami's and causing only the latter to hold her head in pain from the sudden wake up, Tohka panted as she felt her body and realized she wasn't cut or slashed anywhere.

"Yeah... that hurt... a lot." Origami replied, soon collapsing on the floor before crawling back up. "I'm guessing you had a nightmare?"

"I think that's what it was, yet it felt so real." Tohka replied, putting a hand on her head. 'That dream... it had to have been related to that one moment after I destroyed the satellite, but what's it about? Who was talking through my Inverse Form? Worse...'

Tohka looked at the hand on her hand.

'What if... what if that wasn't just a dream, but a vision? Could I lose myself to my powers? Or even worse, am I just the first one who'll go through it?' Tohka thought, soon shaking heavily.

"Tohka?" Origami asked.

"I'm fine, the nightmare's just got me a bit shaken, I'll just go back to sleep." Tohka stated, soon falling back and falling asleep instantly to Origami's shock.

"...Lucky!" Origami stated, walking back to her bed and attempting to go to sleep again.

In the hallways, Kotori and Kurumi were walking through to their room when the talkative trio opened the door and poked their heads out alongside Saya.

"Hey Kotori, Kurumi! Get in here!" Saya smiled, motioning a hand in. "Come on, we need two more people anyways."

The two looked at each other and shrugged before walking in, and Chinami moved out from her spot, having talked the Flame and Shadow Spirit for a while beforehand and getting closer while tapping her headset.

"This is Adeptus 3, [Nightmare] and [Efreet] have entered their room. Have three Einherjar units ready outside the room just in case, and-" Chinami began, only to be cut off as she was struck by a pillow. 'Oh no, did they see me?'

"Hey look, it's the camera lady." Kotori noted, and suddenly she and Saya smirked as they grabbed another pair of pillows.

Chinami got up and paled at the sight of the current and former Efreet having their eyes shine red as they prepared to toss their pillows, she went blue in the face as a flaming demon figure manifested in only her view. The pillows were tossed at her before the current Adeptus 3 was hit by them and KOd.

Meanwhile on the Arbitel, Ellen blinked as Chinami went silent.

"Adeptus 3? Adeptus 3!?" Ellen called out, soon only hearing static before groaning. "...Crap."

"Guess the new blood's facing the unfortunately threat of high school students, isn't she mother?" Marina smirked, swiping at the AI's hologram before she moved over to a different teleporter. "Missed me."
James sighed and put a hand to his head.

"Belay the Einherjar deployment, clearly nothing's going to happen tonight." James stated, a crew member nodded and doing just that. 'Even at the level of mere humans they can be dangerous in a group.'

'Clearly, I'll need to go down when the time is right, there's one particular Spirit who I owe some payback to!' Ellen thought, panting after Marina outran her. Soon taking a look at Tohka's image on the screen. 'I will have my revenge for the defeat you and that Shido Takamiya boy gave me, just wait... [Princess]

Shido was about to go to sleep in his room, when suddenly the lights go on and Kaguya tries to get in bed with him.

"What the!? Kaguya, what are you doing?" Shido panicked, holding his hand out to hold her back and wishing he had remembered that Spirits can teleport which made locking a door useless with them.

"I'm joining you tonight, you adore sharing a bed with woman according to my kinswomen."

Kaguya answered, trying to push against Shido's hand.

"You're... what now?" Shido asked, and soon shivered as Yuzuru bit his ear. "Y-Yuzuru, what are you doing!"

"Implementation. According to my masters, you are easily surprised, which is advantageous to my efforts." Yuzuru answered, soon getting off the bed as she suddenly undid her outfit, leaving her in only her light blue bra and panties to her and Kaguya's surprise. "Bashful. Allow me to warm you with skin to skin contact."

Yuzuru soon get sunder the covers and both stare before Shido feels something off from where he touched.

"Hey! You said that seducing wasn't allowed here!" Kaguya complained.

"Deception. All is far in a love based war, I simply outsmarted you."

Yuzuru commented, still under the bed.

"Oh no you didn't, because I have a secret weapon!" Kaguya declared, soon removing her one clothes and leaving herself in only a red bra and panties... and then she removes her bra to Shido's shock, making him go red in the face as only the blanket hid Kaguya's large bust from the world.

"Isn't this much warmer than what she was doing? After all, Yuzuru's got a colder body temperature than me." Kaguya smirked, and unfortunately for Yuzuru... she couldn't counter that because it was true.

'Pride. I shall not let your advantage overcome me, bring it sister.' Yuzuru thought, soon both grabbed part of his outfit and their shadowed eyes flashed like stars.

"No, don't you dare-" Shido began, but soon the belt flew into the air as Shido screamed loudly. "HELP ME!"

Unfortunately, while Rinne had been nearby, she didn't hear her son's cries due to listening to a song on some headphones Ashley lent her.
"This rock music's awesome." Rinne smiled, still oblivious to Shido's plight.

Shido was panting while on a private beach area, still all shaken after the previous night with the Yamai twins. Soon he heard his headset react and tapped it.

"Are you doing... mostly alright after last night?" Reine asked.

"...If I said yes I'd be lying." Shido shivered, making Reine sigh.

"My apologies, I gave them a big scolding so they hopefully won't pull that on you again. For now, I've decided to tell them about our dating sim method, so now they'll be following my instructions." Reine answered, making Shido sigh in relief.

"They're changing right now, so you should see them soon enough. The others will come a while after, so the rest will be up to you. Just don't let them be aware you know what they may be doing, I won't be telling you directly but I've set your headset to receive a message after I tell them something so you know what it'll be."

Shido nods.

"OK, I got it. I just wish we had a way to help them both instead of only one." Shido sighed.

"I know, but if they didn't have another option to use then we likely don't either. Even your mother and Rio don't understand the irregularities that can form in the Sephira Crystals." Reine answered, soon noticing the twins were done. "I'm gonna cut the line now, good luck."

Shido sighs as he hears Reine's voice vanish.

"What happens to the personality that loses?" Tohka's voice echoed.

"It will die." Kaguya and Yuzuru's voices echo.

Shido stared at the ocean sadly.

"It's not fair one dies for the other to live, why isn't there another way?" Shido wondered, and then...

"Hey, Shido!"

"Joy. I am glad to have finally found you Shido."

Shido turns to see the Yamai twins appear from the stairs to the private beach, both wearing black and white polka dot bikinis. Kaguya's was black with white polka dots, while Yuzuru's was white with black polka dots.

"Oh, hey there ladies, how are you doing?" Shido asked, the two running up to him. "Those swimsuits look incredible, you both look very pretty."

Kaguya and Yuzuru both blush at that.

"U-uh... yeah, you better believe it, I mean... uh... well..." Kaguya stuttered, unable to think coherently.

"...Bashful. Thank you." Yuzuru replied, just as tongue tied as her twin.

The two both turned as Reine began giving them advice, and Shido saw {Apply sunblock to them}
appear via his headset, making him go red briefly. The two turn back and somehow each had a bottle of sunblock in their hands.

"Shido, I demand your mortal form to coat my divine body with protection from the miasma of light!" Kaguya declared proudly.

"Request. Will you please put sun block on me?" Yuzuru asked.

"Um... sure!" Shido replied, sweating a little. Soon the two were laid out on a blanket, their bikini tops undone as Shido gulped as squirted out some of the sunblock subconsciously. "Alright, no pressure Shido. It's just putting sunblock on two girls. It's no different than... washing Mana's back as a kid..."

Shido breathed as lathered his hands in it.

"Shido, I've turned my back to you will full trust." Kaguya stated.

"Confidence. I trust you Shido, please don't let me down." Kaguya replied.

Shido breathed and soon touched their backs.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHH!"

The two were not prepared for the cold feeling of the sunblock and screamed loudly from it, and Shido's unknowing skill with his fingers applying it. Tohka and the others were preparing to swim over, but right as Kotori was about to jump the screams threw her off and she belly flopped. Everyone winced at that.

"Um... are you two alright?" Shido asked worriedly, the two panting after he had finished.

"Surprise. He... doesn't know how good he is." Yuzuru said softly.

"Such... god like fingers, their strength... could likely fell a whole pack of wolves with a single touch!" Kaguya stuttered, twitching a bit.

"Pack of wolves, huh?" Shido thought aloud to Kaguya's comment.

Soon after getting Kotori past the belly flop damage, Kurumi and Natsumi dived in the water with the others and they all began heading over to Shido and the Yamai sisters' location, unaware of Chinami watching them.

"Arbitel, can you follow the targets?" Chinami asked, tapping her headset.

"She seems to be heading to a private beach around 0.8 kilometers Northwest of your position." James answered.

"Alright, I'm heading that way now." Chinami replied, getting up and running after them. "Please have the Einherjar-WAH!"

Suddenly Chinami fell into some kind of pitfall.

"What the hell!?!" Chinami claimed, only for some hidden wire to pour sand into said hole and bury her up to her head in sand. "Who did this!?!"

Soon the talkative trio came into view.
"Oh my god, we so got you Chinami!" Ai giggled.

"Why would you do that!?" Chinami demanded.

"Because... it's hilarious!" Mai laughed, making Chinami's face scowl a bit in anger, a vein forming.

"Oh wait, I think we can add to this." Mii snickered, the three gained the same glows in their eyes as Kotori and Saya did, making Chinami panic.

Next thing Chinami knew... they shaped the sand around her to look like a caterpillar's body. She just stared and groaned as she attempted to force herself out of the sand with limited success.

"At this point, I'm thinking high school teenagers are more dangerous than Spirits." Chinami said, a bird landing on her hand.

Soon the other Spirits finished swimming over to Shido and the Yamai twins' location, Tohka shook her head dry and looked at them.

"Hey guys, what a coincidence we found you all here by your lonesome." Tohka smiled.

"Nice, that's my kinswomen Tohka, Kotori, Natsumi. Hastening to their leaders' side, very nicely done!" Kaguya smirked.

"Wondrous. I didn't think Masters Origami, Yoshino and Kurumi would ever come to a place like this." Yuzuru replied, making Shido blink as he recalled them saying those same words last night. So, the masters and kinswomen were...

"Wait, someone tell me how this whole kinswomen and master thing began?" Shido asked, clearly confused.

The Yamai twins turned to Shido.

"These three seemed to have a bright future, so I performed a baptism of darkness with them yesterday and exchanged our bonds." Kaguya replied, though the scene of a simply party drinking fizzy cola between her, Tohka, Natsumi and Kotori was seen.

"Explanation. I was moved by my masters' wisdom, and so I asked them to make me their disciples." Yuzuru explained, showing Yuzuru on a pillow as she listened to Origami, Kurumi and Yoshino all talk.

"Uh... right." Shido chuckled, rubbing his head oddly. Soon getting a message from Reine on his headset saying {Coming over now, mention you're waiting for me to bring you a volleyball}, and he quickly clears his throat. "Say, we were about to play some volley ball. Reine should be bringing the ball any second now."

Reine appears at that moment.

"I'm here, did you wait too long?" Reine asked, her hair down as she wore her lab coat over her swimsuit. She held out a cup. "Everyone draw one, we'll decide teams by which historical figure you pull out. Yoshino, Natsumi, I'd like you both to help me referee."

Aside from Shido and the Yamai twins, everyone knew the pictures were too similar and that this was made to force the former three onto the same team. Once they drew them out...

"Gregor, Jackson, Spencer and Caesar will be team one. While Alexander, Abraham, Anthony and
Leonardo will be the other team.” Reine answered, confusing Shido and the Yamai twins.

"Yes! I got Origami, Kurumi and Mana on my team!” Kotori declared, looking at Shido, Tohka and the Yamai twins. "Game on, the energetic are where Volleyball is dominant!"

Origami blinked at that, knowing that wasn't her at all.

"You sure Kaguya and Yuzuru will work well together? No offense, but this seems too one-sided.” Shido whispered.

"Not to worry, I've got that covered. I told the two of them if your team loses, they'll have an embarrassing secret about them revealed." Reine answered, making Shido go wide eyed at the fact she just stated she blackmailed them. "We're not exactly at the liberty to play nice, we still can't contact the Fraxinus after all."

"Right...” Shido replied, sweating slightly.

Soon the game began, and Mana served a spike that barely missed Shido.

"And I drew first blood!” Mana shouted, raising her hand victoriously as she did a jumping dance across the sand. "Big brother, prepare to get demolished!"

'She's totally doing this because she's channeling her breast angst at us.' Shido thought, sweating nervously.

As the game continued, Shido's side was doing badly as only Shido and Tohka were able to score any points, the Yamai twins causing them to miss a lot of shots or block them off. Shido and Tohka stared as the two growled at each other.

"Anger. Get out of my way Kaguya, you're sabotaging my efforts." Yuzuru stated.

"What did you say to me!?" Kaguya roared, a vein forming on her head. "You're in my way, get out my territory you peon!"

Everyone stared at the sight, Rinne having since come by with Mayuri and Rio, the latter eating an ice cream cone.

"This is painful to watch, those two aren't gonna get anywhere like that." Mayuri sighed, and suddenly the twins stopped fighting and stood up. "Huh?"

"Well Yuzuru... shall we?" Kaguya asked, her left eye glinting briefly as she looked towards Yuzuru.

"Affirmative." Yuzuru replied, her right eye making the same glint as she looked at Kaguya. "Let's do it."

Kotori went to spike the volleyball, and Tohka barely managed to hit it, launching it a bit too high into the air.

"Oh crud!" Tohka shouted, realizing how far it went.

"Response. Kaguya, set up now." Yuzuru stated, moving to the ground.

"Understood!" Kaguya replied, rushing over to her as Yuzuru's hands reached the ground before she threw Kaguya into the air, surprising everyone. "Take this!"
Kaguya smashes the ball with her fists, shooting the ball into the opposing court to the surprise of everyone as it spun in place from the hole it formed in the sand. Kaguya landed, and soon cheered.

"Alright, did you see that!?"

"Delight! Yahoo!" Yuzuru replied, her and Kaguya running in circles with their hands raised up. The two soon clapping their hands together before they spun around in circles, clasping and releasing their hands repeatedly as they did.

"Did you see that? That was just perfect Yuzuru, it went whiz, whiz!" Kaguya exclaimed.

"Yeah, that's my Kaguya!" Yuzuru exclaimed, the two stopping as they held hands. For a brief moment Tohka noticed their usual speech dropped and their fierce and half opened eye expressions had vanished.

"No, that's my Yuzuru." Kaguya corrected, and after about a few seconds... both of them realized everyone was still watching. They broke off, changing back to their usual expressions. "I... uh... don't get too excited peon! You should be grateful I allowed my almighty feet to step on your form!"

"Nasty. My hands smell, they stink. In fact, they smell like fermented fish." Yuzuru replied, making Kaguya blink and smell her feet to see if they did, which they didn't. Tohka kept looking at the two while everyone else just looked at each other confused.

Soon Tohka was behind the bathroom stalls on said private beach, waiting for Kaguya and Yuzuru to show up, having asked to talk to each of them alone. While she was waiting, Reine began speaking to her via the headset.

"Tohka, what are you doing?" Reine asked annoyed.

"I'm just trusting my gut, don't tell me that the way they acted back there wasn't suddenly different than what we've come to know them as." Tohka replied.

"They share a Sephira Crystal for their powers, they might just know how to work together when needed." Reine replied.

"...Sorry, but I can't believe that. Not after the faces I saw them make." Tohka replied, right as Reine was about to say again... "Hey, just try to trust me here. Everyone says I have a sixth sense for this kind of stuff, right? Remember what would have happened if I didn't run off after Natsumi made us all toddlers?"

Reine went silent, and sighed as she realized Tohka was right. If it hadn't been for trusting her instincts when she had, Natsumi wouldn't be alive right now, she hated to admit it... but the Yamai twins kept making it too hard for Shido to pick a winner among the two.

"Alright, if you think this might help then go for it. Just know if things go wrong you're gonna be cleaning the halls of the base for the next week once we get back home." Reine replied, making Tohka's mouth go flat and stretch out worriedly before Reine hung up.

"...She can be brutal sometimes." Tohka said, sweating a bit as she shifted her mouth back to normal. Soon she noticed Kaguya show up. "Oh, hey Kaguya!"

Kaguya looked away for a bit.

"You... wanted to talk to me about something?" Kaguya asked, and Tohka nodded. "Alright, well I
"Wait a second... Kaguya, why aren't you talking all chuuni?" Tohka asked, making Kaguya's face widen as she exposed herself.

"Hah! So you were taken in by my little farce, were you not?" Kaguya asked, soon giving a haughty looking post and laughed a bit. "You realize how ridiculous you looked, dancing in the palm of my hands? I-"

Kaguya notices Tohka stare at her with a normal smile, making her sweat drop.

"...I'm not fooling you, am I?" Kaguya asked.

"Nope, just like your tag team with Yuzuru." Tohka replied, making Kaguya flinch before hanging her head down. "I knew it, you've been hiding something, haven't you? Come on, we're friends aren't we?"

Kaguya looked away and sweated a bit.

"...I doubt you'd understand it, you're just a Human." Kaguya stated, and Tohka sweat dropped.

"You really didn't notice all this time? Kaguya, I'm a Spirit too." Tohka said, catching the fiery Storm Spirit by surprise. "Not just me either. Everyone else you saw when we first met was too, well... Shido and Mana are technically Half-Spirit but that still counts. I mean look, we have the same eyes."

"No way, all this time? Well... alright, I guess maybe you could understand, sorta." Kaguya sighed, looking at Tohka. "You know how me and Yuzuru said we were once a single Spirit long ago?"

Tohka nods.

"...Well we're not, and we never were. That was just a lie we made together." Kaguya revealed, making Tohka gasp.

"Truth is back then, Rio in that weird invisible...uh, Phantom form of hers was offering the crystal to Yuzuru. I didn't trust what she was doing, so I dived forward to stop my sister right as it happened. Instead, we ended up touching the crystal at the same time. It was probably only because we're twins that it bonded to both of us."

"But... why lie then? In fact, why say one of you will disappear if you were never one? Why act like you tow hated each other?" Tohka asked.

Kaguya hung her head down, her eyes shadowed by her hair as she went silent.

"...Because if one of us doesn't sacrifice herself, then we'll both die." Kaguya admitted, making Tohka's eyes widen. "That... irregular whatever you mentioned, it's not that we split apart. It's that the power of the crystal eventually doubled between us, and it keeps growing... and becoming a ticking time bomb."

"A time bomb, want... do you mean?" Tohka gasped.

Kaguya looked up at Tohka, a sad and serious expression on her face.

"Our deaths will cause a Spacequake, we can't do a thing about it. In the past, our many duels were to waste our power and prevent this. I just wanted to be with my sister forever, but soon our powers
kept recovering faster than we could deplete them." Kaguya stated, Tohka looking at her sadly.

"Worse of all, at this point... we only have a single day left before that explosion will happen. By this time tomorrow its goodbye for us both, unless one of us disappears. I don't want to disappear, but... if I had the right to make the choice I'd pick Yuzuru to live over me!"

Tohka gasped.

"Come on, you should understand this. Why would I give up my life for Yuzuru? It's not just because she's my sister. I mean yeah, she's super cute, right? She's not overly friendly at times but she always means well, and she's clearly a genius to my idiot brawn. She's like a living Moe character! The biggest reason is this... I want Yuzuru to get to live."

Tohka gasped, those words... they fit the same category of words that Shido had said to all of the Spirits he had saved, including herself.

"I decided on a battle of charm because that's the kind of choice the result represents, the one who wins is the one who gets to live with the one she won the heart of. I already accepted I might not make it, and Yuzuru and I have already delayed things as long as we can. So Tohka, tell Shido this because if he doesn't... the whole island pays for our selfishness."

With that Kaguya walked off leaving Tohka to stare at one side of the revelations she had heard, and she had a strong feeling she purposely left Yuzuru with her own set of words to be told.

"They weren't fighting to die... they were fighting to live." Tohka breathed.

Tohka sat and waited for a while, and soon heard a knock on the wall as Yuzuru came into view with her eyes like they were the brief moment she and Kaguya had purposely gotten along.

"Tohka, you asked to see-" Yuzuru began, catching her mistake sooner and clearing her throat and getting her eyes into position. "Confirmation. Did you wish to-"

"Yuzuru, I already learned Kaguya fakes her usual speech and expression. I know you're faking it." Tohka replied, making Yuzuru sigh as she decided to let it go as well now that it was clear they had been exposed.

"It makes sense you would have noticed that, you were the first to stop us. Then again, you're a Spirit yourself, are you not?" Yuzuru replied, surprising Tohka. "I don't wish to insult Kaguya, but she's always been more oblivious than me. I realized fairly quickly you and the others weren't normal humans."

Tohka chuckles a bit.

"Yeah, I'm a Spirit." Tohka confirmed, scratching her head. "Though why have the both of you been talking like you have with such faces?"

"...I guess calling them a defense mechanism would be accurate, a reminder of what's at stake. I'm already sure of what Kaguya's told you, so it's only right I fill the remaining half and the gaps." Yuzuru answered, soon looking at Tohka.

"It was my fault we ended up down this path, I've always loved my sister, but I always felt inferior to her. She's always acts like she's extremely strong, even though one touch will break her due to how brittle her physique has always been. The truth is, to be able to stand tall despite that is true bravery. When I was offered Raphael's Crystal... I felt I could break past that inferior shell, perhaps deep
down I had been jealous... no, I wanted to be therefore her like she had always been for me."

Tohka listened, surprised by how similar the twins seemed like her and Shido in their relationship, always trying to be there for each other and trying to defend each other from anything that came their way.

"I can kinda relate, for a while I've felt I've done little for Shido," Tohka admitted, Yuzuru silently gasped before continuing.

"As a result, I didn't think, or even hesitate about accepting it. Yet when Kaguya say it... I hadn't ever seen her so terrified. She rushed over to help me, and we both gained the burden of bearing these powers." Yuzuru continued, looking a bit somber before giving a light smile.

"Though as a result, I fully got to understand my sister in ways I hadn't before and the same with her understanding me, and perhaps maybe that's how our powers kept growing stronger. We let them grow more powerful with our own feelings. Then we started to feel our power... consume us, or burn through us."

Tohka gulped.

"The Spacequakes you'd cause by both of your deaths if you don't choose?" Tohka asked, making Yuzuru nod.

"We believed fighting even if not to the death, hiding how we felt, making ourselves so... different in a sense would save us. In the end, it was a mere dream, we only slowed down the count that had already begun ticking. Now we only have one more day together." Yuzuru said, her eyes tearing up.

"We tried to find a way, but it couldn't be found. Either one of us would go, or we'd both die. The problem was we cared too much for the other, there was no way one of us would let the other die of their choice, so we had to begin our competitions. We could only hold back though."

Yuzuru turns and looks at the ocean.

"Now for wanting an impossible wish, we're risking the lives of many more people. That's why I accepted the battle of charm. What I want more than anything is for Kaguya to get to live, to see and experience more of this world. She's the reason I learned to smile, if I had the choice I'd give myself up in a heartbeat so she'd get to do that. Someone so full of life is the one who should see it to their own path, not a set ending."

Tohka stared in wonder, Kaguya and Yuzuru... they were so stable and happy compared to the Spirits before them, what made them sad at all was the grim prospect before them... one of them had to die, so not just the other but thousands more wouldn't be killed by their powers imploding.

"You can't just give up, you still have a day left, don't you?" Tohka asked.

"Tohka... I appreciate your concern, but me and Kaguya have already accepted your fate. Don't have Shido risk the lives of many just for our sakes. No matter your choice, neither of us will hold anything against who comes out of this alive." Yuzuru answered, soon walking off.

Tohka soon stared at where she had been, her hands trembling.

"They've both given up... yet they don't want to, but how can they believe when they can't find the answer they need?" Tohka whispered to herself, looking towards the horizon as the ocean waters swayed. "Come on Tohka, think. How can we save them both?"
Unaware to her, Nia had been watching nearby with Raziel in hand.

"Hmm... that's a good question? Is there a way to save them both?" Nia wondered, opening Raziel to see an answer form.

Tohka stared out a window as the night had finally come, thinking hard about what she had heard from each of the Yamai Sisters. She had told Reine, but the answer she had gotten after she had done so was...

"I'm sorry Tohka, but if they couldn't find an answer then I doubt we could either." Reine's voice echoed.

Tohka's face got sadder, and soon the twins' own words played in her head again.

"I want Yuzuru/Kaguya to get to live."

Tohka's mouth quivered a bit, wishing that there was something that could be done to save both Kaguya and Yuzuru.

"-ka, Tohka!" Shido called out, getting Tohka's attention. "Finally, I was calling out to you for a while but you didn't hear me. I noticed you looked really sad, is something wrong?"

"...Hey Shido, do you mind if we go visit the beach together?" Tohka asked, making Shido blink.

"Sure, I guess there's nothing wrong with some personal time." Shido answered.

Meanwhile within the forest area, Kaguya was seen panting by a tree, her face all flushed as she felt herself heating up.

"N-No... not yet, can't lose control her." Kaguya gasped, her eyes starting to glow brighter as she tried to suppress her powers from going unstable. Meanwhile in a different area of the forest, Yuzuru was shown in a similar state.

"I need to... h-hold on, just a bit longer." Yuzuru gasped, the same glow entering her eyes. Unfortunately for both of them, their wishes... they wouldn't be heeded. Both of them shouted as their eyes glowed an entire dark purple.

After a while of searching, Maria suddenly gets a reading.

"YES!" Maria exclaimed, waking everyone else up. "Oh, sorry! I think I just found the interference that's been jamming us! Got anything on this guys?"

"Wait a minute, I recognize some of this." Kannazuki replied, looking closer at it and widening his eyes. "I knew it, there are some changes but it's clearly the Arbitel. That ship's been flying under our noses, but we have too. How about we give them a wakeup call?"

Everyone nods.

"Alright, Fraxinus crew... prepare to engage the DEM airship Arbitel now!" Maria responded, and the ship shifted as it prepared its battle form.

On the ground, Chinami saw Tohka and Shido leave the hotel on their own and tapped her headset.
"This is Adeptus 3, do you read Arbitel Neo?" Chinami replied.

"This is Marina speaking, and we read you. Just got the notice on our cameras. In fact, mother's already gone down to get some sweet revenge against [Princes] herself, and we've deployed some Einherjars." Marina answered, and Chinami suddenly heard yelling from Ellen while Marina giggled.

"Chinami, you can deal with the others. I believe they're about to go outside themselves, I'm sure you can claim one before the Einherjars take all of them for themselves. Give the Lancelot a good first use workout."

Chinami nods.

"Understood, I'm moving out now." Chinami replied, soon forming a navy and gray CR-Unit similar to the destroyed Pendragon and Jessica's Mordred. Soon gripping her sword as she readied to draw it out.

Soon the Fraxinus began flying and undid its invisible, and Marina suddenly got readings.

"Wait a minute, this signal!" Marina said, suddenly enraged.

"What, what is it Marina?" James asked, surprised by the AI's sudden rage. Though it was answered when everyone saw the sight of a certain airship reveal itself. "That ship... it's the Fraxinus!"

Marina growled.

"Maria... that AI dares to fly in the same space as us? Everyone, focus all the Arbitel Neo's systems and efforts on annihilating that flying junk heap! I'm going to destroy everything the Ratatoskr organization holds dear through eliminating that ship!" Marina replied, the venom in her voice clearly noticeable as she began to glow.

"You heard her, this is a date with destiny! It's time we finish what we started 12 years ago and destroy that blasted ship for good!" James agreed, making the crew all look and nod before they prepared themselves. "They may not be what we intended, but activate the Ashcroft Gamma devices!"

The orbs on the Arbitel's frame shifted and glowed in a few enough, Mikimoto noticed the Arbitel had detected them.

"The Arbitel has spotted us, chances of engaging the enemy are now guaranteed!" Mikimoto confirmed, making Maria gain a serious face as she looked at the ship.

"OK, then no turning back now. Get ready Marina!" Maria declared, soon glowing.

"ASTRAL DRESS EQUIP!" Maria and Marina shouted in unison.

Both of them had their Astral Dress' equip, the former had her dress based on the Fraxinus form where Marina's had her dress based on her malicious personality manifest on her before both gave their own expressions of serious and crazed respectively.

"Ex-Celsior Sephira!" Maria shouted.

"Arbitel-Machina Qlipha!" Marina yelled.

As both ships neared each other, the Fraxinus shifted to its battle form... only for the Arbitel to reveal
it now had its own battle form as the latter fired a beam to initiate the fight between the two rival ships.

As Shido and Tohka walked across the beach, Tohka turned her head towards Shido a bit.

"Sorry Shido..." Tohka suddenly said.

"Huh? What for?" Shido asked.

"When I said I wanted to visit the beach for some personal time, it was kinda a lie. Truth is I needed a private talk, just the two of us." Tohka answered, and considering her expression... Shido knew this was about something serious.

"This is about what's been worrying you lately, isn't it?" Shido asked, and Tohka nodded. "I'm all ears, what is it?"

Tohka soon whispered everything about Kaguya and Yuzuru into Shido's ear, and his eyes widened heard it. Tohka eventually finished and he stared at her.

"Seriously? Kaguya and Yuzuru... all this time?" Shido asked, in disbelief of their real reasons.

"Yeah, I both talked with them separately after that one moment their illusion broke. To think all along it was just to decide who the survivor would be when neither will make it otherwise. They've accepted it, but I can tell they don't want to lose each other." Tohka confirmed as her eyes gained a sadder look.

"And they're really tried, they tried to find another way. They never found it. By tomorrow, one of them has to be chosen, and if they don't... it's not a happy ending. Either many day or one dies, but someone still disappears."

Shido sighed at that, he was just as troubled over this.

"Oh man, what do we do? How do I choose who to seal under that? Either way, I'm taking a life regardless of it I want to or not." Shido said, and suddenly... something clicked in Tohka as she gasped. "What is it?"

"Shido... remember how eventually Yoshinon disappeared because you sealed Yoshino's powers, and then before that when Origami's powers threatened to overload and destroy Tenguu City? In a sense, you stabilized their powers." Tohka stated, making Shido nod. "So, maybe if you kissed them both at the same time..."

Shido's eyes widen.

"Of course! If I seal both, then it'd be like sealing a single Spirit and neither's worry would happen. We need to find them Tohka, cause I think you just found the way to save them both!" Shido exclaimed, Tohka smiling at that... before a sudden wind blew past them. "What the?"

Suddenly they saw Kaguya walking closer to them with her eyes intensely glowing and the tips of her hair locks and braid now darkened, her spirit power leaking out... but in a dark orange color. At the same time, Yuzuru came from the other direction, with the same dark spirit power, but her hair had whitened in the same places instead.

"Wait a second, their spirit power... it's gone dark." Tohka whispered, soon gasping. "No way, did that power overload they're facing cause them to..."
"They've been Inverted, the stress of the reality must have finally been too much." Shido answered, holding Tohka closer. "Worse? They both look mad, and... mad at each other."

The two finally get close enough and then...

"WHAT THE HELL!?!" Both screamed.

Suddenly the hurricane winds beginning to form exploded out, Shido and Tohka screamed before the latter saw the former being swept away by the wind across the island.

"Shido!" Tohka screamed, soon noticing the dark orange light right before her.

The twins instantly assuming their Inverse Astral Dresses, compared to their original outfits, they now wore what looked to be Dominatrix like outfits that turned their shoes into high heels, Yuzuru's turning dark blue and Kaguya's becoming so dark that it seemed more purple than pink-red.

Each of them had chains around their bodies, with Kaguya's mostly being on the right side, and Yuzuru's on the left. Kaguya had a lock spot below her bosom where Yuzuru's was around the middle area to above it. Kaguya still had her half skirt and Yuzuru her cape.

"Sathariel!" Kaguya shouted, forming a twisted drill like version of her lance, but twice as large.

"Ghagiel!" Yuzuru shouted, forming a spiked version of her chain.

Tohka covered her face as the wind blew at her, its intensity growing as the twins summoned their weapons empowered by the Demon King that she and the others would later know as Andramelech.

Meanwhile as Origami went to take a look at the fireflies outside, she noticed the winds that were blowing.

"Huh? What the, oh no... are they fighting again? I need to warn the-" Origami said, before suddenly sensing something and dodging a laser blast fired at her. "Who did that!?"

"I did." Chinami answered.

Origami turned to see Chinami walk into view wearing the Lancelot CR-Unit and holding her sword as she drew it, the Arondight.

"No... you're with the DEM!?!" Origami gasped.

"I'm Chinami Mikazuchi, otherwise known as DEM's new Adeptus 3. Prepare yourself for Death... [Angel]!" Chinami scowled, rushing at Origami as she assumed her Astral Dress and defended against her sword strike. "So, you are the real deal."

Origami sweated a bit, Metatron readying itself.

"This isn't gonna be an easy fight, I can feel it..." Origami mumbled to herself.

Tohka soon regained her vision a bit as she saw Kaguya and Yuzuru stare each other down, clearly not themselves.

"So what the hell was all that about? Asking her to tell Shido to pick me!?!" Kaguya growled.

"And what about you, what's your intention!?!" Yuzuru asked angrily. "It's no use, all along we
knew the real method this conflict would have to end. It was too much to ask one to end a duel we started."

Both readied their weapons.

"Very well, then the dueling method is..." Kaguya stated, before both gave focused glares at one another.

"A fight to the death!"

Soon the twin Inverted Spirits begin to clash, causing the winds across the island to worsen until a powerful hurricane had overtaken it entirely, and Tohka barely held onto the ground she was standing at.

"KAGUYA! YUZURU! PLEASE... STOP THIS!" Tohka screamed, but soon the wind blew her away like it did Shido, but not as far or in the same direction. Once she landed she weakly got up. "I... I have to find Shido. If we want to stop this and save them both, he needs to seal them."

Suddenly her eyes widen and she rolled as an energy slash barely missed her.

"Well, it looks like you saved me the trouble of finding you... [Princess], how long has it been since our last battle?"

Tohka gasped as she saw a familiar wizard wearing gold and white armor, even if the CR-Unit was different... the untied light blonde hair and purple eyes and a somewhat bloodthirsty aura emitting from her body? There was only one being Tohka knew had this.

"...Ellen." Tohka gasped.

"Time for me to get the revenge I've been waiting a long time to cash in, it's put up or shut up time!" Ellen declared, closing her hand in a challenging manner. Tohka stared at the situation before her and how bad it was.

The Yamai twins were inverted and fighting in a crazed manner from the influence, Shido had been sent flying somewhere, and worse of all is how she had to fight against none other than Ellen, DEM's Adeptus 1 and their strongest wizard. The worst part...

...This time, she had to fight her alone.

How sad, the whole time the Yamai twins knew the truth, and their whole unique expressions and extravagant speech was their way of shielding themselves from the unfortunate truth that they had to choose one of them to live or both of them would go... and they can't find another way to save them both. Good news for them is that Tohka did, but now? That power build up has stressed them into an Inversion, yikes!

And now to make things worse, Chinami's intercepted Origami for a fight, the new Einherjar units while yet to be seen are likely cornering the others, and Ellen has run into Tohka... all while Shido's now lost in the forest! Oh, to make the Ellen thing sound worse? Remember that Tohka last fought her Inverted, and she technically lost, true there was the Arbitel aiding Ellen, but Tohka was Inverted at the time... the odds aren't in her favor.

So what's going to happen now? Will Origami survive Chinami's attack on her, will the others handle the Einherjar OK? Will the Fraxinus crew be able to survive the Arbitel and Marina's
fury towards Maria? Will Tohka find Shido? Can Shido seal the Yamai twins in time? And most of all... is Tohka even going to be able to handle Ellen? I hate to say it, but this might be the darkest hour that Tohka's ever had to deal with.

Well, guess the answers will reveal themselves next time when the Yamai arc finally reaches its stunning conclusion!

-Kaguya Yamai & Yuzuru Yamai, Code Name: [Pandemonium]-

Angel: Andramelech - Raphael's Demon King counterpart, the angel wing traits on the bow's frame are replaced by demon wing traits and covered in spikes. Like its Angel counterpart, Andramelech has split into two due to there being two individuals instead of just one. They have secondary effects depending on if the bow is Kaguya or Yuzuru's, and the arrows are more serrated which cuts through defenses and cause explosive bursts upon contact. Like Raphael, they also aren't able to attack one another due to an alternate form.

- Alternate Form: Sathariel - The alternate form of Kaguya's Andramelech and the inverse counterpart of El Re'em, the lance has now become twice the size it was as El Re'em and has spiraled and twisted itself in shape to become more drill like, even being able to be thrust like a drill that can set itself aflame. She tends to call its main attack the "Zhaten Lanza" for some unknown reason.

- Alternate Form: Simurgh - Sathariel opens up and reveals a hidden cannon within, able to blast focused heated air that can shoot through things like cutting metal with a laser. The downside to this form is Kaguya is forced to be stationary while using it, and will need around 5 seconds after stopping before the recoil fades and she regains mobility.

- Alternate Form: Ghagiel - The alternate form of Yuzuru's Andramelech and the inverse counterpart of El Na'ash, the pendulum and its chain form are now spiked and doubled in length, and Yuzuru can now manipulate the chain with her thoughts which increases its accuracy and speed. If whipped strongly enough, the chain can create chilling gale.

- Alternate Form: Ammut - Ghagiel coils itself multiple times until it transforms into a chakram, its blades formed from condensed cold air that takes a semi-visible form. While not as open ranged and less focused, when Ammut cuts into something, it not only slices through, but the cold air leaves some ice stuck to the stricken target.

- Alternate Form: Thaumiel - By combining both their Andramelech's in their original forms, Kaguya and Yuzuru create a nine-pronged bow that manifests their combined power together, as well as the secondary abilities they've gained from their Inverse Forms. The force of all nine strings being pulled together for a single strike has the potential of causing such a destructive arrow shot that it can rip through the sky and part miles of clouds away, even shattering the largest of tornadoes or hurricanes, the problem is Inverse Kaguya and Yuzuru are unlikely to cooperate and actually use this form.

- Powers: The Yamai twins' powers amplify to a dangerous degree in this form, with where using a large amount of their powers would cause a hurricane before... simply being in their Inverse Forms will cause an even more powerful hurricane to form. Kaguya's winds gain intense heat, giving her indirect fire abilities in her winds, while Yuzuru winds start becoming...
frosty and chilling which leads to her possessing indirect ice abilities in her winds. Luckily
their Inverse form can be easily dispelled due to a fatal weakness that lies in the automatically
generated hurricanes. Should something manage to disrupt the hurricanes and make them
disappear, Kaguya and Yuzuru will revert to normal, even if only temporarily.

Risk Factors: SS

Spacequake: AAA

Spirit's Astral Dress: B

Demon King Rank: AA

-Kaguya's Stats-

Strength: 235

Consistency: 180

Spiritual Power: 205

Agility: 260

Intelligence: 57

-Yuzuru's Stats-

Strength: 180

Consistency: 235

Spiritual Power: 205

Agility: 260

Intelligence: 132

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 86%

Origami - 83%

Yoshino - 78%

Kotori - 80%

Kurumi - 76%

Natsumi - 47%
Chapter 34

Surprise everyone! As my own gift to everyone for this being my birthday, I've made a double chapter post for you all to enjoy! ^^

This is it everyone! The Yamai arc has finally reached its final chapter, and we're going to the Inverse Yamai twins clash, the Fraxinus Ex vs the Arbitel Neo, the fight between Origami and Chinami who's the Old Timeline Origami in design and in a sense, is making Origami face herself, we'll see the Einherjar units in action, and after an entire season since their last battle... Tohka and Ellen are going to be crossing blades once again!

This time however, Ellen's got a stronger CR-Unit, Tohka's not in her Inverse Form, and Shido's not there to aid her... Tohka's situation doesn't look good right now 0_0 *gulps*

Luckily for Tohka though, Ellen doesn't know that Tohka can now use Earth powers so at least Tohka has some new tricks to give her an edge in this fight against her.

Everyone, the others will likely be fine, but Tohka's facing an opponent she wasn't able to truly beat while Inverted despite she technically managed to challenge Ellen... because Westcott admitted she might have been a bit rusty at the time. Small story short. This time, Ellen's not only using a stronger CR-Unit, she's not rusty anymore. Tohka's facing what Ellen wasn't during their first fight, at full strength, so cheer her on to somehow pull out a victory!

Now, let's get this chapter started! This storm's winds are finally going to blow away and I'm the writer who's gonna part the clouds! *blinks* ...Yeah, that pun might need some more work ^^;

Chapter 34, S2: Yamai Clash, Part 3

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This time, she had to fight her alone.

'Last time I fought her I wasn't able to beat her even while in my Inverse, especially once she locked me in her territory. It was Shido that stopped her in the end. Is it even possible for me to win against her? Tohka thought, a drop of sweat trickling down her left cheek. Ellen got slightly annoyed by her inaction.

"Are you really just gonna stand there? Sorry, but I'm afraid you don't get that choice. Show her what I mean Einherjar units!" Ellen shouted, and suddenly Tohka gasps as she sees red lights appear form shadowed figures, looking a lot like Bandersnatch units. "Take her down!"

Tohka grit her teeth, knowing she didn't have a choice.

"Adonai Melek! Sandalphon!"

Tohka's princess ballgown shaped armor formed as she swung her Angel against the automatons, but only managed to slash against a territory to her surprise. She landed back on the ground as she looked at the now unveiled DEM automatons.

While they did look a lot like the Bandersnatch units, what made them unlike the automatons of that name she had come to know is that they were slightly bigger and their armor was a more platinum color and even seemed translucent as if made with crystal.

On the palms of their claws and some slots of their armor were areas clearly made for blasters, and said claws seemed retracted as if they had a form where they extended and became another weapon entirely, probably a sword or even a spear.

Six small spheres, name two Ashcroft Alpha devices, two Ashcroft Beta devices, and two of the incomplete but usable Ashcroft Gamma devices were attached. Tohka assumed they were likely what had formed the barriers she just slashed moments prior.

Most of all they had their armor shift between their ground and air forms, meaning they transformed for a different form, or another reason like a type of battle variation. Needless to say, these were basically elite and much stronger versions of the Bandersnatch, and probably even more dangerous.

"These things... I have a bad feeling, it's like they're an overpowered version of what I've fought so far." Tohka sweated, looking at them and then Ellen again. "Just like what I feel with you. You're trying to bait me, and I'm not falling for it!"

"Hmm... I'm impressed, you've actually learned a bit on battle strategy. You've grown a bit since you changed back from your form as [Sovereign], but I think you know that you can't beat me while you're still [Princess]." Ellen smirked, grabbing her sword. "Why don't you do yourself a favor and just give me your Sephira Crystal right now."

Tohka gets into a defensive position.

"So, you're actually going to try and fight me? Good, that's what I actually wanted. Einherjar, stay back and let me handle this, only I get to cut this Spirit. Go help the other units take out the others." Ellen ordered, making Tohka gasp at that claim as Ellen fully draws her new weapon, the Caliburn.

"If you wanna help them, then just beat me. We both know that won't happen though."

Tohka grunted as the Einherjar all took off and fled, she gripped Sandalphon tightly before throwing all doubt to the side and preparing herself to fight.
"Bring it on!" Tohka shouted, rushing forward at Ellen and preparing to swing down, Ellen simply help up Caliburn to block... but to her surprise, the way Tohka thrusted her sword caused her to skid back a bit.

"Actual skill with a sword? It seems you didn't just improve your strategies, and I was worried you'd be unable to entertain me without your Inversion." Ellen replied, soon making her bloodthirsty face as Tohka realized she was about to go all out. "Then let's truly fight to the death!"

Tohka suddenly saw Ellen rush at her at inhuman speeds as she barely held up Sandalphon to block the attack... only for Ellen's Caliburn to shatter it to pieces to her horror as Ellen gave a cruel smirk.

"What a disappointment, time to end this!"

Tohka fell back as Ellen prepare to slash Caliburn at her defenseless form.

The Arbitel fired a beam at the Fraxinus, and the Ratatoskr's ace ship formed a territory to defend against it, though the entire ship shook from the recoil of the blast and everyone on it nearly fell from their seats.

"Mikimoto, Nakatsugawa, give me damage report ASAP!" Maria begged.

"Port side territory has been reduced by 5 percent!" Mikimoto reported.

"Minimal damage to the fleet! Though going by these readings, it's clear the Arbitel's gained an upgrade on the same volume as our own!" Nakatsugawa replied. Maria breathed, soon crossing her arms.

"Alright, then time to hold nothing back! Minowa, disable all non-combat, mobility and crucial functions until further notice! Scan for next attack wavelengths!" Maria ordered, making Minowa gasp as she started the scans. "Got something already? Status report!"

"It's heat waves, a second attack's coming!" Minowa shouted, and everyone began typing.

Maria cracked her knuckles a bit.

"Marina's honestly trying to destroy this ship so she can kill me, well time to strike back!" Maria exclaimed, moving her hands out as she linked into the ship systems and assumed the Fraxinus' battle functions. "Kannazuki, you're my co-pilot for any battle functions, standby till I give the order!"

"Loud and clear." Kannazuki stated, putting on his usual headset.

"OK, here goes! Protect territory activate, executing manual positioning! Location 1 O'clock! Range Coordinates X-132, Y-50, Z-39! Deploy at range 255 to 246!"

The Arbitel fires its next shot, this time a magic circle shaped territory forms and takes the attack, negating all possible damage.

"The enemy ship is reading no damage!" James reported, making Marina growl. "What do you want us to do, it seems they're not letting us push them over this time."

"Give me full access to the system, everyone aid auxiliary support on my command. It's obvious their AI's taking over and we'll just fight fire with inverse fire!" Marina ordered, causing everyone to nod as she saw James grant her full access to the systems.

"Activate all Ashcroft Alpha devices and Ashcroft Beta devices 1-25! Make no change to the
Ashcroft Gamma devices!

Shiizaki notices the lights on the Arbitel glow brighter.

"Maria, the Arbitel's magical power is amplifying!" Shiizaki replied, making Maria sweat laser fluid.

"Dang it, how can we... wait, protect territory is focused and strengthened at a specific location. If I can pinpoint the exact spot they'll fire I might be able to keep us safe. Everyone, keep an eye out in case anything else threatens to attack the ship, I'm taking a gamble! Oh, an Shiizaki? Contact Chairman Elliot, ask if it is ready for use yet."

Shiizaki gasped before nodding.

"Right, attempting contact now." Shiizaki replied, initiating the call.

"OK, specifying range in the same direction! 5-0-6-9!" Maria replied, making the others gasp at that narrow range. "I get its far too narrow, but trust me!"

Soon the Arbitel fires an even stronger blast as the protect territory forms, and while a bit shaky at first, once again no damage is taken from the blast.

"Incredible, we actually blocked it!" Minowa gasped.

"And it was so much more powerful, she had to make the range so narrow just to defend against it. This upgraded Arbitel may be as bad as a threat as it was when we faced its original form 12 years ago." Kawagoe sweated, noticing how much Maria was sweating. "Oh, Shiizaki! The signal made it through!"

Shiizaki notices and manages to pull up a screen showing Elliot.

"Elliot here, what's the problem?" Elliot asked.

"Sir, we're under attack! We're barely holding out against an upgraded Arbitel. We need to know... is it ready to be used yet?" Shiizaki asked.

"Hmm... it should, but we haven't tested it yet. Let Maria decide if it's the right call to use it." Elliot replied, soon the connection was cut off, making Shiizaki look at Maria who thought for a bit.

"...No choice, at this rate its either 100% chance of death or less than 100%, and I'd prefer the later. Alright then." Maria replied, soon breathing. "Everyone, activate... the Ashcroft Delta devices!"

Yoshino found herself being charged by a group of Einherjar, and soon she slams the ground.

"El! Zadkiel!"

Yoshino's Astral Dress formed as Zadkiel formed from the ground and pushed the Einherjar units back, they all quickly regroup as their arm shifted and they rushed at Yoshino even faster.

"Freeze!" Yoshino shouted, blasting them all and freezing them in their territories... only for all of their Ashcroft devices to glow and give them the strength to shatter out of them. "What? No way, territories should freeze from my powers."

Yoshino's eyes widened and Zadkiel took a defensive position as they all jumped and shifted their claws into spear-like swords to attack her.
Natsumi held up Haniel as some of the Einherjar rushed at her and slashed down with their claws, she spun around and knocked them away before holding Haniel out.

"KALEIDOSCOPE - SANDALPHON!"

Haniel morphs into a copy of Sandalphon, but with Natsumi and Haniel's color scheme instead. She slashes at the Einherjar units before her, only to clash with their barriers.

"What? They have territories, and ones this strong?" Natsumi gasped, jumping back as some dogpiled at her. "Shit! This is bad, my bond with Shido's still too low, I can't draw enough power to break through their defense!"

Natsumi sweated as the Einherjar around her in circles and prepared a simultaneous jump strike, making Natsumi shift her feet to defend herself again.

Kotori yells as she swings down on the Einherjar units, smashing into their territories but barely leaving any damage to them.

"What? No way, I can usually smash through these no problem!" Kotori gasped, the Einherjar all rush at her claws out before jumping and changing them into their Spear-Sword forms. "Crap!

Kotori smashed Camael onto the ground, making it erupt in flames and make the Einherjar stop in place. When the flames vanished, Kotori was seen holding the Megiddo.

"Say hello to my little friend! MEGIDDO!" Kotori exclaimed, blasting out the beam of fire from her cannon and hoping it would melt through the Einherjar. "Yeah, take that!"

Suddenly the Einherjar grouped together and instead of making a territory barrier around their entire bodies, focuses in the front as a group. Their combined barrier completely blocked the Megiddo's entire blast to Kotori's shock.

"No... that's impossible!" Kotori gasped.

The Einherjar all rush at her again, Kotori changing Camael back into an axe as they neared her.

Kurumi suddenly saw an Einherjar rush at her from behind and she cartwheeled out of the way, soon panting a bit.

"Holy crap, those don't look like Bandersnatch to me, they look much worse." Kurumi breathed, soon getting back on her feet fully and putting her hands together. "Elohim! Zaflkiel!"

Kurumi's astral dress appears before she crossed her arms as her twin guns manifest, and soon she crossed her arms in a horizontal manner before twirling.

"And now Nibellcole!" Kurumi declared, soon Kurumi's shadow extended out as Kinshu, Shincho, Masayoshi and Yuuki all manifested. "OK girls, we're dealing with some new automaton type and it looks to be a more dangerous version of a Bandersnatch."

"You got it Kurumi, let's do it!" Yuuki smiled, grabbing her Zaflkiel copy as the others all did the same. The Einherjar all rushed at them while Kurumi and her clones all jumped away and fired at them.
Origami dodged left and right as Chinami rushed and slashed Arondight with her with a clear murderous intent, Origami moved Metatron's pillars to defend, trying to get an occasional blast in with little success.

"So strong..." Origami grunted, being pushed back by the recoil of Chinami's most recent attack. The violently Adeptus 3 wizard soon swung her sword down on Origami who was able to barely defend with her mana barrier. "Yet... why is she so violent with her attacks?"

"Shut up monster, you have no right to talk like your part of this world!" Chinami screamed, slashing at Origami again and piercing her mana barrier as she tumbled across the ground. She weakly got up as Chinami walked at her. "I'll finally get to avenge my parents for your murder of them!"

Origami's eyes widened.

"You lost your parents to a past Spirit? Look, it wasn't their fault, the Spirits don't-" Origami tried to explain, but Chinami slashed at her, and Origami was tossed back as she held her arm.

"You think you can justify they did it by accident? Wrong, I saw the whole thing myself! It was on purpose, and that innocent face was the trap they walked right into before I watched her murder them." Chinami declared, gripping her sword tighter.

"5 years ago, my birth parents died of an illness, and my aunt and uncle offered to adopt me and have me live with them and my younger sister. However, the day I got there, tragedy met me when... the Tenguu Fire broke out across the city."

Origami's eyes suddenly widened at that, horror filing her face.

"I ran through it trying to find them, but when I did... the sight of a white haired Spirit smiling at them before she burned them to a crisp was what I saw! That was you, the Spirit made me promise to make you all pay!"

Origami shook at that, and suddenly this girl before her? She noticed the similarities of their faces.

"...You were the one they talked about, weren't you?" Origami said shakily, getting Chinami's attention as she raised her eyebrow.

"What nonsense is this? You're just a murderous monster, don't act like they-"

"Yes, I'm that Spirit, but those two people I killed... they were my parents!" Origami cried, making Chinami suddenly freeze and stare at her. He eyes widen as she suddenly realized the one who would have been her adoptive sister. "My name is Origami Tobiichi, and even if by accident... my powers killed my parents!"

Chinami's stare turned dark, staring at the Spirit known as [Angel]... and the girl who was her cousin Origami Tobiichi. In most cases, you'd expect the attacker to stand down and realize what they've done and things would work out.

For Chinami however? She didn't see her cousin, she saw the monster she was turned into, and swung her sword again as Origami barely dodged it. She turned to see the cold, dark and to a degree somewhat insane look on Chinami's face.

"...So, you've turned into one of the monsters harming this world, my cousin died the day she became you. I guess that means cutting my hair to honor still works. Don't worry, I'll kill you so she can finally rest in peace!" Chinami roared, thrusting Arondight at Origami before Metatron fired at the DEM wizard to protect Origami.
"No... Chinami, why? Why are you so incredibly hateful? Why did it turn out this way, why?"
Origami asked, her eyes tearing up as it was clear her cousin would forever view her as an enemy rather than her family.

Chinami soon rushed out, and prepared to deal a fatal blow to Origami... only for all of Metatron's pillars to fly up close and fire beams at point blank range. Chinami gasped as the shots fired and blasted her away, sending her flying.

"Damn you, this isn't over [Angel]! One day in the future, I will kill you, just you wait!" Chinami screamed, soon landing in the ocean.

Origami stared at where she had shot Chinami off towards, staring as her cousin... no, her enemy's last words rung through her head. She tightened her fist and grit her teeth in sorrow and anger.

"She was right... we're not family anymore, because she's fallen too far into her pain to turn back." Origami stated to herself, breathing heavily. "Westcott... Just how many lives has your so-called dream ruined!!"

Suddenly Origami felt herself get shot from the side, she gasped as she turned and saw a group of Einherjar fire at her.

"No, I can't..." Origami said, blacking out before she could hear the sound of metal being shredded apart.

Meanwhile high in the skies, Kaguya and Yuzuru's clash kept intensifying as waterspouts began to form on the ocean, with signs of tornadoes on the land getting closer to fruition with every second.

"SIMURGH!" Kaguya shouted as Sathariel opened up and turned into a cannon, charging an incredibly hot chamber of wind inside it. "I'm not giving anything up to you, if one of us has to go it's gonna be you!"

Kaguya thrust Sathariel forward, blasting the sweltering winds inside out like a blade of air. Yuzuru swung Ghagiel and created a gale of cold wind to counter it.

"AMMUT!" Yuzuru shouted, spinning Ghagiel's chain until it morphed into a chakram and cold winds condensed into blades. "Neither will I! This force has gone on long enough, this lie about caring for each, I'll shatter it by ending you!"

Yuzuru tosses the chakram and Kaguya uses Simurgh to block it, but upon cutting it the cannon's body froze before Kaguya smashed it and reformed it as Sathariel's lance and then throwing it like a drill to shatter the chakram. As Yuzuru reformed Ghagiel's chain, the two fly and crash into each other once again.

Maria activated a certain command code on the Fraxinus as the Arbitel prepared its next shot, Marina smirked as she focused to a certain area on the Fraxinus' haul where she was sure their territory barrier wouldn't work the way they wanted.

"Alright, this is it! Activate all Ashcroft Beta devices and Ashcroft Gamma devices, spike them and the Ashcroft Alpha devices to maximum power!" Marina declared, the crew responding as the Arbitel prepared a blast at full power.

"There's no way they'll survive this one." James smirked.
Soon Kannazuki gets the readings.

"Maria, better hurry up or we're dead!" Kannazuki warned, making Maria nod and soon...

"Yes, success! Restore all disabled functions and link the Ashcroft Deltas throughout the whole ship! Form the protect territory!" Maria shouted.

Soon the Fraxinus made a normal territory barrier again, and to the Arbitel crew’s surprise it was enough to block the attack.

"What!? That's not possible, they weakened their barrier and we shot at our strongest, how'd it fail!?" Marina demanded, soon noticing the Arbitel detect an unknown device in the Fraxinus' frame. "Wait, culminate and estimate the unknown readings through available cross referencing!"

Marina looked at the data and soon recognized they were devices using studies on Artemisia's territory but with specs that made the Ashcroft Gamma devices look like prototypes in comparison.

"No way, they made their own Ashcroft devices!? Hey wait... oh shit, the Arubi Island base had notes on the Ashcroft Gamma and Artemisia's with them again! We let them steal our technology again!" Marina growled, soon having her eyes glow. "Alright, then we'll just have to wreck it with the power of all three types we possess!"

The Fraxinus soon charged a blast to Marina's surprise.

"Firing the Mystletainn!" Maria ordered.

The Fraxinus fired out its ultimate weapon from all three of its main cannons, the beams turning a light green color from magic power produced by the Ashcroft Delta devices. The resulting blast smashed the Arbitel's territory barrier apart and shook the entire ship as the defenseless haul took the full shot.

"Damn them, we can't defend with a spread territory! Marina, let's end this the old-fashioned way with good old violence!" James growled.

Marina smirked at that before she dove further into the Arbitel's systems and had her Astral Dress stretch out and link into parts of the internal systems. Soon she rose back up as the Arbitel's glow changed to a purple glow, representing black light.

"Shave off the enemy ship's territory directly, ram them to smithereens!" Marina shouted, and the Arbitel flew at the Fraxinus with incredible speed.

"Oh no, the enemy's going for us directly! The Arbitel's too big for the Fraxinus to survive a direct collision!" Kawagoe shouted, started to panic slightly. "What should we do!?"

Maria looked worried until she noticed a certain Spirit's location.

"Guys, I'm pulling off a worse gamble but it may be the only way we'll survive this. Kannazuki, you and I need to regulate our territory barrier for as long as possible! We have to put our faith into something that has a small chance of happening!" Maria replied, making Kannazuki nod.

"You heard her everyone! Activate the advanced realizers with parallel driving force, bring all power to protect territory! Move the Yggdrasilums to scatter the ship's haul and focus everything to a core point!" Kannazuki exclaimed, and everyone did so. "Let's hope luck smiles on us."

Everyone completed their tasks.
"Maria, be honest... how likely is our survival rate?" Shiizaki asked.

"...10%, but it's better than none at all so I guess that's why this is a gamble!" Maria admitted, making everyone sweat worried.

The Fraxinus soon rushed at the Arbitel as its own territory barrier formed.

"Enemy ship's territory output rising!" One of the Arbitel crew reported, turning to Captain James. "It'll come into contact in 15 seconds!"

"Those idiots are relying on luck now, they can't ambush the Arbitel!" James smirked.

Soon the two ships were about to strike one another.

"Deploying the territory range, condensing the entire attack to the point of contact!" Marina commanded.

Soon both ships focused their territories to their fronts, and soon they crashed into each other making both ships shake heavily from the force, and unfortunately... the Fraxinus was losing.

"Territory output at 87%! ...81%! ...72%!" Minowa reported, noticing their numbers dropping fast.

"Heh! They've lost, we might be even in our territory output, but the Arbitel's too massive so our physical force is stronger." Marina smirked, laughing at the result. "Yes, we've won! Victory is ours!"

Maria sweats, looking towards Tohka's location.

'Come on Tohka... if you don't notice us soon we're dead. Please, you're our final hope!' Maria thought, focusing the best she could to delay the territory output's reduction.

Tohka stared as the Caliburn neared her, about to slash into her... only for her eyes to widen as she stomped the ground. Ellen's eyes suddenly shrunk as a slab of stone shot out of the ground and smacked right into Ellen's gut. She was knocked back as Tohka quickly reformed Sandalphon.

[Seriously master, that was crazy! If I had a heart I'd have just had a heart attack!]

"S-Sorry!" Tohka sweat dropped, Ellen coughs as she regained her bearings. "Glad I remembered I could do this at the last moment, gotta remember these new powers more often so I can avoid these situations."

"Earth powers? You've never shown these before, were you mocking me before by not using them?" Ellen asked annoyed.

"No, I guess sometimes you don't know what you can really do." Tohka answered, readying Sandalphon again. "But that also means you don't know some of what I can do, guess it's not as easy as you thought it would be!"

Ellen growled as Tohka playfully smirked, causing her to swing Caliburn back as it opened to reveal a tip like a spear, reminding Tohka of her former Rhongomiant spear/cannon once she saw it. Ellen gave a dark look as she held it back out.

"You haven't seen what the Arthur or Caliburn can do yet, and I intend to make your demise prolonged and painful!" Ellen smirked darkly, rushing at Tohka once more. "Now die [Princess]!"
"Not today, and not ever!" Tohka screamed, swinging Sandalphon and causing a sandstorm to blind Ellen.

'Damn, not just rock but sand!?' Ellen thought, soon feeling crystals pelt her from all directions. 'And now crystal? Damn it, she really is just mocking me now! If that's how she wants to play, then I'll give her a taste of the ultimate public humiliation!'

Ellen swung Caliburn down, and it fired a beam out as she did, cutting the sand twister and managing to hit Tohka dead center, flinging her back and causing her to tumble a bit before she got back on her feet.

"This farce needs to end, its time I kill you now!" Ellen declared, swinging Caliburn down and causing an energy wave to rip through the ground at Tohka. Time slowed through Tohka's mind as she saw it coming.

'What do I do!? Every new trick I had, my new sword skills, my earth based abilities... she barely needed any time to overcome and counter them! Am I really just fighting a losing battle!? Tohka thought, her worries about never being able to help surfacing. 'It's just like before, nothing's changed! Nothing's-'

"Don't let the stress and fear overtake you." Kotori's voice echoed out.

Tohka gasped.

'Wait, that was... it was one of the things that Kotori taught me. She's right, and I can't give up. The moment I do is when defeat's guaranteed, and I may lose the chance for a victory! Come on... remember, remember what everyone taught you!

"Believe in your Angel, believe in your power, and believe in yourself!" Origami's voice echoed.

"You summon Sandalphon forth with your desire Tohka, it bonds with you is why it answers your call and only you have the power to wield it." Yoshino's voice echoed.

"When you summon forth your power, calm your heart and still your mind. Focus on that desire and let everything else go, then let that wish come to the forefront of your senses. Treat it like nothing else matters, just that one single moment before you." Natsumi's voice echoed.

"Picture what you want, then yearn for it in the depths of your heart and then give your Angel all of it. Trust it and their power will be by your side. TO put it another way, your emotions, your will, your dreams... everything that makes you who you are, the person the Angel chose to bond with. You are the Angel's power, it's not a conduit to use your power, it's an extension of the power that's always been in you!" Kurumi's voice echoed.

Tohka's breathes and focuses, the still slowed sight of the attack aiming towards her straight in her view as she gripped Sandalphon tightly.

"Sandalphon... I don't know how well I've done my job as a Spirit, or truly wielding you. No matter what though, until the very end, please... let me, let Tohka Yatogami, fight by your side! That's all I ask!" Tohka whispered in a begging tone.

[...I will mas- no, I will Tohka!]

Tohka did this, and soon the world around her felt its normal pace of time resume, and Tohka readied Sandalphon overhead and without her even noticing... the crystal edge on the blade began to glow as it had only twice before, but this time brighter than ever! Ellen noticed.
'Wait a second, that's—' Ellen mentally gasped, recalling the time Shido had managed to make it glow in his attempt to save Tohka. With a mighty scream, Tohka swung Sandalphon down and at that moment?

Every concept of her true strength was shattered as the glow manifested as pure energy, causing a giant slash wave that cut through Ellen's slash wave without any effort, pushing her back a bit as she could only stare at what just happened to her attack.

"Impossible!" Ellen declared.

The Inverted Yamai twins prepared to cross paths again, but right before they did... Tohka's slash wave shot through and cut their twin hurricanes in half!

At that moment, both suddenly stopped in place as their dark spirit power enveloped them before turning normal orange, their Inversion having been broken with the hurricane's destruction. The other wind based phenomenon all vanishing alongside them. Both turned to the source of the attack once their senses came back to them.

"W-what just happened!?!" Kaguya gasped, visibly terrified.

"I don't know... I feel so uneasy right now." Yuzuru said, also showing some fear to what had just occurred.

Meanwhile in another area of the sky, Maria suddenly noticed the attack coming and smirked.

"Yes, the gambit paid off now... move out of the way!" Maria screamed, making the Fraxinus use its incredible mobility technique force their clash upwards a bit... and leave only the Arbitel in range of a rogue stream of energy created by Tohka's slash wave! The entire Arbitel shook as their territory output was shot.

"What the hell!?!" Marina asked in shock, trying to realize what happened. "No way... that was [Princess]'s doing? That's not possible!"

Marina suddenly noticed part of the ship was on fire... the area where the Einherjar units were being powered.

"No, not there! Without them the Einherjar will... damn it! We've got no choice, find Adeptus 1 and 3, we're changing targets to Berserk! We're not gonna lose this chance to capture them!"

James groaned at the news, but considering what had just happened right as they almost claimed victory there was no room for debate, and they were not risking the Arbitel for the kind of repair that would take forever like the previous one did.

"The enemy ship is... retreating! We did it!" Kawagoe declared, and everyone in the ship cheered at that.

"Yay. Now no one tell Commander Reine what we just pulled, otherwise she might kill us all." Maria sweat dropped, making the whole crew gulp and nod in agreement. 'Especially me, cause I'm the one who thought of it. Yikes!'
few, the group was starting to run on fumes.

"Come on, we gotta hold out a bit longer!" Kotori panted, holding Camael out as the other readied their Angels. Suddenly the sight of Tohka's spirit caught their attention from the horizon and then... all the Einherjar suddenly sparked before falling over. Everyone looked in shock.

"Hey, wait a second, that was Tohka's power so... no way! Did she do this?" Natsumi asked.

"Seems likely, she must have taken out whatever was powering them. Come on, we gotta find Origami!" Kurumi stated, making the others nod.

They all ran around looking and saw Origami on the ground with Rinne, Rio and Mayuri by her side. Mayuri was panting as she noticed the Einherjar finally stopped moving, Rio was holding a barrier around Origami and Rinne, the latter healing Origami's wounds right.

"Oh thank goodness you're OK." Rinne sighed, glad the others were alright.

"What happened to Origami?" Yoshino asked worriedly.

"Not completely sure, but I tried using my power to read her brain waves and we got some info. Apparently, she fought and barely beat the new Adeptus 3 of the DEM. Then an Einherjar got her, that was when I think we showed up to help." Mayuri explained, making the others gasp.

"Luckily she's fine, she just collapsed. Though I wonder... just who was this new Adeptus 3, and how strong was she to push Origami to this state?"

Tohka blinked at what she had just seen happen, and then finally noticed Sandalphon's edge glowing, this time the glow didn't vanish as if it was permanent. She gasped at the sight and the power she felt flowing through.

"What? How can this be? What's happened to you Sandalphon?" Tohka asked.

[I... I'm not completely sure myself! Though I've felt this once, it was... yeah! Shido made me glow for a brief moment when I let him use me. This is just a guess, but I think it's possible you just managed to unlock my true power! That would mean all this time you've fighting with two left feet!]

Tohka gasped at that, and based on what she just did... that may have been right. All the times she had felt weak and too powerless to help Shido and the others, now it had an explanation, she just didn't know she wasn't using her true power. It's like recalling what the others told her caused her to manifest the missing link she needed.

"What's going on here? How are you doing that, tell me!" Ellen demanded, feeling insulted at her strongest attack being bested so easily.

"Uh... I guess I just discovered that I wasn't using my full strength without realizing it?" Tohka answered, still a little thrown off by the whole situation. Ellen's eyes shook with rage at hearing that.

"It's just a guess!"

Ellen soon readied her sword again.

"I've changed my mind, I need to take you and that boy with me, resisting me will not be wise! I won't drop my guard again!" Ellen declared, soon taking a step forward.

Unfortunately for her... that area was a spot where the talkative trio made another of their prank traps,
and Ellen fell inside while screaming, Tohka watched as she hit the bottom hard. Blinking for a moment, she whistled as she stomped the ground, causing some rocks to drop in and fall on her.

"No... I lost to [Princess]? It's not fair, I am the greatest Wizard ever!" Ellen grunted, but soon all the damage she had taken was too much and her body gave out. "...Crap."

"Well, that's one way to beat Ellen." Tohka sweat dropped.

[Yeah... I'm doubting her claim on how strong she is now, I mean falling into a hidden pit like that? If she was that strong she should have noticed it.]

Tohka nodded, and soon she heard some groaning as she saw Shido walk into the area, rubbing his head.

"Shido!" Tohka exclaimed happily, hugging him tightly before he yelped in pain from the bruises. "Sorry! Are you alright, I was so worried!"

"Mostly, I just broke a few bones, had to them regenerate back into place. Oh, and it doesn't heal bruises." Shido winced, soon noticing Sandalphon's glow. "Wait, what happened to Sandalphon?"

"To be honest, I have no idea what's going on." Tohka answered, soon gasping. "Wait, we gotta find Kaguya and Yuzuru!"

Shido yelped in pain as Tohka dragged him somewhere, soon finding the two on the beach. To their surprise their Inversions were gone and they noticed the two, then noticing the glow from Sandalphon.

"No way, that was Tohka who did that?" Kaguya stated.

"Such incredible power, I still can't comprehend it." Yuzuru added.

Soon Tohka breathed and took a step forward.

"Kaguya! Yuzuru! This can all finally stop, there's another way!" Tohka shouted.

"You just don't get it! We already told you, there's no ending where we both come out of this alive!" Kaguya said, turning away.

"She's right, just accept the truth like we have." Yuzuru replied, doing the same.

"You're wrong! There's always been a way, you just never say it, because it's been right here!" Tohka shouted, surprising them both. "Because Shido has the power to save both of you!"

The two stare at Tohka, confused.

"Me, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori, Kurumi and Natsumi... he saved all of us, and can save you the same way! The fact we know you were always two is enough that I know this can work! You said it yourselves right. Kaguya, you care more about Yuzuru then yourself. Yuzuru, you feel the same way for Kaguya!"

The two stared at each other, fighting between trying have hope to believe, or still have reality say otherwise.

"So it's time you learn what that third option is! That option is... in exchange for having your powers sealed, you can both live!" Tohka exclaimed, making both gasp.
"Seal? W-what do you mean by seal!?” Kaguya asked.

"I agree, that doesn't..." Yuzuru began, soon realizing something. Despite being Spirits, most of the others didn't show any signs of their spirit mana leaking off them. It was almost like it wasn't there, or based on how Tohka had it now, possible to remove it and take it back. "...Wait, are you saying that's what Shido did to you all?"

Tohka nods.

"I can still use my powers, but it's all inside Shido now. If the DEM tried to detect me by my mana, they wouldn't get any results even now!" Tohka answered.

"She's telling the truth, if I sealed you both at the same time, then it might just work!" Shido added, hoping they were getting through.

"You... you can't have the power to do that, no Human or Spirit does! There's no way that'll save us both!" Kaguya cried out. "Just stop, we don't want a false-"

Tohka fires an energy blast past them, making the Yamai twins stop in turn.

"What's wrong with having hope!? You've both been faced with the fact only one of you can survive, and you barely have any time left before you have to make a choice... is it wrong for one last time that you can believe there's a chance to help you both survive!?” Tohka stated, making the twins’ eyes widen.

"All we're asking is you give us a chance to help you, I mean I just split those hurricanes you caused! If I can do that, then I think it's right to see one more time if there is such a way to save you both! If you still can't convince yourselves, then... if it does fail, the one who survives can kill me for getting your hopes up!"

Kaguya, Yuzuru and Shido all gasp at this claim, and soon Tohka feels her vision getting blurry.

"Please, just... trust us..." Tohka said weakly, Sandalphon vanished along with her Astral Dress as it reverted to her prior outfit and she collapsed forward, Shido catching her barely conscious form. "Please... I... beg you..."

The Yamai sisters just floated in place motionlessly for a moment, and then Kaguya turned a bit before breaking the ice.

"Hey, Yuzuru... what if she's right? What if Shido can save us both?" Kaguya asked.

"That would... make me happy." Yuzuru replied, looking back at her. "And if we did both make it, what would you want to do first?"

Kaguya thought about that.

"I guess... I'd like to try all the food Tohka's told me about, all of it sounded so delicious. What about you?" Kaguya asked.

"I think... maybe, no... I want to go back to school again, for real this time.” Yuzuru replied.

"Yeah, me too! The boys would be all over you too!" Kaguya giggled, before giving a somber smile. "Then again... I think we both know there's only boy we've got an eye on now."

Shido blushed at that.
'That's totally me, at this point is has to be.' Shido thought, but so far the signs seemed good.

Soon the two twins kept staring at each other in the air, and soon Tohka managed to get back up slightly with Shido holding her, the two wondering what would happen... and then Kaguya shed a tear.

"Yuzuru?" Kaguya began, getting her sister's attention as she cried. "Will you forgive me? I... I want to believe, believe that we can both survive. I know I said I'd rather give up my life for yours, but the truth is if you're not here, I'd rather die with you!"

"Kaguya..." Yuzuru replied, soon crying herself. "I feel the same! If you were to disappear, then I'd want to die too! There's no point if I'm not with you!"

Tohka and Shido smiled, and soon they heard ship engines and saw a familiar ship.

"Oh no, not that thing!" Tohka shouted worriedly.

"Heh, look at that! [Princess] is out of steam and that boy's wounded! This is it, we'll finally capture Spirits, this is our day!" Marina cackled, moving the Arbitel closer. Soon the Yamai twins looked at the ship annoyed. "Time to play fetch, deploy all remaining Einherjar units! I'll move them through my auxiliary power!

The Yamai twins looked at each other.

"Now this is just getting ridiculous. Come on, let's show them not to ruin the moment!" Kaguya exclaimed, smiling.

"I agree, let's put an end to this." Yuzuru replied, also smiling.

Both twins reach for the winds on their shoulders.

"RAPHAEL!"

Said wings finally awaken from their standby forms, detaching as for the first time since coming under the Yamai twins' possession, transforming into their true forms. Tohka and Shido looked as they saw the true form of the Angel Raphael, a bow.

"I wondered where their Angel was, take them down you two!" Tohka shouted, giving a fist pump for encouragement.

Soon the two slammed their bows together, making them glow as the two Raphael's become one, revealing the form that only exists from their power and bond as twins.

"EL KAN'APH!"

The two bows become a single three-pronged bow, having three strings to each fire an arrow from. Marina suddenly gets a warning on their power levels, and suddenly sees the arrow they were charging as the two pull the three bowstrings together, knowing they didn't have any defense due to their territory being shot...

"Oh no, change of plans! Evacuate right now!" Marina warned, typing a command for the Einherjar to all gather and allow them to escape.

The Arbitel quickly turned, and the two twins shouted together as they released the arrow which flew through the air.
All the remaining Einherjar units gathered and piled up, focusing their personal territories. They were torn to shreds, but it was enough to prevent the arrow from reaching the Arbitel, but just barely. Marina gave an annoyed look as the video feed showed her the four celebrating.

"I... hate those... children!" Marina screamed.

Soon inside one of the rooms, Rinne put a wet cloth on Origami's head, and soon gasped slightly as Origami's face twitched and she woke up.

"You finally woke up, thank goodness." Rinne smiled happily. "Glad you're OK."

"Yeah, me too. Had a bit of a bad family reunion... that Chinami lady was with the DEM all this time." Origami replied, making Rinne nod.

"How sneaky, using someone we didn't know to hide the DEM's presence right under our noses. Especially while we had that jamming keeping us from doing much. We couldn't even alert the AST members here that trouble came... no one tells Mana." Rinne stated, making everyone nod. "Hey wait... did you just say family reunion?"

Origami nodded.

"Chinami Mikazuchi... is a cousin of mine, one my parents were going to adopt. She was there when I killed my parents. She's our enemy, all because... seeing what I did made her believe we're the real monsters." Origami sighed, looking up. "I won't hesitate to face her again, but now it's clear... we have a dangerous new enemy to face."

Rio rubs her head.

"Just try to relax, don't stress yourself. Oh! And don't worry about Shido, Tohka or the Yamai twins, the jamming's gone and we heard they're all OK and heading back. Tohka even defeat Ellen!" Mayuri replied, shocking some of the others. "Well... technically she fell into a hole and then Tohka used boulders to immobilize her, but it counts as losing!"

"I agree with that, can't fight if you can't move." Natsumi nodded.

Back with Shido and Tohka, the Yamai twins landed in part of the forest where they met up with them.

"Tohka, Shido... thank you for everything. If it wasn't for you, we might have hurt a lot of people and been too stubborn to accept anything could change for us." Kaguya apologized.

"It means a lot to us all you've done just to help us, we'll be in your gratitude forever." Yuzuru thanked, both her and Kaguya bowing to them.

"Eh, no big deal. It's kinda our thing at this point. Not to mention the DEM wants our heads too." Shido chuckled, scratching their heads. "Oh yeah, you're not gonna end up Inverting again anytime soon, are you?"

The two wave their hands in denial at that.

"Oh no, we're good for now. Not sure how long though. So... this sealing thing, might wanna do it now." Kaguya stated. "Which leads to the question, how does it work?"
"Well first question to that, are you two in love with Shido." Tohka asked, making the two blush.

"U-uh... how is that relevant?" Yuzuru asked, sweating a little. Tohka suddenly turned around, trying not to laugh. "Tohka, what is so hilarious to you?"

Shido sweated a bit and soon turned to face them.

"Because I can't seal you unless that's the case." Shido replied, making the twins blush. "Though I'm guessing the both of you do, I mean considering Kaguya's one comment and Yuzuru's lack of a denial."

Kaguya flinched at that while blushing more, Yuzuru, turned her head while blushing brighter herself.

"I thought that was in my head, not my mouth!" Kaguya said embarrassed, soon shaking her head. "OK, we admit it! Don't look at us like that! We can't help how we began to feel from this whole thing!"

"OK, and after that its simple." Tohka replied, sweat dropping and looking away as she said the part she'd wish she didn't have to. "You have to kiss him. In this case, at the same time."

"What?!" Both twins shouted, and Shido only nodded with a sweat drop.

"...Alright, if we must. Please close your eyes when we do it though." Yuzuru reasoned, and Shido blinked.

"Uh... OK then, I can do that." Shido said, closing his eyes.

"I feel like we forgot something." Tohka said, too quiet for the others to hear.

At that moment, Kaguya and Yuzuru both neared Shido and kissed him on the lips, and after a moment Tohka's eyes widened as she remembered.

"Oh no, Shido... we don't have a coat! Much less two!" Tohka panicked, and Shido's eyes suddenly opened as they paled. The twins looked confused... until they suddenly saw their clothes disappear, causing both to cover themselves and kneel to the ground.

"W-We're so sorry, things got so chaotic we forgot that sealing your powers causes your current outfit to disappear!" Shido and Tohka said at the same time, both failing their arms in panic.

"SHIDO, CLOSE YOUR EYES DAMN IT!" Kaguya screamed, crying a bit.

"The ultimate shame, I'll never be able to forget this moment... the horror." Yuzuru stated, crying a bit as well.

Seeing his eyes were still open, Tohka slapped her hand over his face, causing him to scream in pain.

Meanwhile on the Arbitel as it began heading back to England for a quick repair, Ellen was using a private channel between her and Westcott. The head of the DEM quickly growled at the news, especially the fact there were two Spirits labeled Berserk, rather than just one like previously believed.

"So, the operation failed entirely?" Westcott stated, making sure he heard everything correctly.

"Correct, unfortunately it seems [Princess] had somehow failed to manifest her full power. Forgive
me. I made the mistake of forgetting there hadn't been any prior holders of the Sandalphon crystal. I made the mistake of believing she had her full strength all along." Ellen answered, anger on her face for the crushing blow on her pride.

"However, it may be possible that wasn't the case at all. This may just confirm that Shido Takamiya really does possess the power that falls into your plans. Perhaps for now rather than the Spirits..."

Westcott thinks on that before smirking.

"You're right, wait for the next Spirit to appear, next time we won't try to capture it. We'll use their attempts to seal it in a place to trick them and hopefully... we'll catch Shido Takamiya himself. It's time we reach for the core rather than its parts." Westcott replied, smirking.

"Understood, I'll alert the others. Hopefully we can get Chinami to drop her vendetta against the Spirits for a while, especially [Angel]." Ellen nodded, soon cutting the connection before holding up a tablet holding Tohka's spirit data on it. "We'll deal with them when we get the required result."

On it, the tablet showed her data updated. Her strength, consistency, spiritual power and agility had all gone up by around 50 each, or rather had been 50 lower than her full potential was. Also, her Risk factor and Spacequake ranking had bumped up to S and A rank respectively.

"Once that's finished, I'll finally come and destroy you myself [Princess]. No... Tohka Yatogami." Ellen said, her thumb shattering the part of the tablet where Tohka's face was.

The follow day, the return trip to Tenguu City had finally arrived, and luckily for the Yamai twins they found out to their joy that Shido sealing them had indeed done it and saved the both of them. Tohka having to explain the whole oddity to the others.

Currently as they waited for the plane, the sight of Kotori, Kurumi, Yoshino and Natsumi standing in a square pattern was seen. Each of them holding their hands back.

"Alright, Tohka and Origami won the spots for sitting with Shido on the way here, now we're competing for who gets them on the way back." Natsumi declared, and the other three nodded.

Shido gulping as some of the usual male students glared at him. "OK, one, three... shoot!"

Six hands appeared, four rocks and two papers. The four all looked in shock to see the Yamai twins were the two papers.

"We win!" Kaguya smirked.

"That means we'll be the two getting to sit with Shido on the way back home." Yuzuru added, causing the two hug his arms... and press their breasts onto them again. Shido went red. "Wow Shido, I didn't know you were shy about this kind of thing."

The guys glare more as they start to add growls.

"Uh... what's with them?" Mayuri asked.

"Jealousy, they hate my son gets all the girls' attention because she's actually nice." Rinne replied, turning her eyes at the boys annoyed.

"Oh, is that cause they're in big brother's harem." Rio said innocently, not realizing the bomb she just set off. Rinne, Mana and Shido all staring in horror as Rio blinked. "Did Rio say something wrong?"
The guys glares all become more murderous as Shido shakes.

"I knew it, he was going after all the girls! Now he's got eight of them! Get him!" The main guy yelled, and they all rushed at him.

A certain silver haired Spirit noticed this and wrote {the group of rushing boys all slip on a waxed part of the floor and crash into the wall, never making it to Shido} in response to the sight, and soon enough... they all slip, completely miss Shido, and crash into the wall to everyone's shock and confusion.

Nia quietly walked away and teleported before anyone saw her. Not too long after, everyone headed home while Nia watched from a certain spot on the plane.

"I don't think he's ready, but I think it's worth giving him a trial run now." Nia smirked.

Once everyone had returned to Ratatoskr, Rinne was suddenly asked by Elliot to talk with him in a private room. Once they were in...

"I've recently received a rather disturbing report from one of our info diggers, they intercepted something about plans Westcott and Ellen were talking about in the brief moment the Arbitel's communications were unprotected from their territory output being depleted." Elliot began, with Rinne nodding as she listened.

"I didn't get to hear much of it, but it seems that Westcott's not as interested in the Spirits as of recently, but your son's ability to seal them within himself."

Rinne gasped at that.

"What? Are you sure about this, no room for doubt?" Rinne asked.

"I'm afraid so, and you and I both know why something bad happening to Shido is the last thing we need." Elliot continued, making Rinne listen as she sweated a bit.

"If the DEM were to somehow actually kill him... calamity could befall the spirits we worked so hard to seal. Not only could their powers return to them, but their very bonds with Shido could lead all of them undergo a simultaneous Inversion. You and I know we cannot let that happen."

Rinne sighs.

"I see..." Rinne nods.

"I'm sorry I had to reveal such an unpleasant discover to you, but I'm afraid we have no other choice. Especially since if they're interested in Shido like a Spirit..." Elliot stated.

"Don't worry, I understand. It's like you said. We can't let the worst come to pass, after all... there's likely no chance that any of us would survive if someone manages to cause a [Category F]." Rinne answered.

Oh yeah, now that was awesome! The Yamai twins have been both sealed, and neither of them is dying now, thank you sealing for fixing Sephira Crystal irregularities! Also... surprise on that twist with Chinami! To be honest, that was something I added last minute because I felt it would help flesh things out more, plus I need to give her a rival like how Tohka's rival is Ellen, and Mana's rival is Jessica.
First thing I should probably talk about is the power Tohka just managed to achieve, because Sandalphon guessed it exactly right. All this time, and partially due to being the only host of the Sandalphon Crystal, Tohka didn't even realize she wasn't using all of her power. Believe it or not, the last chapter of Tohka's arc even hinted this (the moment Ellen reacted to upon seeing the blade edge glow), and from here on out she's finally got full strength!

Now you might be wondering, how does this effect Tohka's data sheet? Well her Risk Factor and Spacequake ranks both went up by one, so Tohka's now an S-Rank Spirit with a A-Rank Spacequake level. Her actual stats? Unchanged, but I will submit her data sheet to show you all how much of her stats she's actually managed to use before now, plus I need to update it due to her earth abilities she gained in Natsumi's arc.

So, you're probably all thinking that Miku's arc is next now? Well... *begins a drum roll*

WRONG!

Its Nia that's next! Yeah, you heard me right, I'm bring Nia in before Miku. That's all I'm gonna say though, you'll understand why when I finally start Nia's arc in the next chapter. *snickers* :3

[Category F]... that sounds grim, but what is it? Not much to go on other than apparently its gonna kill everyone based on Rinne's words. *gets closer to all of you* DUN, DUN, DUN! *moves back* Well, that my fellow friends and readers will not be answered until near the end of this season. My refusal to reveal it is even so great, should you manage to actually guess it via review or PM... I will not tell if you guessed right. It's that big a deal for this season that I can't confirm or deny any guess you make about it.

That's a rap for the Yamai arc, so I hope you all enjoyed it. See you all next time and stay awesome! ^^

A/N: The stats in the parenthesis are how much of Tohka's full power she's actually been able to use before this chapter, and just to avoid confusion, Tohka's number stats are the same.

-Tohka Yatogami (At Full Power), Code Name: [Princess]-

Angel: Sandalphon, the "Throne of Annihilation" - Sandalphon is a powerful two-handed sword that Tohka is strong enough to wield with only one, namely her dominant left hand, that appears from a golden throne. Sandalphon's power comes in the form of pure mana and powerful enough some of the strongest defenses in the world. Sandalphon's true power is only confirmed to be active if the crystalline edge of the blade is glowing, otherwise Tohka is only using some of the Angel's full power. Using the Angel's full power requires a deep focus of one's willpower and emotions.

- Alternate Form: Halvanhel ev, the "Sword of the End" - By shattering her throne into pieces, the shards can combine with Sandalphon to transform the sword into a massive single-edged zanbatō-like sword. While the sword's larger size decreases the speed at which Tohka can swing it, it gives it the power to equal a Demon King's base form. Tohka mentions she must be careful not to use too much power from Halvanhelev at once, or the mana inside of it will overload and cause an explosion, though this problem vanishes if Sandalphon's true
- Chrysaor: Not an actual form of Sandalphon itself, but Sandalphon can be used in conjunction with it. By kicking her throne, Tohka can shift it into a flying vehicle form and drive it using her willpower. This allows Tohka to use her powers without any limitations from flying normally. If Sandalphon is sheathed in the scabbard area, Tohka can spin the throne to make a slash wave or rush forward for a piercing attack. For some reason, this alternate form allowed Tohka to learn how to drive without training or practice.

- Powers: Tohka's elemental affinity as a Spirit is pure Mana with Earth as her secondary elemental affinity, mainly in the form of causing seismic waves, summoning her throne from the ground, and manipulating stone, sand or crystals. She can utilize energy blasts with her hands or fingertips, as well as create shock waves with a mere arm swipe. She also has supernatural strength and speed even when not using her powers, the ability to sense if she's in danger that's often called her 'Sixth Sense', and her sense of smell even more potent than a dog's.

Risk Factors: S (AAA)

Spacequake: A (B)

Spirit's Astral Dress: AAA

Angel Rank: AAA

Strength: 230 (178)

Consistency: 178 (124)

Spiritual Power: 201 (153)

Agility: 168 (118)

Intelligence: 100 (100)

-Spirit Bond Levels-

Tohka - 86%

Origami - 83%

Yoshino - 78%

Kotori - 80%

Kurumi - 76%

Natsumi - 51%

Kaguya - 47%

Yuzuru - 47%
Welcome to the next arc everyone, Nia Test. This arc is a little different from the rest for three reasons. I won't say what they are though. The first two if you noticed them will likely clue you in on the shocking swerve I'll be throwing in by the end, which is also the third reason. Maybe some of you might see it coming, and maybe you might not. Either way, I hope you at least enjoy the chapter.

Now, before I somehow forget to do this again... *looks at the Natsumi and Yamai arcs* the emotion of this arc is "Curiosity", quite fitting for a Spirit who writes a manga series don't you think? *sighs* I kinda wish Silver Bullet was real, cause the story just makes it sound so interesting! Fiction in fiction, it often never sees the light of day, if any of them even do at all T^T

Oh yeah, while the Miku arc isn't until after this one, you will see a familiar scene from it and a mention of her, that's right... I'm talking about Shido being voted in as the Ten-Oh Festival organizer. My reasoning and justification for this is that it felt like the festival got set up way too fast. So I'm having the preparations begin here to make its pacing more realistic, plus I feel it's actually the perfect chance to get Shido to meet Nia anyways so... win-win ^^

Let's take a look at Nia's data sheet and then we'll get this arc started!

-Nia Honjou, Code Name: [Sister]-

Angel: Raziel, the "Tome of Revelation" - Raziel is a simply futuristic tome made of metal and some unique kind of paper, every page in the book is blank and eventually becomes blank after any additions are made to it. Raziel is a near-omniscient Angel, if Nia has a question for it then it's likely to give her an answer, however some information appears in the language of the Spirits which only Rinne can read. Nia can also draw or write something in Raziel's pages to manipulate events up to a maximum of five minutes into the future, or temporarily create a living or non-living object she draws.

- Alternate Form: Thoth - By opening Raziel quickly and drawing through the flipping pages, Nia can manifest a world of imagination from its pages. The space around the world of Thoth is mentioned to be about a 1 kilometer radius. The objects or creatures that manifest within the world of Thoth are considered living within it, so one needs to make careful contact with what's within the radius.

- Alternate Form: Kirigami - By imbuing some of the pages in Raziel with her spirit power, Nia can rip copies of the pages off to make paper warriors that are giving life through her mana. The Kirigami however don't possess wills or understand commands Nia gives them, therefore she must write a set command for them to follow that starts with "The Kirigami will" followed by the chosen commands, otherwise they'll do nothing but stand in place.

- Powers: Nia'a's elemental affinity as a Spirit is Imagination, if Nia can fantasize it, dream it or invent it then she might be able to manifest it depending on what it is and some limitations, a prime example being that Nia managed to ask Raziel a specific set of questions that allowed
her to discover a method to always escape from DEM wizards before they can even get near her and outrun them for 27 years. Some of the limits to Nia's powers is she can only manipulate the fate of events and how the effect people, as Nia can't use Raziel to create love or to kill someone, and if she creates something then it won't exist forever. Should she form something that doesn't or has yet to exist, she can't use it to learn how it will eventually be created.

Risk Factors: A
Spacequake: C
Spirit's Astral Dress: B
Angel Rank: S
Strength: 80
Consistency: 178
Spiritual Power: 155
Agility: 169
Intelligence: 205

Chapter 35, S2: Nia Test, Part 1

Tohka, Yoshino and Natsumi were all seen looking a paper that Reine handed to them as she made a small stop at the apartment, it was something about being part of the group's class at Raizen High yet not actually being students, for the second semester.

"Uh... what?" Tohka asked, completely confused. "We're in school, yet we're... not in... school? What is this?"

"For once even I'm confused, and that's saying something!" Natsumi claimed, just as tongue tied from what she was seeing.

"I told Kannazuki these were too complicated, but no. He insists 'they're smart girls Commander, they'll understand', remind me to lecture him later." Reine sighed, soon sitting down.

"We figured with how the DEM's moves are getting more focused recently as of Westcott taking full power, it would be best to keep all of Ratatoskr together the best we could at all times. So, since there are a few class re-arrangements for some classes at this time of year, we'd have you be in the class acting as students without officially being enrolled, use Tamae's classroom as an all Ratatoskr class. Consider it having access to the fun of school, but being able to skip all of the dumb and boring stuff."

Tohka blinks before grabbing Yoshino and Natsumi's papers and throwing them all into the air.

"That means I can spend all day with Shido and not have to deal with any learning at school! Yay!" Tohka cheered, soon jump dancing around the room as she twirled around. Soon stopping as her stomach growled. "And now I want Doritos."
Everyone face faults as Tohka grabs a bag of them.

"How’d she go from cheering to dancing to getting hungry for Doritos?" Kaguya asked, surprised as she turned away for a moment. They moment she turned back she suddenly had her jaw drop as Tohka had eaten five bags of them. "What the!?

"Oh yeah, you guys didn't get to see how large Tohka's appetite is in Okinawa." Shido replied, sweat dropping slightly.

"Where does she put it all?" Yuzuru asked, looking at Tohka's figure... until she saw her chest. Causing Tohka to tilt her head as Yuzuru quickly turned away. "...Never mind, I think I know."

Mana groaned at that, making Rinne kneel by the twins' ears.

"Don't mention anything about Spirits and chest sizes together, she's really sensitive over the fate she's small compared to everyone else." Rinne whispered loudly.

"I can hear you mom, and that's because you suck at being quiet when whispering!" Mana called out. Making Rinne's eyes widen before she blushed, leading her to slowly back track out of the room.

Soon the next few days after, everyone was back in Raizen High for the Second Semester, and a new building was present on the campus grounds within part of the greenfield areas which had some of its trees shifted to create the campus grounds for the new structure and any needed fields for things like gym class.

The public story was that this was a building made to house a special class for some students who earned special honors for their efforts, but that was to cover up the fact that it was really a sub-base for everyone in Ratatoskr who was within school age.

Within the classroom walls, all the Ratatoskr allied students from Tamae's class were present like before, all of them in casual clothes since they were now in a private area of the school, only requiring their uniforms if they had to visit the public campus. The doors open as the new 'students' came in, Tohka rushed over to Shido and hugged him.

"Shido! I'm so excited to be here, this is gonna be fun! Now we get to be together almost all day every day!" Tohka exclaimed, smiling brightly. Everyone sweat dropped as they saw Shido choking slightly up until Tohka let go. "Best idea ever!"

"G-Glad to see you happy about it... Tohka." Shido coughed, soon inhaling to regain the air Tohka squeezed out of him. At that moment, Saya slid across the floor as she came into the room, giving a dramatic pose as she did.

"And Saya Yamada has entered the classroom!" Saya declared, making everyone sweat drop as Kurumi just giggled as her best friend's antics. "Now come on everyone, get in here! We've gotta make this official!"

The sight of Mikie, Katie, Leonora, Cecile and a few other Ratatoskr members entering the room were scene.

"Wow, most of the gang's all here!" Kurumi smiled, and soon noticed another face enter the room, no longer with her crutches as she did. "Artemisia!"

"I finally got the OK to walk without my crutches, so hi there everyone." Artemisia smiled, waving
her hand. "I'll even be able to start aiding the AST again soon enough."

Soon after that, everyone else who fit the description of the attending class had come in before Tamae and Reine walked in as the former carried a big smile.

"Welcome everyone, and I'm glad to announce the first day of the second semester! Not only that, but the official opening of the Ratatoskr Classroom." Tamae smiled, soon looking at the door. "Now while technically a formality, I'd like you all to meet our second assistant teacher and her little aid."

Rinne soon ran in with Rio piggybacking her, nearly tripping once she came to a stop before regaining her footing and looking at everyone. Mayuri sweat dropped at the sight before Rinne smiled and waved at everyone.

"Hey everyone, Rinne Sonogami here and ready to help teach!" Rinne smiled, making Reine sigh before smirking a bit.

"Well, guess it's good some of us are having more fun with it than others." Reine replied, soon looking at the class. "Everyone, I believe most of you are aware that today we have a school assembly. So get your uniforms on and head over to hear it. For those who don't have one yet, come see me before you leave."

"OK!" Everyone replied at once, soon heading over and getting a uniform if they lacked one already. One they did, everyone was waiting in the gym as the talkative trio suddenly appeared on stage for the announcement.

"Welcome everyone! As you all know, the Ten-Oh Festival is about to turn its head once more, are you all excited!?!" Ai asked, hearing everyone cheer. "I can't hear you!"

Everyone cheered again, most of the Spirits a bit confused on what this event was.

"Now the time for this year's organizer to be chosen is here, the results of our ruthless poll are in! And with an overwhelming number of votes, our winner is..." Ai announced, soon turning to the screen... only to have her eyes widen as Shido appears on it. "Shido Takamiya!? Wait, are we sure this is right?"

Shido shouted out in shock, soon suddenly forced on stage by someone.

"How'd I get voted in!?" Shido asked, completely confused.

"I have no idea, but the votes are legit." Mai replied, shrugging her shoulders a bit. Mii was looking at the votes and saw something odd.

"Weird, it seems like most of the votes came from boys-" Mii stated, and then suddenly they and Shido all went silent as the screen showing Shido's vote total and the 99% of the voters being male was suddenly explained. "Oh no..."

Soon some of Shido's former classmates, and many of the male students standing in the shadows of the crowd all gave evil looks and smiles at the result.

"Serves him right!"

"That's what he gets for always being lovey dovey with all the cuties and taking them for his apparent harem!"

"He had it coming!"
Suddenly most of those boys felt something hit them where the sun doesn't shine as Mana was tossing some marbles with an angry face. Making Saya stare at her before smirking and holding out a hand for a high five.

"That's what I'm talking about it, you show them sister!" Saya stated, getting her high five returned. "Plus..."

Saya whispers to Natumi, who's eyes widen as she smirks.

"Oh yes boys, thank you for giving Shido the perfect opportunity to be with his girls planning all the events and stuff alone. You gave us all so much personal time." Natumi stated, suddenly making all those boys pale as that factoid came to light and Saya snickered.

"No wait, I wanna change my vote!"

Soon all the male students complained at their plan backfiring as Saya and Natumi fist bumped at that. Hiroto chuckled at that.

"It just shows when you try to play with fire, you'll only get burned." Hiroto stated, noticing the other male students' sudden disappointment and tears. Soon he sees Tohka looking at him.

"What is up Tohka?"

"What is this Ten-Oh Festival anyways?" Tohka asked.

"Oh, that's right, it wasn't around at your time." Hiroto said, bringing up his phone to show some pictures.

"It's a joint event hosted by the ten High Schools that make up Tenguu City. Every year events are planned for students and citizens to enjoy, even some tourists get excited by this, in fact we even hold polls to vote each school's efforts in booths, exhibitions and performances. The school that wins gets a lot of prize money to add to its budget, and bragging rights for the next year."

Tohka's eyes sparkle.

"Wow, that sounds awesome! Has Raizen ever one before?" Tohka asked.

"Only once, a lot of schools can really pull out some big shots. The competition is especially fierce through Ebunishi High and Senjo University high. Though the clear winner has had the top spot for the last 15 years. I think Saya and Kurumi know which school this is." Hiroto explained, looking at the two.

"Rindouji actually kept winning ever after 5 years? Whoa... I knew our old school was good, but not that good." Kurumi replied surprised, and seeing Tohka's curious face. "Oh right, you don't know. Rindouji is a Girls Only Private school, the students there are either from wealthy families or earned scholarships."

Hiroto nods.

"Not to mention that as of last year they've gained a powerful new addition that dominated the stage portion. The famous new idol, Miku Izayoi!" Hiroto declared, making Shido blink as he finally walked back to the crowd.

"Who's Miku?" Shido asked, making Hiroto gasp.

"Shido, I am shocked. How do you not know the mysterious new and popular idol?" Hiroto asked.
"Uh... because I've been saving the lives of unique and keeping them all happy?" Shido answered, almost implying he asked what should have been a rhetorical question and making Hiroto sigh. "What?"

Hiroto shook his head.

"Shido, if you can't be at least up to date with things like this, people are gonna consider you a Neanderthal at this rate." Hiroto stated, making Shido sweat drop at that. Soon turning and patting his back. "Though if you can find another non-Spirit who doesn't know who she is, I'll kneel over and eat spaghetti while doing a handstand."

Saya blinks for a bit before looking at Kurumi.

"Do you know who this Miku girl is?" Saya asked, making Hiroto go white as Mana suddenly began laughing. All the while... none of them noticed the Yamai twins getting so cuddly it almost looked like they were flirting.

Soon the time of sunset came, and Shido was with Yoshino, Saya and Artemisia getting out of the supplies they needed. They had just finished and were preparing to head back to the Takamiya Household.

"Man, its only day one and already they're already making me work my butt off." Shido sighed, soon turning to Saya. "Oh, and thanks for what you did at the assembly earlier. I owe you one Saya."

"No need, you making Kurumi stay happy is all the payment I need. After all, it did kinda bring me back to live," Saya replied, making Shido chuckle a bit. "It's a good thing we left Natsumi with Tohka. Even if she can eat anything, I'm sure you don't want her putting anything inorganic in her stomach."

As if right on cue, Natsumi was seen cooking at home, putting out some plates of food before Tohka could start munching on one of the couch pillows.

"Wait, that's a real thing?" Artemisia asked surprised, but before she got an answer they heard someone collapse.

"Hey look, over there." Yoshino pointed out, making everyone see a silver haired girl wearing a hat and spectacles on the ground. Her stomach growling loudly as she twitched across the ground, reaching a hand out shakily.

"Dang it, forgot to eat... after that rush hour." Nia weakly said, collapsing onto the ground.

"I got her." Artemisia replied, grabbing her and rushing to the nearest fast food joint before putting $10 dollars down. "Give me the biggest thing that you can make nearly instantly, and keep the change."

The stall person's eyes widen before he rushes to make some fries, once he hands to Artemisia, Nia's nose twitched before she suddenly grabbed them and scarfed them all down.

"Oh thank god, food!" Nia sighed in relief, soon suddenly burping loudly. "...And sorry."

"Wow, she was really hungry." Yoshino stated, and suddenly Saya's eyes shifted a bit as she looked a bit more at the woman who blinked at what she was doing... and then Saya screamed in surprised. "W-What is it Saya?"
Saya mutters gibberish until Shido hit her on the back.

"That woman, does anyone know who that is? T-that's Souji Hasegawa! She's the creator of most popular ongoing manga right now, Silver Bullet!" Saya whispered to them, getting Shido and Artemisia's attention as their eyes widened and turn to her. Nia shrugged at that.

"Surprise?" Nia answered, moving the sunglasses up to confirm it. "Say you aren't gonna suddenly announce I'm here, are you?"

Saya shook her head at that.

"Good. Now if you could do me all a favor, mind getting me more food? Those fries are only gonna work temporarily." Nia said, her stomach still rumbling. "And there's the first warning sign of my starvation."

"Uh... sure, we were just heading home and dinner's waiting." Shido replied, looking at Saya and Artemisia. "You guys wanna join us."

"Sure, I don't mind." Artemisia replied.

"Let me call my parents real quick." Saya said, taking out her phone. "Hey mamá, papá. Uno de mis amigos me invitó a cenar, razón por la cual estoy hablando en español para evitar la embarazosa mi. Es eso OK?"

She hears them answer and nods.

"OK, gracias chicos! Te quiero!" Saya replied in Spanish, hanging up the phone. "They said I can."

"You know how to speak Spanish?" Yoshino said surprised, and Saya nods. "Then why haven't you used it before?"

"Because I only use it when I don't want someone who speaks English to know what I'm saying." Saya answered, making everyone blink at her. "...What? Like you don't have things you don't want people to hear?"

Everyone nods at that, admitting it was true. Nia followed the group home right after that.

Natsumi whistled while she finished the last of the food, and soon she noticed Shido and the others walk in.

"Hey Shido, welcome back-" Natsumi stopped as she noticed their guest, and rubbed her eyes briefly as she blinked. "OK, not an illusion. Who the guest of yours?"

"Oh, this is-"

Shido's words were interrupted as everyone suddenly heard Mana scream, prompting her to rush over to Nia to her surprise.

"Y-Y-You're Souji Hasegawa! The maker, author and illustrator of Silver Bullet, my favorite manga series! I'm you're biggest fan!" Mana exclaimed, shaking Nia's hands as the silver haired spirit blinked and most of the others went wide eyed.

"You're THAT Souji?" Kotori asked, familiar with the name due to Mana owning every volume of the series. "Holy macaroni!"
Nia sighed playfully before tossing the hat and sunglasses off to the side.

"Yes, I'm the genius behind Silver Bullet. Hold your applause everyone." Nia confirmed, soon seeing Mana suddenly holding some Silver Bullet merchandise. "You want an autograph on those, don't you?"

Mana blushed a bit and nodded.

"Eh, guess it doesn't hurt anyone." Nia said, taking a permanent marker from somewhere and signing it all. Mana breathed heavily before fainting.

"Rio's confused, why is big sis napping?" Rio asked, noticing Mana on the ground. Nia blinked at that last part before Rio looked at her and made her sweat a little. "You look familiar, does Rio know you?"

Nia mentally sighed at that, Rio didn't recognize her right now.

'Good, the disguise is working.' Nia thought, soon rubbing the kid's head. "No, I don't think I've seen you before. Maybe you're familiar with one of my photos?"

"Hmm... Rio might be, Rio doesn't always remember things." Rio smiled, soon going to the table.

"Good idea kid, if I don't eat now I'll collapse again." Nia said as she grabbed a plate, making everyone minus the group who found her earlier give her confused looks. "I sometimes forget to eat when I get into some of my work."

Everyone nods and gives an 'oh' with their mouths, soon joining everyone at the table, minus Nia who was just eating by the counter. Mana looked at Nia, who held a finger out.

"Sorry kid, no spoilers." Nia answered, making Mana pout as she ate her food. Nia soon finished her meal and stood up. "I'm gonna borrow the bathroom real quick, then I gotta leave. Deadlines are murder."

Nia soon walks into the bathroom and locks the door, after looking left and right for anything odd in place, she takes off her glasses. Her body glowed a silvery color for a moment as her short hair suddenly grew out, changed from an adult to teen in appearance, and her flat and average figure changing into a more buxom and curvy one.

"Woo boy... using that disguise for long periods of time always leaves a weird feeling after I go back to normal." Nia said, shaking her head and body slightly to shrug off the odd feeling changing back gave her. She summons her Angel and looks at it. "Is that how you feel whenever I have to write in you?"

[Er... I'd say it's more ticklish than weird, but I don't like being tickled so I still understand the off feeling you get.]

Nia shrugs and nods, soon opening Raziel to its blank pages.

"Now let's figure out where boy's gonna be in the next few days. Raziel, show me his current plans." Nia asked, causing the tome to show {preparing Raizen's Ten-Oh Festival presentations as its chosen organizer.} to her surprise. "Ah, seems like I'll be able to meet with boy easier than I intended. I've got something there tomorrow."

Nia smirks as she placed her glasses back out, changing her back to her appearance as Souji Hasegawa. She flushed the toilet just to be safe and walked out, as she neared the door, using what
she just learned she pretended to notice the shopping bags Shido's group had as odd.

"Huh, usually don't see kids buying this stuff. You working on a project or something boy?" Nia asked, making Shido look at her.

"Oh no, I'm unfortunately my school's organizer for the Ten-Oh Festival." Shido answered, making Nia give him an interesting look. "What?"

"I just happen to be having something at Tenguu Square tomorrow, you'll be going there anyways so why not come and take a look? I'll even let them know that I invited you personally. After all, I think your sister might be interested in something... exclusive?" Nia smirked, and Mana suddenly grabbed Shido's arms.

"Ow! O-OK, I'll come! Just stop hurting me Mana!" Shido gasped, making Mana scream victoriously. "And that'll sting for a while... and my full name's Shido Takamiya as a heads up."

"Alright, see you there boy." Nia replied, noticing Shido's look. "I don't use names unless someone's a close friend, that happens when you have thousands of fans."

Nia walked out, leaving Rinne to blink at the situation.

"So... is that a normal thing for humans?" Rinne asked, everyone shook their heads. "Really? Huh, the more you learn."

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Soon at the Tenguu Square building, Shido along with most of the Ratatoskr agents were present for preparations for the eventual Ton-Oh Festival in a few days. Rio's eyes sparkled at how big the building was.

"Rio's never seen something to big before, Rio's excited." Rio stated, smiling brightly.

"And you'll get to explore the rest of it when the festival finally begins." Rinne smiled, petting her daughter's head. She turned to Shido right after. "Shido, me and the others will help set things out for you while you take Mana to visit that author woman. Just sends us any updates through that... uh, is it that texting thing?"

Saya facepalms.

"Yes Rinne, the texting thing." Saya sighed, shaking her head worriedly. "Please hurry back."

"Right..." Shido replied, sweat dropping a bit. Mana soon hugged his arm tightly in excitement. "Ow! Mana, stop that, it's hurting- Ow! That hold's crossing a line now!"

Shido guided Mana as he tried to force his little sister's grip off, eventually they reached a certain area inside the building where a man was standing by a door that lead to Nia's event. Once he noticed them come close he held out a hand.

"Halt, no uninvited guests or those without a pass or ticket allowed. Go somewhere else." The security man said.

"Uh... actually Souji invited us herself, does a Shido Takamiya ring a bell?" Shido asked, holding up his school ID.

The man went silent before he checked a list he held in his pocket, and sure enough that name was listed on personal invitations. He took a step to the side.
"You're clear." The security man replied, and Mana squealed. "No squealing or any other loud fan noises outside of the room please."

Mana put her hands over her mouth and muffled said squeal, soon the two walked in as they saw Nia wearing black jacket/coat hybrid with a mini-cape that had a red inside draped over her shoulders. A similar longer cape around her waist, flapping against her gray pants that showed some of a white shirt under the coat with black cross markings and asymmetrical boots with the right one being up to her knees and the other her ankle, and a pair of silver guns in her hands.

She was cross dressing as a character, specifically Fatima, the fabled 'Silver Bullet' and protagonist from her manga it shared the name with. Nia soon does his signature pose, causing Mana and many other fans to all scream and take pictures.

'Holy crap, Hiroto wasn't lying... these things DO get crazy!' Shido thought, noting how wild and uninhibited Mana currently was in comparison to her usual self. He even had to grab his sister as she nearly tried to tackle Nia.

"Thank you all for coming, now if you'll excuse me, feel free to look around. Glad my fans are happy with my work." Nia replied, soon giving an upside-down finger point that set them off again. Some guards had to hold back the crazier fans as Nia noticed the Takamiya siblings. "Ah, I see you made it boy, girl."

Mana smiled brightly.

"I'm so excited right now, I don't care you didn't even use my name." Mana said, her smile so wide that you'd worry it would get stuck if mouths required breakable gears to move themselves. "I think you said the other day about something... exclusive?"

"Huh? When did I say that, I don't recall it?" Nia wondered, making Mana's face pale... only for Nia to making a teasing smile and chuckle. "I'm just messing with ya! Here, this is a spare."

Mana suddenly went silent as she caught a copy of Futima's cosplay outfit, and after a few seconds she screamed so loud that her voice failed to project. It was only a few seconds after she fainted in her brother's arms.

"Man, girl's crazy obsessed with this manga, isn't she?" Nia chuckled, slapping Mana's cheek to go wake her up. "It's even got another autograph on there in white. Enjoy it, only brownie points you're ever getting."

Mana nodded heavily before nearly stumbling as she went to find Rinne and the others, and actually tripping over her slightly before leaving the room.

"So, uh... is that it or..." Shido asked, unsure how to reply. Nia grabbed his arm. "Wait, what-"

"You boy, you're coming with me." Nia replied, making him shout as he was suddenly dragged off somewhere. 'Can't believe the guy who's saved eight Spirits is this easily surprised and nervous. Makes me wonder what they all see in him, well except that girl with the butterfly ribbon.'

With the others, Tohka felt an itch on her nose and she suddenly sneezed.

"You alright?" Mikie asked.

"Yeah, I'm alright. Though that came out of nowhere." Tohka replied, sniffling before wiping it. "Maybe Shido or Mana's talking about me?"
Rinne tilted her head confused.

"It's a weird thing people like to say often, if someone's thinking about you and far away from you, you'll suddenly sneeze." Katie replied, making Rinne's face contort with confusion.

"Then why don't I sneeze often?" Rinne wondered aloud, making everyone sweat drop. Mana soon came back with the others, nearly stumbling again as she held her recently acquired Futima cosplay. "Oh, hey sweetie, what's that you got there?"

"...My life is complete." Mana answered, giving something of a lovesick giggle as everyone sweat dropped at her. "It's complete."

Mayuri tried to say something but just scrunched her lip in.

"At this rate, I'm worried she might tell us she wants to marry that Souji woman... please say she's already married." Mayuri asked, gulping a bit after saying that.

Shido found himself panted as he helped Nia pass out copies of various volumes of the Silver Bullet manga with exclusive covers to her various fans as they buy them out, Shido was surprised how Nia was able to react and didn't even seem tired by this. Heck, she was having a snack and only had one free hand!

"Hey boy, you're slowing up a bit." Nia stated, making Shido regain his focus.

"Right! Sorry!" Shido replied, handing out more as Nia quietly snickers. After about 30 minutes of non-stop manga handouts, they finally sold out and Shido slumped to the ground. "I don't think I can feel my hands anymore!"

"Sheesh boy, man up. Aren't boys supposed to be the gender with the bigger muscles?" Nia smirked, making Shido sigh. "Then again, you got that harem on you so man they're the ones defending you."

Shido looks up at that.

"Oh come on, like it wasn't obvious? You got two people with blue hair excluding you, two with pink, and the others are all the same age as you and you pretty much said with your words that they're living in the house." Nia stated, making Shido blink before nodding slightly.

"Plus I've seen another guy with a harem before. Sheesh, you think people would see them more often considering the reason why polygamy and such was made legal. I mean hello? 30 years ago, the population dropped from 8 billion to 2 billion, we're only at about 3.5 billion now, gotta restore our numbers while the Spacequakes constantly threaten to kill us. You'd think more people would do it, but no they don't."

Shido stared at her, making Nia clear her throat.

"Sorry, we all have things we take seriously and that's one of mine." Nia replied, clearing her throat again. "So how many of those girls are actually your harem and not family?"

"W-Why would you ask me that!?" Shido screamed in shock.

"There's no law against it, is there?" Nia smirked, making Shido groan and slam his head on the table. "Come on, don't be shy."

Shido raised his head slowly.
"Eight, two were my sisters, one was my mom and one was... well she'll be my cousin soon so she doesn't count." Shido answered.

"Ooh! Looks like we've got a real Casanova here." Nia teased, making Shido blush at that. "I get the feeling you're not even done yet either. How many more you want? Going for a dozen?"

"Stop it!" Shido blushed, making Nia laugh and fall out of her chair. "What is wrong with you Souji!?"

Nia stopped laughing and climbed back in her chair.

"I make a fictional stories, curiosity and inspiration are a key thing to those." Nia answered, making Shido sigh. "Hey, at least they seem to care about you. Better a harem is happy than it is large."

Shido blinked on that, surprised at the solid advice she just gave him.

"Uh... yeah, I guess that's a compliment. Thanks." Shido smiled, making Nia shrug. Suddenly he felt Nia pull his arm again. "Wait, what are you making me do now!?"

"You'll see, now don't complain. You chose to come after all." Nia answered, making Shido groan.

Back with the others as they were setting up, some of the Spirits were reading the first volume of Silver Bullet, getting quickly interested in the story.

"Wow, this is as good as Mana implies it." Kaguya noted.

"It seems like this half of the century's version of that One Piece series, we need to ask Mana to let us read the rest." Yuzuru agreed.

"Told ya!" Mana smiled from afar, her face blushing from the joy that still had yet to leave her.

"I admit it's good, but I prefer Other Fake to this." Kurumi admitted, making Mana gasp at her claim in shock. "Hey, don't gasp at that. It's like how not everyone likes the same flavor of ice cream."

Mana blinks before turning and whistling.

"Thank you Mana." Kurumi smiled, soon thinking a bit. "...Say, where is Shido?"

"I think he's still with Souji, wonder what he's doing?" Mana wondered.

Shido soon found himself at Nia's apartment complex, she put her hand on the scanner and opened it up.

"...What are you doing? You made me help you sell your manga out, and now I'm out your house. Is this some kind of mixed message you've giving me?" Shido asked, honestly confused at this point. Nia thinks for a bit and gives a cat like smile.

"Oh? Boy, are you implying you think this is a date?" Nia asked, making Shido blush and suddenly sputter unintelligibly as a result. Nia snickers. "I don't think our age gap's too big after all, maybe I wouldn't mind dating."

"Stop! That isn't funny!" Shido yelled out, waving his hands out. "Don't even joke like that!"

Nia blinks.
"...Who said I was? Cause I'm pretty sure I didn't." Nia smirked, making Shido pale as he fell on butt. Nia laughed as she walked inside. Shido groaned as he walked inside as well, quickly tripping over a bit of trash.

"Yeah, that's where I need help. Work related stuff? No problem, organized as the dots placed on a domino. Everything else on the other hand? I think it's obvious I can't stay tidy to save a life. So, help me clean?"

Shido sighed at that, its like she was making him the chore boy for the day to pay back having given Mana an exclusive fan item.

"Oh boy, it's like everyone things I'm a living vacuum. Alright, I'll help clean up, but you're not just gonna sit there doing nothing, got it?" Shido stated.

"Of course, I have a system so I need to make sure said system doesn't change too much." Nia replied, soon throwing her coat on the couch. "Which is starting as of now, proceed boy."

Shido sighed as he and Nia soon began cleaning up everything, at least what Nia said he could clean out of the whole mess. After he got out all the trash he checked the fridge, noticing all she had was fruit punch.

"Uh... you know only drinking this stuff isn't very healthy, right?" Shido asked.

"Don't worry about that, they were just on sale last time I went." Nia answered, and led to Shido writing a grocery list to live for her on the door. Nia whistled at how clean the place looked now and smirked before patting Shido on the back and smirking. "Maybe I should pay you to do this, in fact here's $100."

Shido stared in shock as he saw the 100 dollar bill get placed in his hand, blinking just to get his senses back into reality. Right before he did though, Nia used the moment to form Raziel and write something in it. She giggles at his expression.

"What? Are you secretly poor or is that your first $100?" Nia joked.

"Uh, no it's not that! It's just I didn't think you'd pay me this much... how much do you have?" Shido asked.

"Eh, details. Well I'll saw now that I've gotten all the help I need from you, so go feel free to rejoin your friends and get all you work down." Nia replied, opening the door. "Off you go."

Shido blinked before shrugging, things had already gotten weird enough with them. As he suddenly took a step, a sudden paper suddenly fell off the table right to where he stepped and made Shido slip. This was part of what Nia had written, {Have a paper make Shido slip towards me, and either slide pass me or end up crashing into me and smacking an accidental kiss}, now the question was which result would happen?

"Look out!" Shido warned, and Nia just stood there.

And in the end... Shido completely missed her, and Nia looked to see him crash on the railing outside and get hit in the gut by it. Nia sighed and smiled, just as she expected. Shido was nowhere near ready to seal the powers she possessed.

"Well, it seems like you're still not at the right level. Luck's been all that's let you seal the other Spirits so far." Nia stated, making Shido turn at her in shock.
"Wait, how... how do you know about the Spirits?" Shido asked, paling. "Oh no, are you with-"

Nia chuckled a bit.

"I think this should answer your questions boy." Nia replied, soon taking her glasses off. Shido gasped as she sees Nia's true form, right at the same moment she manifested a nun based Astral Dress before him.

"Allow me to re-introduce myself Shido Takamiya. I am Spirit No. 2, also known as [Sister], my name's Nia Honjou. The one known as Souji Hasegawa is a disguise I use to write Silver Bullet under, this is the real me."

Nia soon flies into the air.

"Hey wait! If you know about the sealing then-" Shido began, only for Nia to wag her finger.

"Sorry kid, but it's clear to me you're just not ready to seal my powers, if you tried to then you'd likely do more harm than good." Nia answered, surprising Shido.

"If you want me to give you the chance to seal my powers, then earn it by showing you can actually do it with skill. I can tell you now, me, Zodiac and Diva are much more than any of the Spirits you've faced so far. Good luck boy, until the day you're actually ready."

Nia giggled as she teleported away, leaving a shocked Shido.

"Oh boy, the others are gonna love this... hey wait, why didn't Rio recognize her if she's a Spirit? Unless Rio didn't know about it." Shido wondered aloud, soon thinking about Nia's words. "Can't win with luck... the last three Spirits are more than what we've faced before. Is that a warning?"

---

"YOU SAW WHO!?!"

Shido covered his ears as everyone shouted at once, soon removing his hands from them after it ended.

"That Souji Hasegawa is really a Spirit named Nia Honjou?" Shido repeated, making everyone stare at him more.

"Rio didn't notice Souji was Nia, Rio always met Nia as Nia. Not Souji." Rio replied, soon rubbing her head. "Rio's head hurts."

Rinne rubbed her head to Rio's happiness.

"A warning about her powers, well... to be honest I think she was justified to claim that. The Raziel Crystal's powers are based on the element of imagination. Out of the elemental abilities, I'd say it's one of the more dangerous ones." Rinne replied, soon thinking of the last two.

"Gabriel and Michael's Crystals aren't pushovers either, Gabriel has control over sound while Michael is able to distort space itself. I hate to say it, but the last three Spirits? They'll be our toughest challenge yet, today was just a prelude... and Nia barely showed us anything."

Meanwhile outside the building, a girl wearing a Rindouji uniform walked by. She looked up at Tengu Square, revealing her indigo hair and her whitened pupils, and suddenly gave an unusual smile as she did.

"Hmm... I get the feeling that the next few days will be interesting, I wonder why?"
Surprised? After having every Spirit sealed upon Shido meeting them, I decided to finally break that trend here, there's two reasons I decided to do this. The first is that I wanted to give one Spirit the role Kurumi had of failing to be sealed on the first capture attempt and Nia seemed like the right Spirit due to Raziel's abilities, and the second is for the next arc, they can't have Raziel's near-omniscience.

To anyone who didn't figure out the two clues that showed something was amiss in this chapter, I'll share them here. The first one was the DEM didn't show up in response to Nia's presence, Westcott mentioned using the next Spirit to appear as a way to capture Shido in the previous chapter. The second was only Shido had been in focus, yet I said for season 2 that Tohka swapped the protagonist spot with him.

Nia's disguise thing was an idea I got based on the fact that Nia uses Souji as her pen name, but also because I've seen some authors such as the man behind Daily Life with a Monster Girl who represents himself as a hermit crab with art pens for pincer claws. That made me think I should make Nia's canon form a secret identity, and I decided to go with it.

So I've made her glasses, which she doesn't wear in Spirit mode, a creation of Raziel's that changes her appearance and makes her eyes look human when worn, hence her canon appearance. The younger, long haired and buxom version of her is her true form. I think I'm fixated on those traits because of most of the anime I grew up on, it makes you have a type based on the characters you make your favorites.

Alright, now that we've gotten Nia's situation put on standby for now, the Miku arc is finally happening! *chuckles* What makes it funny we've finally reached this arc? Well, Shido mentioned back in the first chapter of Kotori's arc that he was sure no Spirit would ever be a lesbian, boy is he gonna learn that the hard way. *giggles* Everyone, get ready for Shiori, especially since Natsumi's powers mean he ain't cross dressing when he becomes her :3

Get ready everyone, Season 2 is getting ever closer to its end and after that its two Movie arcs. Speaking of which, I'll mentioned right now Ars Install and Rio Reincarnation will be said movie arcs for Season 2. Mayuri Judgment will not be one, but this is because it's going to be the movie arc for Season 3 instead, and I think most people will know the reason behind that choice considering one important part of the movie's story.

Well, that's it for now. Until next time everyone, stay awesome! ^^

A/N: To anyone wants to know, here's a translation of the two lines Saya said in Spanish, mostly because I don't know Spanish and I'm unsure how accurate the translation engine I used was.

1. Hey mom, dad. One of my friends invited me to dinner which is why I'm talking in Spanish to avoid embarrassing myself. Is that OK?'

2. OK, thanks you guys! I love you!

-Spirit Bond Levels-
Tohka - 90%
Origami - 87%
Yoshino - 81%
Kotori - 85%
Kurumi - 79%
Natsumi - 63%
Kaguya - 55%
Yuzuru - 55%
Chapter 36

One moment everyone... *walks in wearing an idol's outfit, holding a microphone, soon breathing and in a singing tone* Welcome everyone... to the next arc of this story! This is the Miku Fantasia arc! *does a finishing pose, soon getting up and spinning to change back to my usual outfit* Sorry, I may have gotten a little carried away right there with that idol impersonation. I think it's because not counting the two movie arcs, this is the semi-final arc of Season 2.

I still can't believe how fast I went through this one compared to Season 1, then again... Kurumi's arc was 9 chapters, so maybe that's it. Though I have a good feeling depending on if what I'm planning goes the way I expect, Season 2's final arc will be pretty long itself. Regardless, Miku's finally taking the stage, leaving Mukuro as the only Spirit who's yet to have her identity confirmed by Ratatoskr.

As a friendly reminder to everyone, as Tohka's already been inverted, expect something completely different for where the story will go after the contest between Miku and Shido, or should I say Shiori for now, ends. Best of all... Artemisia's finally able to fight alongside the others again as of this arc since the Bahamut CR-Unit will finally be fully readjusted for her.

Oh! Luckily just caught myself, time to reveal the arc's emotion. Its "Suffering", and while it relates to Miku, there's a lot more than just her canon story this can apply to, in fact... actually I'll just let you read to know what I'm talking about. It's pretty much one of the earliest scenes of the chapter, and a prelude to something that'll happen in the next arc.

This arc's a concert everyone, so let's begin the first song of this performance! *giggles* I think I've got Miku fever because I'm writing the Miku arc ^^

-Miku Izayoi, Code Name: [Diva]-

Angel: Gabriel, the "Army-Breaking Songstress" - Gabriel is a unique Angel, simply being Miku's own voice, a translucent keyboard always hovering in front of Miku when in use, but also appearing as a giant golden organ if in the right environment. If taking the form of the organ, it may just appear as one or many of the gold organ's pipes. It responds to Miku's song, voice, wails, screams or any sound she can make with a musical nature to it, but doesn't work on Spirits who will shrug it off, with Rinne being outright immune. Gabriel's alternate forms are unique as they last a true form, but have a specific use for each, and is the one angel Natsumi can use the alternate forms of if she makes a Kaleidoscope copy of it.

- Alternate Form: March - Gabriel's primary method of support, it enhances the physical strength of the user and any listeners of her choice. These physical enhancements can take the form of having more power, faster speed, stronger durability or increased stamina. She can't gave give more than one type of enhancement, and can't mix and match them between a group, meaning they must all have the same enhancement.

- Alternate Form: Rondo - Gabriel's primary method of defense which can also be used to restrain others as well. However, it can fail against a Spirit of a higher threat ranking than her
own since their spirit mana be much more powerful than hers and able to resist it, and is outright useless if used on an Inverse Spirit who's dark spirit power outright counters it due to its opposite nature.

- Alternate Form: Solo - Gabriel's primary offensive technique, and Miku's most often used one. While usually used as a sonic shout that can attack or act as a small barrier, its true power brainwashes the listeners. It can't alter their memories though as while it messes with its victims' perception of Miku and has them prioritize her well-being above anything else, it doesn't affect their existing views on other people.

- Alternate Form: Requiem - Gabriel's primary method of healing and its most pacifistic technique, creating a relaxing song that has an analgesic effect and can help reduce and heal from damage that could otherwise be fatal. The point of its reduction will fail upon use on extreme injuries like near amputation which simply emit too much pain.

- Powers: Miku's elemental affinity as a Spirit is Sound, with Mind as her secondary element. Miku's power is directly tied to her voice and actually restored it after she lost it for good while still Human. As a popular idol, Miku's skill with her voice makes no one a better wielder for Gabriel's power, and the danger she presents isn't due to her sound powers themselves, but her ability to gather people through her fame and use her voice to bend them to her will. Being sound-based, speakers easily extend the range of her powers, however the fatal weakness of her abilities is they're rendered useless if no one can hear her voice. Also, if her powers are overused, she'll temporarily be unable to use them or speak until her mana recovers.

Risk Factors: A

Spacequake: B

Spirit's Astral Dress: C

Angel Rank: AA

Strength: 85

Consistency: 72

Spiritual Power: 159

Agility: 67

Intelligence: 70

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*Chapter 36, S2: Miku Fantasia, Part 1*

Tohka was currently napping on the couch, Rinne trying to figure out how to play a handheld video game console that Mana lent her, sweating as she kept having trouble and messing up on the game. As this was happening, she didn't notice Tohka was all restless. A familiar nightmare replaying in her head.

"THEY MUST PAY!"
Tohka rolled over slightly, leaning against the couch wall as the nightmare intensified, becoming more than it had ever been before.

Tohka suddenly found herself in the Spirit Dimension, back before its final destruction by Westcott's actions. Namely in the Sandalphon region that once house her Sephira Crystal. In moments, the ground ruptures and Spirits are seen screaming as they tried to run away.

"What... what is this?" Tohka gasped, panting as she felt herself becoming terrified. The sight of therupturing energy spreading out worsened and anyone caught within them were suddenly vaporized instantly, their screams running through Tohka's ears like an echo she couldn't silence.

"Please, someone help! Save us!" A Spirit cries before the energy kills her, her screams ringing throughout the area.

Tohka tried to close her eyes, and even cover them so she couldn't see... but it didn't work, her body was a complete illusion... right now, she couldn't block her ears and she couldn't shield her eyes. Every second of this horrible destruction, she was forced to experience it all.

"Stop it... please... I swear, I'll do anything if you make it stop." Tohka begged, continuing to see everything against her will. She soon screamed as she couldn't take it anymore "JUST DON'T LET ME SEE THIS ANYMORE!"

Her wishes weren't answered, and soon the entire world before her was suddenly ripped apart and exploded into shreds. Every final scream flooded into her head at once, and Tohka fell to her knees, breaking down and shivering at what she just had to see.

"Toh... ka!" Shido suddenly said.

Tohka looked up as she heard Shido's voice, confused to where she was now. Only to gasp as she saw herself behind a glass, and Ellen stabbing Shido, making her gasp to her horror.

"Shido!" Tohka screamed, seeing Shido collapse onto the ground before her. "No, get up! Don't leave me!"

"Don't bother [Princess], there's no hope for him now," Tohka suddenly turned to see Westcott nearby, hidden behind more glass to shield himself. "I'm going to make you watch as we take his life. Feel free to try and stop us, but I'm afraid there's nothing you can do."

Tohka gasps as Ellen prepared to swing down, causing Tohka to form her Astral Dress and Sandalphon as she tried to cut through the glass, but her attacks didn't even dent it.

"I won't! Let! You! DO! THIS!" Tohka screamed, shedding tears as nothing she did worked. "I won't let you die! Please Sandalphon, I need to save Shido! I'll pay any price, please! JUST LET ME STOP THEM!"

Sandalphon's voice wasn't heard, either it just couldn't respond or it was its way of saying it couldn't give her any more than she was already giving.

'Take anything you want, please... break my heart. Rip it in two! Just not Shido, not him. You can't... I don't care what you do. Please, just spare his life... someone please spare it! I beg of you!' Tohka thought, and Ellen's blade came down. With that, she screamed louder than she ever had before, and in the end...

*SLASH!*
Tohka failed to even register what she saw, but she did register the sound... and the moment she found her voice it broke apart.

"SHIIIDOOOOOOOOO!"

Tohka suddenly felt herself back in the same place she had met her Inverse Form in a previous dream, still in shock from the scene of seeing Shido die. It didn't take long for her to hear the familiar footsteps belonging to her dark counterpart, and she turned to see her holding Nahemah in hand.

"They must pay, Humanity must pay!" Inverse Tohka declared once again, swinging Nahemah down at Tohka who was thrown back by the force. Due to her current emotional state, it didn't matter she had her armor and weapon this time. "So why... why do you still defend them?"

"I don't even know what you're talking about!" Tohka replied, still shaking from everything she had seen before. Inverse Tohka swung again, knocking her to the wall.

"Don't you dare lie, you know... and you always will!" Inverse Tohka screamed, grabbing her by the throat. Tohka felt herself starting to lose all her air. "I told you before, you will be the messenger of our rage! There's no escape! The time is coming, and you will follow!"

Tohka coughed as she lost more air, and soon Inverse Tohka threw her across the landscape, and as she did she looked up to see her dark spirit power flare... and for a brief moment the sight of faces showing negative emotions were seen within it as Inverse Tohka formed Paverschlev.

"Now Nahemah!" Inverse Tohka, holding up her sword as Tohka tried to move, only to collapse to her horror. The dark energy spiraled around the Demon King before she swung it down. "Finish it, and wake her up to reality! PAVERSCHLEV!"

Tohka stared in horror as the attack neared her before it hit her and she screamed.

Tohka suddenly felt the pain transfer as phantom pain to her chest, and screamed loudly in real life as she woke up and rolled off the couch, hitting the floor with a thud. Rinne in surprise moved her game console's controller oddly and...

"[Congrats, you win!]"

"Wait, I won this time? Yes!" Rinne cheered, soon remembering Tohka's scream. "Oh wait, Tohka? Are you OK?"

Tohka got up, holding her chest for a moment until the pain finally vanished.

"Yeah, I think I just had a muscle cramp or something. Albeit a very painful one!" Tohka replied, and luckily that was enough of an excuse that Rinne didn't notice anything about Tohka having a nightmare. "I think it's fading now, I'm OK. I'm fine now."

"Alright, I was kinda worried for a moment." Rinne smiled, completely oblivious to the lie. "I better give this game back to Mana now."

Rinne left the room, and soon Tohka curled on the ground, shaking at the nightmare she just had.

"What's happening, is..." Tohka breathed, recalling her Inverse Form's words. "Is it trying to take over? Or worse, trying to replace me? What's going on? Please... someone help me, Shido... I need
Shido was seen walking through the streets of Tenguu City, currently talking with Maria via the headset.

"Sorry we haven't been able to help you directly with setting things up Shido, since we know Sister's identity we've needed more hands here and info from Rio and Mayuri to add in. Only two Spirits' real identities elude us now after all." Maria apologized.

"Its fine, I think we've already run through the ragged parts of the Festival, so the easier stuff is all we have left to deal with." Shido replied, making Maria sigh in relief. "To be honest I think info about Nia might be more important, after all what she told us..."

Maria nodded, Nia clearly warned them that if they weren't serious with the last three Spirits that they would be in trouble. Considering she was one of them... that wasn't an idle claim, especially if it ended up being a threat. Suddenly at that moment...

[WARNING! THERE HAVE BEEN PRECURSORY SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING SPACEQUAKE!]

"The Spacequake alarm!" Shido shouted, everyone evacuated right as buildings began to shift and he tapped his headset. "Maria, is it Nia?"

"No, it's not her. We've traced it to Tenguu Arena. Go hide in an alley and stay put, we'll send you over to the scene once we're close enough to beam you over." Maria replied, soon hanging up.

Shido went to an alley way quickly, and soon felt himself beamed up onto the Fraxinus. Once on, he rushed to the main area where Reine and the Fraxinus crew were waiting and soon caught his breath.

"So, which Spirit is it?"

"According to these readings, we've encountered Spirit No. 9. The Spirit known as [Diva] and the Sound Spirit." Reine replied, showing some info but no picture. "Unfortunately, we have little more to go off of. According to Rio, the most recent Diva only became a Spirit a year ago, so she's the second most recent Spirit to be born behind Tohka."

"What's more is she's only shown up once and then... poof! Not even the DEM's had any idea where she's been until now." Maria added, showing the chart for her appearances and the clear yearlong gap. "I'd exercise caution, we don't know anything about this [Diva] and we barely got info on her predecessors."

Shido nods, looking at the info and learning what he could.

"Alright, so where is she? Better yet... where's the Spacequake?" Shido asked.

"Tenguu Arena, strangely fitting for her abilities. The Spacequake however? That's the odd thing, it was so high in the air we almost missed it." Maria answered, showing a recording of an indigo Spacequake going off high in the sky.

"It seems she may have only been trying to have some privacy, or maybe she knew the DEM won't jump over to Tenguu City since this is our home field advantage. She likely knew trying to get her here would get us involved... at least that's my theory on it. Never mind that, go do your magic Shido."
Shido was suddenly forced to the teleported and beamed into Tenguu Arena, once he was inside...

"-Let me... sing you a song! And let's sing along!"

"Wait, that's... music? Is there something playing in here?" Shido asked.

"No Shido, my guess is that's Diva singing right now. Luckily that'll let me trace her, and she's over..." Maria replied, and soon an arrow of light forms to create a path. "There! Just follow the arrow Shido."

Shido does so, and after finally crossing through the path, he sees the stage area with the Spirit in question. Upon seeing her, it was clear to anyone without a doubt that she a beautiful girl. She had a voluptuous figure and smooth skin that looked to have never missed maintenance, long indigo hair with eyes of the same color, but not as vivid as her hair's indigo.

Her Astral Dress was based off a pop idol's outfit, fitting for her code name, and was mainly yellow with blue and white ruffles covering some parts of her dress. She also had a yellow moon hair clip with a flower connected to the curve ends of the moon. White flowers and petals could be seen next to the moon hair clip. She also wore a choker on her neck with a white lily attached on it. Maria suddenly gasped.

"Wait a second... Shido, I think I know who that is!" Maria replied, getting Shido's attention.

"Really?" Shido whispered, and after checking her references... Maria gasped as she found she was right. "Who is it Maria? Tell me."

Maria breathes.

"Shido... that's Miku Izayoi, the famous rookie idol." Maria answered, making Shido gasp.

"The one Hiroto told me about? No way, I can't believe it... what are the chances?" Shido whispered, as he kept hearing her song though he noticed how great it was. "Though I'll admit, that song's lovely."

Shido tried to slowly get closer... only for his foot to kick a can he didn't notice due to the darkness. Miku stopped singing as she heard it too.

'Oh shit!' Shido and Maria thought simultaneously, hoping Miku wouldn't attack in response.

"Who's there?" Miku asked, trying to find the source of the noise. "Hello, do I have an audience out there? I can't see you if there is."

The two sighed in relief.

"Jump up there and try introducing yourself, she doesn't seem hostile." Maria replied, and Shido nodded as he jumped up and grabbed the ledge as he pulled himself up. 'For some reason, I feel I'm forgetting something... but what?'

As Shido did, an option for talking appears saying to tell her {Didn't mean to sneak up on you, but your voice sounds great}, once he got high enough he got Miku's notice.

"Oh, you climbed all the way here just to see me? Lovely night isn't it, it's nice to meet... you..." Miku suddenly trailed off as the light showed Shido's appearance, revealing him to her.

"Oh, hello there miss." Shido replied, unaware of Miku's odd staring towards him. "I didn't mean to
eavesdrop on your singing, but your voice is beautiful."

And suddenly... Miku's emotional state drops to Maria's surprise. Shido sweats as he sees it as well, and Maria sweat as she thinks.

"Uh... say something about how she looks!" Maria sweated, hoping it was just Miku being uncomfortable.

"Uh... has anyone ever told you how gorgeous you are?" Shido asked, and noticed she hadn't changed her expressions at all. Maria paled as the emotional readings suddenly dropped to less than half, making Shido whisper. "Maria, what's going on here!?"

Maria gulped in worry.

"I don't know! Uh... OK, I may regret giving you this one, buy say the view from below was great without implying you don't mean it in a sexual way." Maria answered, honestly grasping at straws. 'Hiroto, why do I have no data on this!?'

"Uh... the view from below... was..." Shido began, only for Miku to finally react in an odd manner as Maria saw all her emotional readings hit rock bottom to the lowest a Spirit's readings could go without undergoing an inversion. "You OK?"

Suddenly the headset blares in a warning.

"GET OUT OF THERE!" Maria warned, but not fast enough. After her position made her breasts bounce briefly, Miku lurched forward with her eyes rolled behind her head as she screamed out a sonic wave. Flinging Shido off the platform and off the stage platform, he barely caught himself on a wire despite he would survived the fall.

"What... just happened!?" Shido panicked, completely confused how she went from saying it was nice to meet you to outright attacking him. "Maria?"

The AI was silent in fear as Miku walked near the ledge and stared down at him, the light formerly shining over her now gone.

"This is rather unexpected. Why haven't you fallen down yet, why aren't you dead!?" Miku said, a glare shadow over her eyes. "Disappear from this stage, this world and this confluence of time and space! Do it as soon as possible, you wretched plebeian!"

"Is she serious!?" Shido thought aloud.

"I said disappear, not talk! I'd rather you not even expend the energy your halitosis latent breath. Are you too stupid to realize your that your mere presence contaminates the purity of the air!?" Miku stated angrily.

"...OK, she clearly has some issue with me I don't know about."

"You're not very good at following instructions, are you!?" Miku shouted, making Shido gulp a bit. "Can you even comprehend why I wouldn't stomp on your hands right now and send you falling to your death!? Because I care about the bottom of my shoe too much to let it touch filthy scum like you!"

It was clear, this Spirit was violently against talking to Shido and he knew it, Maria soon replied quickly.
"Shido, we're teleporting you now! Shield your eyes!" Maria screamed.

Shido nods and closes his eyes, and at that moment Miku breathes in and prepares another shout, likely closing her eyes and not seeing Shido get beamed up as parts of the arena break apart. Back on the ship, Shido gasps for breath.

"I actually thought I was gonna die!" Shido exclaimed, falling on his butt.

"That was strange, the emotional graphs seemed to indicate what you said didn't matter. It was almost as if it was you, or rather your presence she didn't like." Reine wondered, thinking a bit, soon looking at Nakatsugawa. "Nakatsugawa?"

"Yeah commander?" Nakatsugawa replied.

"See if anyone in your 'waifu' circle has any further information on Miku Izayoi, I think we're going to need it." Reine replied, making him salute as he takes out his phone. "For now... we'll just need to avoid contact with her, I don't think anything will change."

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The following day, the last bit of the Tenguu Festival was about to be cleared up as Shido was with Tohka and Origami at Rindouji All-Girls Private Academy, where all 10 high schools' organizers would be present to decide on where they'd have everything set up for the festival. Shido yawned over a lack of sleep due to last night.

"Are you alright Shido? Reine told us about what happened." Origami asked concerned.

"Mostly, just had trouble sleeping all night." Shido yawned again, rubbing his eyes. "Say, you don't mind taking care of things for me if I fall asleep, do you?"

Origami rubs his back and nods, and soon everyone heard Rindouji's organizer and her group walk in. The three turned around, only for Shido to gasp before messing up his hair to look different, leaving his two girls confused... until the girl in question walked by and turned to face everyone.

'Indigo hair and whitened pupils!' Tohka thought in shock.

'That's... that's her, that's Miku Izayoi!' Origami thought, similarly shocked.

"Hello everyone, welcome to the meeting." Miku introduced, giving a brief glare towards Shido who she quickly recognized, and which he caught as his hair flopped back to normal. "Now, let's get started."

Shido stared in horror, the very Spirit they were after had been in Tenguu City the whole time just like Nia had. Though in this case... that wasn't a good thing right now with Miku's apparent hostility towards Shido.

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At Fraxinus, everyone was gathered as Nakatsugawa brought a disc containing information one of his contacts gave him.

"Luckily, I found a contact who had information, she was at one of her private concerts and snuck in a camera to try and get some info about the mystery idol. Snapped a few pictures without getting caught." Nakatsugawa stated.

Maria began to search through them.
"Let's see... what do we have here? Oh, uh... Mana, I'd advise you to look-" Maria began, only to have Mana forced herself through and saw Miku's listen BWH information... it was a B94-W63-H88 which made her scream.

"It's bad enough I'm being out-sized, but most of the time I'm being out-sized by people in at least the 90s! I hate this! It was bad enough Nia's true form is a 92cm!" Mana cried, making everyone stare at her blankly.

"...OK, I'm now starting to get very worried that my niece just seems to learn this information." Reine stated, making Rinne sigh and nod. "And worse is we know this is gonna happen one last time when we find [Zodiac]."

Artemisia quickly sweat drops as she pulled Mana away from the screen. Maria cleared her throat and resumed looking through the info.

"OK, blood type... birthplace... birthday... OK, none of this information seems particularly helpful so far-" Maria stops as she passed by an image, soon going back a few. "Wait, I think I missed something... ah, there's a video among these pictures."

Maria plays it, showing said contact as she was brought by Miku to her home and where she asked a few questions.

"Say Miku, I was wondering. Why was this concert only for girls?" The contact asked.

"Why would I allow men in? They're nothing but dirty smelly pigs, god for nothing jerks who are better off disappearing!" Miku replied, huffing a bit. Soon getting close to the contact. "Girls like you on the other hand?"

Said contact's unseen face was shown widening by the camera shifting a bit.

"W-wait, you mean you... oh boy, I don't think I'm on that train actually." The contact said, before the video got cut off. Making everyone blink at that, while Shido suddenly paled a bit.

"So... she hates men, and brought woman home to get... uh, cozy I think is the term, with them." Rinne thought aloud, and then her eyes widened as she turned towards Shido with a smirk. "Strange, I think Shido once said the chance of meeting a Spirit who likes girls was-"

"Don't you dare." Shido warned.

"But it's clear that-" Kaguya tried to say.

"Don't finish that sentence!" Shido warned again.

"Why? What's wrong with saying Miku-" Tohka tried to say.

"I SAID-" Shido was about to warn again, only for Natsumi to smirk.

"Miku Izayoi is a lesbian!" Natsumi exclaimed, making Shido scream in defeat as he fell to his knees. "Ooh, never knew you'd jinx yourself Shido like that Shido. How does it feel, tell us?"

Shido just groaned.

"Hey wait, but then there's no way we can do anything about her! If I cross dress she'll still know it's me by my voice!" Shido shouted, only for Natsumi to smirk. "Wait, Natsumi... why are you smiling that way?"
"Oh nothing, nothing at- Think fast!" Natsumi shouted, soon tapping Shido and making green light surround him.

Once it ended, everyone looked to see Shido was now a girl with long hair, which Mana looked like when her hair wasn't tied up, with a green flower clip in her hair. She had the same school outfit on as the Yamai twins', possessing the same sleeveless Summer sweater, and to Mana's horror... was pretty busty.

"What did you do to me!?!" Shido asked Natsumi, only to cover his mouth as he heard his high pitched female voice. "Wait, this isn't my... oh my god, I'm a girl!"

"No! This is... this is a joke right, tell me it is Natsumi. You only gave my big brother's gender swapped form 95cm breasts as a joke right!?" Mana asked as she groped her brother's breasts and made him gasp slightly from the feeling, her eye twitching and Natsumi blinking at somehow knowing her bust line instantly.

"Uh... nope, after I got my memories back from Haniel I learned this. If I transform someone into the other gender or shift their age, they transform into how they would actually look like in such a form. That my dear Mana? If Shido was born a girl, her true size. Sorry about that." Natsumi answered honestly, and Mana slid to the floor crying.

"Hey, if I could even make you feel big for a moment I'd do it but it ain't my call."

Mana sobbed more and Natsumi patted her head, knowing how she felt too well. Soon the talkative trio looks at Shido's female form up close.

"Oh my god, I'm so jelly of how you look now." Ai replied, soon blinking. "Wait, what do we call you as a girl? Shido's obvious a boy's name?"

"Uh... how about Shidomi? No, scratch that. How about, uh..." Shido tried to think.

"Shiori, that's the feminine version of your name." Rinne replied, smiling in a way to show she seemed to be enjoying this too much. "You know, I did once believe I'd only be able to have daughters. Now I get to see how what it would have been like for this Spirit sealing mission."

Shido, or rather Shiori currently, groaned upon hearing that.

Shiori was soon heading over to Tenguu Square, blushing embarrassingly over the fact she had been turned into a girl just because there ended up actually being a lesbian Spirit among the Sephira Spirits.

'Worst thing about this? I don't know why, but I think I'm starting to like this, or I'm at least getting too comfortable with it. I'm totally scared how things will be after this is over!' Shiori thought, soon getting a message from Reine.

"Shiori, the booths for Rindouji are area S01, see if noticed her there." Reine stated, and Shiori nodded as she walked close by.

Eventually she saw Miku walk out into view, and slowly began to follow her from behind as she entered somewhere that said 'No Entry" in kanji. She opens the door and goes inside, soon seeing Miku on the stage.

"Alright Shiori, now or never. Also since Miku might here you whisper to me, I've established Mayuri's aid in creating a way to talk through our thoughts, just think and your brain waves will talk
through the headset for you.” Maria replied, making Shiori nod.

Eventually she walked into view, catching Miku's attention as she looked at her, Maria sweating and crossing her fingers that Miku didn't know the truth. At first her look seemed to say she knew, but then it became normal.

"Hello there, what's your name?" Miku asked, and it was so cute that Shido forgot something.

"Uh, I... forgot!" Shiori replied, making Miku blink.

"YOU FORGOT!?" Maria repeated in shock.

"I... freeze up when I get nervous!" Shiori said quickly, making Maria sigh in relief at her save. "Sorry!"

Miku giggled at that.

"There's no need for you to be nervous around me, although it does make you irresistibly cute." Miku commented, making Shiori smile with an open mouth as she sweat dropped slightly.

"OK, note to self. Your usual personality is apparently the kind of girl she likes. That's a bonus." Maria stated, noticing her mood was going up steadily. "Alright, let's see how we should reply to this.

1. Situational Response - "You're Miku Izayoi right, do you mind if I get an autograph?"
2. Curious Response - "Why are you here exactly?"
3. Perverted Response - "Will you sell me the current panties you're wearing for 30,000 yen?"

"OK, another pervy response as expected... hey wait. That would be perverted if a guy said it, but right now Shido is Shiori, so maybe... Shiori. Try option 3, but like you're telling a joke. Make a cute face for emphasis." Maria replied, making Shiori go wide eyed.

"What!?" Shiori shouted, soon looking at Miku with a cute expression. "Uh... I wonder, would you be willing to sell me the panties you're wearing right now for 30,000 yen?"

Miku gives a silent gasp to that, but then smiles.

"I actually have a counter bid." Miku mentioned, making Maria and Shiori go wide eyed at that. "I don't wanna sell them to you, but I'd consider trading them for your own."

"W-W-What!?" Shiori gasped, her eyes white. "Wait, I was just joking there. You don't need to give me your panties!"

"Oh don't worry, I was too. Wouldn't I have been freaked by that question had I been serious?" Miku asked, making Shiori chuckle oddly at that. "That uniform, you go to Raizen don't you? Then let's try this again, I'm Miku Izayoi and I go to Rindouji."

Miku holds out her hand, and Shido nervously takes it.

"I'm Shiori Takamiya, nice to meet you... in person I mean! Yeah, I-" Shiori replied, soon sweating a bit as Miku giggled at her. "Oh man I'm fumbling this."

"OK, that's not being faked... wait, is Shiori actually more nervous and shy than Shido is? Wow, I hope that's not gonna have a side effect later." Maria wondered, soon thinking. "Try asking her some questions."
Shiori tried to think, and then remembered the second option.

"Um... if you don't mind my asking, why are you in here right now? It's still off limits." Shiori asked.

"Oh, I just love the stage. It's too hard to keep away from it." Miku admitted, soon turning like she was facing the crowd. "To have everyone hear my voice, I can feel excitement crackling in the air. Yet I don't feel that from you. Have you not heard of me?"

Shiori sweats.

"Uh... w-well, I guess I've only heard your songs recently?" Shiori wondered aloud.

"Aww, how cute." Miku replied, putting a finger to Shiori's lip. "Don't worry, I won't tell anyone you were in here if you don't. It'll be our little secret."

Shiori nods, blushing a bit.

"Wow... Kurumi wasn't kidding, I think Shiori's falling in love with her while trying to make her fall in love with her. Wonder where this is gonna go?" Maria inquired, soon thinking a bit. "Guess we'll see."

The two began walking out, only for Shiori to trip over a wire and causing some of the props to fall on her.

"Oh my, are you alright?" Miku asked, Shiori held her right hand which got a little scraped up. Miku took out a handkerchief and wrapped it around Shiori's hand.

"Oh... thank you." Shiori thanked.

"You're quite welcome." Miku smile before walking off, Shiori holding the handkerchief with her other hand. Blushing as she did.

"...I'm never washing this hand again." Shiori blushed, making Maria sweat drop a bit.

Back at home, Shiori was seen cooking some burgers for dinner, wondering why Natsumi didn't change her back.

"Seriously, why can't you just turn me back already?" Shiori cried, and Natsumi turned as she had a pocky stick in her mouth and ate it.

"Because with Miku finally into you, I ain't risking a change back between forms affecting anything. Plus, the big names of Ratatoskr all agreed you should stay like that until you seal Miku, we'll deal with the fallout after that." Natsumi answered, making Shiori cry a bit. "Oh come on, based on that handkerchief I think you like it."

Shiori blushed.

"W-why would you say that!?" Shiori blushed.

"Why didn't you deny it?" Natsumi teased, making Shiori gasp in horror before Natsumi blink. "Wait, you mean you... ooh... I'm gonna stop talking now before this gets weird. Starting now."

Kurumi sweat dropped a bit as she finished making a new handkerchief to gift Miku with.

"Good news is we have an excuse for you to meet up with her, she likes to have tea with one of the
girls she's taken a liking to each week. Looks like you got the winning vote." Kurumi smiles, showing Miku's personal blog and making Shiori blush.

"I don't know whether to be honored or embarrassed." Shiori blushed, soon finishing up the burgers. At that moment, the TV shows an ad playing Miku's latest hit.

"And now, singing her newest hit Mermaid Love Story!" The TV person said.

As everyone listen, Yoshino looks in awe.

"She has such a lovely voice." Yoshino commented, and Tohka's eyes sparkle.

"I wanna do that too, karaoke!" Tohka requested, her eyes sparkling. "Come on, take me! Take me!"

"Ooh, me too!" Rinne asked, walking in at that moment. Mana giggled at her mom's excitement.

The follow day, Shiori was seen at Rindouji at a place where and soon noticed as a few students came out and noticed her.

"Is there something we can help you with?" One of the students asked.

"Uh... yes please, I met Miku in Tenguu Square the other day." Shiori replied.

"What? Are you another fan?" She replied, almost as if this was a usual thing she barely bothered to care about anymore.

"No, not exactly." Shiori replied, getting a little nervous.

"That's what they all say. I'm sorry, but this is supposed to be her private-"

"Hello Shiori!" Miku called out, making the five all turn as they saw her and two others behind her. "It's alright girls, she's telling you the truth."

The five all nodded before bowing in apology to Shiori and walking off. It wasn't that much longer after when Shiori found herself inside a private room in the school. It made Shiori wonder just what else they had in the school and if she should ask Kurumi about it later.

"Um... thanks, but you really shouldn't have gone to all this trouble." Shiori said, watching Miku poor some tea.

"Oh, it's no trouble at all. It was so sweet of you to give me a new handkerchief too." Miku smiled, making Shiori blush a bit. "Don't worry about it."

Shiori playfully chuckled before sipping her cup of tea.

"Wow, this is really good." Shiori said surprised, not expecting the taste she just experienced. Miku giggled again at that.

Soon enough time just flew by between the two until the sun had begun to set.

"You know, you really are amazing. I've never had anyone like you before. Don't you feel like theirs something special between us?" Miku asked, making Shiori blush in surprise. "I think you should become a student at Rindouji."

"W-what? Uh... I don't think that would work, two of my friends used to be here before they
transferred out. Plus, I don't think I'm that good with my grades or money." Shiori panicked, waving her hands in front of her.

"Oh don't worry about those things, I'll personally request you be passed through." Miku replied, soon taking on of Shiori's hands and pressing her breasts against her side to Shiori's surprise. "Please reconsider."

Shiori noticed a small spirit wave distortion when she said that, for a moment she felt something nag on her mind, but luckily it didn't take hold.

"I... the answer's still no." Shiori replied, surprising Miku.

"Shiori?" Miku asked, making Shiori blink at her. "Please take off all your clothes."

The same distortion was seen, and the same feeling as previously. Though once again it didn't work.

"Uh... Miku, I think you're great, but don't you think that's going a little too fast?" Shiori replied, chuckling nervously. 'Did I really just say that!?'

"You're not influenced by my voice at all, are you?" Miku stated, soon getting a more serious look. "Are you a Spirit as well?"

Shiori's eyes widened at that, whatever she did was something Miku had failed to do to someone else before.

"There's no point in trying to hide it, the only ones who can shrug off my voice's commands are other Spirits. There's not a single human alive that has a will strong enough to disregard an order from me." Miku stated, getting up and looking at the window. "Or are you something else? Perhaps one of those people from DEM?"

"I'm... uh..." Shiori tried to reply, unsure of how to respond one Miku turned to stare at her. "Maria, what do I do?"

Maria thought for a bit.

"...Just be honest with her, I don't see a way to walk out of this. It's risky, but maybe knowing she's speaking to another Spirit will let us negotiate with her, just trust what you think after you tell her the truth." Maria replied.

"Well... it's complicated, I'm not a Spirit, but I am one." Shiori replied, making Miku show confusion at that. "I think it's accurate to say I'm a human with powers like a Spirit. A Half-Spirit I guess you could call it."

Miku gasped silently at that, it sounded like she was looking at something that shouldn't exist yet did. 'It doesn't seem like she's lying, that Phantom person didn't seem normal herself. Not to mention I've only met that silvered haired Spirit once before.' Miku thought. "Then what exactly is your power? If you're a Spirit, you should have one."

"Well... I can sort of seal the powers of other Spirits, but not like locking them away. More like a seal shrines would use against evil forces." Shiori answered, making Miku's eyes widen a bit.

"I've already sealed the power of 8 Spirits, and as a result they're no longer able to be found by DEM's radars. You don't lose your powers either, if you needed to protect yourself you could easily call them back, I'd be more like the storage that hides them. Trust me, there's a way you can live
peacefully in this world. I give you my world, you don't have to be alone anymore all I want is to help you."

Miku stares at Shiori, and the latter sweats worried how she'd react.

"You know what? I believe you." Miku replied, making Shiori smile a bit... until. "But I don't need you to seal me. The way things are now, I don't think I can be much happier. I have my powers, my music, and a life of luxury. What more could I need?"

"What? Even after hearing that she doesn't want to be sealed? I don't like where this is going... Shido, I think there's something we haven't seen, a third side to her. Just keep pushing, may she might expose it." Maria reasoned.

Shiori looked at her confused.

"But why? You caused a Spacequake the other day, I don't think you have full control of your powers. Sealing you would prevent the Spacequakes and you wouldn't lose anything." Shiori reasoned, trying to change Miku's mind.

"Oh that? Your concern is touching, but I knew what I was doing when I set off that Spacequake. After all, I didn't set it off close enough to do any damage, didn't it? No need to worry anyways, I've already had someone teach me how to control my powers." Miku smiled, picking up a rose to smell.

"I never got the chance to sing at Tenguu Arena, so when I passed by, I felt the urge and decided to let it go! I just couldn't help myself."

Shiori stared in shock, so the whole reason behind the Spacequake and the panic it caused... was just to sing at that stage? Nothing to do with being attacked, the DEM or anything related to that? Shiori's eyes were shadowed behind her hair as she looked down.

"And the thought of you messing that up and accidentally hurting or killing any of your friends didn't concern you in the slightest?" Shiori asked, starting to worry about what she was seeing from Miku.

"What friends? I don't have any, and why would I need any? Everyone already adores me." Miku answered, and with that Shiori's eyes widened. Miku didn't even care about other people... she did hate men, but she didn't even give any human a real thought.

What had happened to make her this way? Not even Natsumi had ended up this bad, or even the Cassiopeia affected Kurumi if you considered Westcott couldn't have her kill directly as a precaution to keep the illusion he had her in intact.

"...Because they're totally adore you?" Shiori stated, and Maria saw Shiori was the one having her emotional state go downwards.

"Ooooh boy... it finally happened, a Spirit's actually managed to piss you off." Maria said worriedly, not liking where this was heading. "I'm just gonna be silent, you won't listen to any advice I give you right now."

Miku soon noticed Shiori give her an angry look to her surprise.

"You know, I thought you were just misunderstood when I heard you didn't like men... but now I'm starting to doubt that!" Shiori stated, making Miku's eyes widen a bit as she heard her talk like that to her.

"You're intolerably arrogant and prideful, and you can say everyone adores you, but that doesn't hide
the truth. If you didn't have those powers they wouldn't give you a second thought! All that adoration you claim to have, the sad truth is it's just a fake illusion your powers have created! If it's not real, then you can never say it's something to be proud of, because it's a lie to even yourself!

Miku's eyes shook at that as if Shiori had hit a nerve... which she had, she stared for a moment before sighing a bit, though Shiori could tell she was just keeping a strong face to hide the obvious fact her words had done the damage she expected them to.

"How strange, someone talked back to me, insulted me and is immune to being wrapped right under my finger. I should be angry or hate you for it, and yet... now I just want you even more. Perhaps it's because I can't get you the easy way." Miku replied, making Shiori sweat a bit.

"Alright, then let's play a game you and me. I'll give you a chance to actually seal my powers, but... only if you can make Raizen High beat Rindouji at the Ten-Oh Festival, in other words... you need to take first place."

Shiori's eyes widened, based on Hiroto's words from before, this was a large hurdle to clear because Rindouji hadn't lost the first place spot in years.

"...And what if I lose?" Shiori asked, sweating a bit.

"If you lose, I get you and each of the Spirits you've sealed. Do you agree, or do you wanna run away?"

Shiori stared as a drop of sweat trickled down her face. After thinking on it a bit... she breathed as she made her decision, opening her mouth to answer.

The challenge has been made, and now Shido/Shiori has to face Miku's challenge to have any chance of sealing her powers. Worse is this isn't going to be easy, I'm not sure how well I had Miku's words and thoughts imply it, but the one who learn to control her powers... that was Nia, so I think it's pretty clear why Shido ran into Miku only a day after his failure to seal Nia.

Once again, Tohka's being plagued by the same nightmare with additions the prior time lacked... but in three stages this time. Seeing the Spirit Dimension's destruction from the Sandalphon region, then being put into the scene where she has her Inversion in canon... but with a different result, and ending with the usual where Inverse Tohka attacks her. She still has no idea what's going on, and now she's worried its prophetic... and she's too scared to say anything.

Also... here's Shiori in not cross dress form, but gender bender form! *plays cheering noise on a sound machine* And she's gonna stay like that for a while, if only because I find it funny and in character with Natsumi's teasing. *snickers* Also that moment with Mana? It's kinda a variation on how Kotori reacted when Shido used Natsumi's powers to become Shiori in Volume 12 and checked to see if Shiori's breasts were real.

In regards to the scene where Shiori calls Miku out, I'll mention here I kinda felt by word choice at least that Shido was a bit OOC, didn't feel like saying he "hated" her was really in character for him, the exception being Westcott for obvious reasons. Because of that, I changed it to stating her fame was basically a lie, which I personally feel would have likely had more of an impact due to her backstory.
Oh, and yes. Shido's time as Shiori is gonna affect her mind somewhat. Don't worry, it's not that serious, let's just say it'll be interesting while still keeping him generally in character. *snickers* It'll be very interesting.

Anyways, that's all for the Miku arc's start, so get ready for next time when the Ten-Oh festival contest begins! Until then everyone, stay awesome!

Oh! And I should probably mention this in now before I forget and since it's become relevant with Shiori's appearance, but there are certain passive abilities that Shido can now use without his Spirit Ascension due to sealing Rinne during the Rinne Utopia movie arc. Shido is still unaware of most of these abilities, and therefore has yet to use some of them, but he'll start doing so when he discovers Rinne's.

**Tohka** - Form a mana barrier automatically

**Origami** - Teleport Dodging

**Yoshino** - Dampen enemy territories

**Kotori** - Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force

**Kurumi** - Hide in his shadow, and only his

**Rinne** - *Secret*

**Natsumi** - Transform into Shiori

**Kaguya** - Flight

**Yuzuru** - Weight Manipulation

**-Spirit Bond Levels-**

**Tohka** - 95%

**Origami** - 90%

**Yoshino** - 84%

**Kotori** - 87%

**Kurumi** - 81%

**Natsumi** - 73%

**Kaguya** - 62%

**Yuzuru** - 62%
OK, time for act 2 of the Miku arc. *blinks* Yes, I'm going to make music and performing based cracks, comments and puns until this arc ends, after that brief moment where I author talked myself into dressing as an idol, I can't stop doing it. It's like I've got acting-ivitus for that one scene, and now it's stuck and hooked on tight like a sharp fishing lure.

We've got a unique set up here. Shiori along with the Ratatoskr agents and most of Raizen High all gotta team up and work together to score more points than Rindouji on the overall scores, we got their band group that'll have all the Spirits working together, the maid cafe that Ai, Mai and Mii will manage, and since I don't recall what they offered for entertainment I've thrown in a third thing that Saya's got her hands in making and being in charge of.

Also, the DEM's about to start the plan that Westcott mentioned back in the Yamai arc's end, now that they've got notice of Miku's presence they're about to go after not her or the other Spirits, but our favorite Spirit sealer himself. Yikes! 0_0 *gulps* Well, only one thing for all of us to do now, wish them all luck in everything... except the DEM of course, because Westcott's insane.

Since this will be relevant to the chapter, I will include Miku singing Monochrome and the Raizen High team singing Q&A, but I'll use the short versions so it doesn't overload the story too much. Plus, I honestly want to describe the performance scenes, especially for Q&A which is one of my favorite DAL songs. I just really love Rock music ^^ (It is a rock song, right? I'm bad at recognizing the genres a song falls under)

Now before we start, I have one last thing to mention, this arc's total length is a bit unsure at the moment, at the least there will be three parts, but it may be four. I can't say for sure because it depends on the length of events that happen after Ellen shows up since in a sense they're still part of the Miku arc, but around that same point is also where we'll be breaking off and beginning the final arc of Season 2.

Alright, now that we've cleared that up... *holds out megaphone* ACTION!

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"IS THIS SOME KIND OF JOKE!?!" Reine screamed in anger, making everyone in the Ratatoskr base flinch at her yelling. Especially Shiori who was standing closest to the blast range... because she was the reason Reine was even yelling. "Why the hell would you agree to something like this!?!"

"Uh... well, because it's the only way I could agree to a condition where I could have her powers sealed?" Shiori replied, sweating a bit as her Aunt's angry and annoyed face. "She realized I wasn't a normal human when her powers didn't work on me. I didn't have a choice, she'd be suspicious otherwise!"

Reine sighed, sitting back in her chair.

"I'm sorry Shiori, but I can't-"

"Now hold on there Reine, let's not be too hasty. I don't think you've even let Shiori here know why
she accepted the deal." Elliot interjected, soon turning to the Half Spirit. "So why don't you tell us? I get the feeling you learned something a bit dangerous based on my assumptions."

Shiori nodded.

"Yeah, I did... Miku doesn't just have power over sound, her voice can hypnotize people. She's a lot like a Siren." Shiori revealed, catching Reine's attention. Rinne thought on that for a moment, and soon looked at her eldest daughter.

"Yeah, now that I remember it, the Gabriel regions' spirits had sound and mind based powers. Although I wasn't ever actually in that region, so I assumed that was more along the lines like telekinesis rather than hypnotics. Then again, Natsumi's powers have shown me that in this world, the powers adapt and evolve." Rinne replied.

"I even researched Miku a bit more after I noticed the waves from Shiori, her voice is considered 'audio ecstasy', 'addictive' and 'impossible to hate' by many." Maria replied, forming her hologram by Reine's desk.

"If I even had to guess, all of Rindouji's under her thumb. We can only confirm Spirits feel the effects, but they don't take hold, while Rinne? I'm pretty sure you'd be immune, the Angels only disobey their owners when it involves you in a certain manner."

Rinne nods.

"I hate to say it Reine, but I think Shiori made the best call. I mean we've already got a wild card with Nia, and we still don't have any idea where Zodiac's located since Rio and Mayuri combed the Earth for her and no luck. Miku's the only Spirit available to us." Rinne replied, making Reine sigh.

"Fine, I guess we can't argue with that logic." Reine stated, soon looking at Shiori. "Anything else you think is important for us to know?"

"Yeah, one thing. Miku said she had someone train her to use her powers. So that means it had to have been Nia or Zodiac." Shiori stated, soon blinking as she turned to Rio. "Hey Rio, do you think you know who could have trained her?"

Rio thinks for a moment.

"...Ah, Rio remembers when Rio and Mayuri went to talk with Nia, Nia brought up that Nia trained the current Diva." Rio smiled, making everyone face fault to her confusion. "Did Rio say something wrong?"

"Rio! Why do you always forget the important stuff until the last or worst possible moment to reveal it!?" Mayuri groaned loudly, slumping onto the ground. "Well, that makes this worse, Nia's a veteran among all the Spirits. She's been one for 27 years."

That got Rinne's attention while the others looked surprise.

"27, are you serious!?" Kotori asked in shock.

"Yeah, according to what Rio told me, she asked her Angel a certain set of questions and now the DEM can't catch her cause she knows they're coming before they even get near her. That girl's clever." Mayuri replied, soon getting back up.

"That's probably why her being the one who taught Miku is dangerous. You're looking at the oldest and most experience of the Sephira Crystal induced Spirits. Not to mention she called Shido's
successes as luck. Miku's have experience and proper teaching... we're facing a dangerous enemy right now."

Everyone sweated a bit before Rinne giggled to their surprise.

"The goal is to beat Rindouji for the top spot, right? Think less of her as a Spirit and more as a rival student, so get out and win it! Entertainment, Food services and the Stage performance. Blow them all away!" Rinne smirked, making everyone do the same.

"Yeah, let's do this!" Kaguya exclaimed.

"The battle isn't over until a winner's chosen, let's not forfeit before we've begun." Yuzuru replied, and soon Shiori smiled.

"Alright, let's figure out how we're gonna do this then." Shiori stated.

Meanwhile at DEM Industries, Westcott was handed a report by Ellen about Shido's most recent contact with Nia, the Spirit better known to them as [Sister], the one Spirit that was just as elusive to them as Rio/Phantom had been.

"So, the first of the remaining Spirits he chose to come into contact was [Sister]? Shame, that seemed to put a damper on acting on our plan." Westcott sighed, noticing the similar look Ellen gave him. "She's always been the one we can't seem to touch, much less near."

"I know, I found it nothing but unpleasant. Imagine what she could have told him too. The only benefit I see in this is she didn't seem to bother sticking around to be sealed." Ellen sighed, rubbing her head slightly. "I guess we'll have to wait until-"

Suddenly Marina forms into view to their surprise.

"I have some good news father, mother. So there's no need to wait." Marina smirked, looking at Westcott while Ellen had a vein form from the usual mother comment. "That Shido Takamiya? Well, he just made contact with [Diva]."

"[Diva]? Ah, what a perfect chance this is, she's a Spirit we know all too well. Didn't we have someone who was involved with her one ago?" Westcott asked.

"Surely you jest father, wasn't the point of having Edgar meeting with her as a TV producer last just so you could have a predictable Spirit? Phantom did end up making her just that, shame we had to kill him but he served his role enough." Marina replied, giving a cruel cackle. "Enough about the past, what are we gonna do here?"

Westcott smirked at that.

"No matter how strong the Spirits are, they won't risk their full strength when civilians are in harm's way. I'm pretty sure Tengu Square is the worst battleground for us to ambush them at. Knowing that..." Westcott replied, turning to Ellen.

"Understood Ike, I have a certain Spirit to crush. Let's see how it feels to do that emotionally." Ellen said, smirking widely at the thought.

Back at Raizen High, everyone was in the Ratatoskr Classroom as Tamae had ended up naming it, everyone was gathered as they prepared their strategy against Miku and Rindouji at the Ten-Oh
Festival.

"OK everyone, Miku's challenge was like an attack against our awesome, so let's do everything we can to make sure we win this!" Ai declared.

"We have three areas to focus on, we've gathered everything we need so now we're gonna choose what to do." Mai followed, looking at Mii. "So, what options do we have compared to the other schools?"

Mii checks her notes.

"It looks like in regards to the entertainment it's mainly games, so let's try something unexpected. We'll have Saya do the job there." Mii replied, looking at her. "You have an idea?"

"Oh yeah, for this time of year there's only one thing unexpected but guaranteed to force people in... a Haunted House!" Saya replied, somehow managing to get the lights to turn off while holding a flashlight for emphasis, freaking nearly everyone out. Soon she giggled and looked at Maria's hologram. "Thanks for getting the lights off for me Maria."

Maria giggles and everyone chuckles nervously.

"Well at least we know you know what you're doing with that idea." Mii replied, still shaking slightly.

"So what about the food service, how are gonna do that?" Kurumi asked.

"Leave that part to us, we've seen enough of the crowd between these schools to know how to suck in everyone like flies to honey." Ai replied, making Kurumi blink as Ai tapped her hands on a certain box nearby. "Don't sweat the details Kurumi."

Kurumi chuckles and sweat drops at that reply, but just decides to go with it.

"And what are you guys doing about the performance portion? That's the area Miku's gonna be at, and likely where Rindouji's gonna keep us from getting any higher than second place." Mayuri asked.

"Not to mention Miku's got her voice on hand, if we're not careful... this might be the hard part for multiple reasons-" Maria started, before gasping. "Wait, her powers won't work on other Spirits! We just need something you can all do together."

Shiori thought on that, unsure of what to do.

"How about you guys play in a band?" Rinne suggested, making everyone look at her as she put out some instruments she pulled from the school's band room. "Instruments are varied, and it's not anything too special but still popular. Not to mention you don't need any real routines with it."

"Well, I can play a little guitar." Shiori replied, holding up a guitar and playing a little. "I think it's good enough to play on stage at least."

"I know how to play the keyboard." Kurumi answered, dancing her fingers across the keys of a keytar.

"I've got the drums!" Kaguya exclaimed, playing a drum roll. "And the winner for tastiest bass lick is..."
Soon everyone saw Yuzuru jamming on a bass.

"Is this passable?" Yuzuru asked.

"I find it demeaning to give point scores, but for this instance for all of you..." Mana said, soon pulling out said score card. "10!"

The Yamai twins high five each other.

"What about the rest of us?" Tohka asked sadly.

"No one said the band had to only be a few of you. Sometimes bands have multiple members play the same instrument, so anyone else know how to play?" Cecile wondered.

"Well... kinda embarrassing, but I kinda stalked Shiori on some of her guitar lessons and learned how to play myself." Kotori admitted, Shiori went white at that comment but dropped it when she heard Kotori's skill. "Well, maybe I also did a lot of personal lessons."

"I am a mimicker, and drums are better solo so..." Natsumi began before transforming into Yuzuru and back, picking up a bass and jamming on it. "I'll play a spare bass."

Rinne writes that down, soon realizing Tohka, Origami and Yoshino were left.

"Hmm... I think one of you can sing, but as for instruments that's a different--Oh wait!" Rinne said, bopping a fist in her hand as she finds two tambourines. "The one instrument that's an essential and doesn't require anything but a good sense of rhythm."

Tohka soon shook one of the tambourines, and soon got all excited as she tried to shake it in every possible form.

"I love this thing!" Tohka giggled.

"I'll use it too, uh... if Origami doesn't mind." Yoshino replied, Origami answered simply by picking up a microphone. "Origami?"

The Light Spirit replied by breathing before singing a lovely hum to the surprise of everyone.

"Holy... guaca...mole!" Maria replied.

"Wow, Rio didn't know Origami could sing like that, Rio always thought Origami was too shy to sing." Rio smiled, clapping while Origami turned her head bashfully. "Rio wants to hear it again!"

"We'll save that for the performance itself." Origami said, turning her head a bit more. "I think that covers everything though?"

"It does, now... time to begin our counterattack against Rindouji!" Kotori exclaimed with vigor, everyone else raised their hands in response to that.

Back at the DEM's Main branch building, Chinami walked into the locker room after a long round of training as she wiped the ocean of sweat off her body. As she opened her locker...

"Hey Chinami, are you listening?" Jessica asked, getting the brown haired wizard's attention.

"What is it Jess?" Chinami asked.
"Tomorrow on September 23rd at precisely 15:00, the both of us, the other Adeptus numbers excluding Ellen, and many other DEM wizards are going to be attacking Tenguu Square. It's a difficult mission to capture those Spirits and that boy from Ratatoskr." Jessica stated, catching Chinami by surprise. "I'd let me finish, that's just the cover story."

Chinami blinked.

"...OK, I'm listening. Cause I find it crazy to attack a public event, if only because that'd cause people to learn the truth about us. Not the smartest move considering we just kicked off Murdoch and the other board members." Chinami asked.

"It's quite simple, we know the AST will be deployed to try and stop us, and that'll divide their attention. The moment [Diva] sings her song..." Jessica continued, making Chinami's eyes widen as she realized where this was going. "Ellen will claim our targets while everyone's blinded by her voice."

Chinami soon went silent and threw her towel away.

"I'd personally rather take out Angel, but I guess Master Westcott's orders are more important for the time being." Chinami stated, cracking her knuckles a bit. "So, up for last minute sparring practice then?"

The following day at Tenguu Square, fireworks went off in the air around the building.

"[Ladies and Gentlemen, we will now commence the 25th annual joint High School extravaganza! Welcome to the famous and beloved Ten-Oh Festival!]

Cheers were heard as everyone swarmed into the building. In one area, Saya and a good number of Raizen Students, and even Hiroto, were all seen by the Raizen High Monster House they made as they began scaring everyone who went inside.

"I will eat your souls!" Saya exclaimed darkly, wearing an outfit that made her look like a burning demon and a voice machine that distorted her voice, scaring a couple who had walked in together and ran head, Saya smirked as she hid back until the next group came. 'Best idea ever!'

Meanwhile in the refreshments area, a maid cafe was seen as Raizen High's mini-restaurant where Shiori had come to see how things were going. Needless to say, seeing Mana wear a maid outfit was quite surprising.

"Hello master, can I take your order?" Mana joked, sticking her tongue out cutely. "So how do I look?

"Cute, but I didn't think you'd ever where something like this. So our food presentation is a maid cafe?" Shiori asked, causing the talkative trio to walk into view.

"No one used it and considering our diversity, what could have been better?" Mai asked, soon pointing at some of the other girls. "We have a beautiful but surprisingly innocent girl type."

Mikie smiles at that.

"A wild tsundere type girl."

Ashley forms a vein at that comment, but ignores it knowing it was for the sake of getting Miku sealed.
"And a tall yet timid and bashful type."

Katie blushes as she waves at that, and soon all the girls lined up.

"The boys are gonna love us! Unless they like older girls or swing the other way, eh... don't think there's too many of them." Ai replied.

"And if they are, go for it anyways." Mii replied, soon turning to Mana. "Now go get them poster girl! You're the head maid here!"

Mana smiles at that, and soon the other students lined up.

"Your wish is our command!" They all replied.

"Then let's make sure all of us work hard!" Mana replied, making everyone cheer. Soon turning to Shido. "Oh, and we got your band outfits ready. It's over there in the corner."

"Thanks Mana." Shiori replied.

After taking a moment to change, the girls were all seen changed into styled T-shirts that gave a mix of a rock and pop theme by being normal but having exotic pink symbols as their designs.

Each of the group had their shirt in their respective Spirit color, with the pink symbols representing Rinne who was the reason they had even become Spirits and Shido and each other, with Shiori's being cyan. They also had jean shorts with torn out bottoms in more faded colors of their shirts and also boots following the same color theme.

"Wow, these are rocking!" Kotori commented, putting her hands on her hips while giving a toothy grin. "I gotta hand it to Saya, that girl knows how to rock things into the fun zone. You sure she comes from a rich family Kurumi?"

"She does, it's when she's in public like this she lets loose. Learned that firsthand when she was your predecessor." Kurumi giggled, her usual hair ribbons replaced with ones that had a black star pin on each of them. "It'll be a while before the show so let's take this chance to enjoy everything."

With that, Tohka ran off to everyone's sudden surprise.

"I'm guessing that's Tohka's of way of telling us to just do it. Well, I'll buy it, see you guys in about an hour!" Kotori waved as she went off herself, and after a few minutes only Shiori was by herself as she chuckled at everyone's energy.

"Well, it's good to see how far they've all come." Shiori smiled to herself, though right as she did... she swore she saw Nia in her undisguised form looking at her and holding a candy apple. However, the moment someone walked by, she was gone. 'Meanwhile I'm so stressed I'm seeing things.'

Shiori soon heard footsteps and saw none other than Miku and a quartet of Rindouji's girls walking besides her. Soon Miku notices her.

"Good morning Shiori, how are you today? From the looks of things, I'd say you're doing quite well." Miku greeted.

"Um... yeah, I guess I am?" Shiori sweated, unsure how to respond to her. You couldn't blame her though, Miku was technically her enemy in a competition sense right now, and she didn't want to aid Rindouji's efforts by accident.
"I've gotta admit, those clothes suit you. In fact, it might be interesting for you to wear that outfit every day." Miku stated, making Shiori blush before Miku giggled at her reaction. "My, you always get flustered so easily. Ever heard of joking?"

Shiori stutters a bit at that.

"I've heard jokes, you just make it hard to tell what's a joke at all!" Shiori replied, making Miku giggle again.

"Yeah, maybe I do." Miku admitted, soon looking at the girls by her side. Shiori soon noticed the ripple effect from her powers come out. "Give me and Shiori a little alone time, would you please?"

All four of the girls walk off without any resistance or reluctance, making Shiori sweat.

'No matter how many times I see it, the sight of that power always gets me on edge. Hearing Nia helped train her just makes it worse.' Shiori thought, soon recollecting herself. "For someone scoping out the enemy you're not exactly being discreet."

"Oh no, that's not what I'm doing at all. Even I have lines I won't cross. After all, despite how I hate men do you see a string of deaths anywhere." Miku asked, making Shiori pale at the dark humor of her example. "You take things too seriously Shiori. Though as for why I'm really here, I came to ask you on a date."

Shiori blinks a few times at that.

"A date?" Shiori repeated.

"Just go with it Shiori, after all we'll have to tell her the truth about you being a guy eventually. Best we improve your relationship with her so maybe we can calm the storm when that finally happens." Maria replied, making Shiori mentally sigh knowing she was right.

"Uh... OK, I guess we can do that." Shiori replied, soon blushing as Miku took her arm. "M-Miku!"

Miku giggled as she dragged Shiori off.

"Oh, don't worry. We're both girls, aren't we?" Miku replied, ignoring the fact that Shiori was aware of her sexual orientation. Soon they stopped by a crepe stand as Miku buys them each one. "Here, enjoy!"

"Thanks." Shiori said while sweating slightly, looking at Miku eat hears.

On the Fraxinus, everyone watched the particular scene as Miku commented on how the crepe tasted. Rinne, Rio and Mayuri were also present on the ship due to Rinne suggesting her presence would protect the Fraxinus if something went off with Miku's powers.

"Just one day and she asks for a date. I can't tell if Miku's really into her, or just full of herself?" Rinne wondered.

"Hey Shiori, be careful of what you say. While we were fine the other day, Miku seems to be masking her stress, if you push her too far... well let's just say it's very possible for the end result to be her undergoing an Inversion." Maria replied, making Shiori gulp.

"We currently do have a way to protect everyone via another addition to the headsets, but this is based on her normal form. If she were to Inverse we risk not just the people present, but aside from
us here in the Fraxinus we might not be able to keep anyone but the Spirits unaffected."

"Right, I'll be careful." Shiori replied.

Maria sighs nervously.

"I can't help but worry, after Nia's tricks and what we see with Miku... I don't have the same confidence with these last three Spirits." Maria admitted, looking at Rinne.

"Any of the Spirits can be dangerous, if Seigo's taught me anything the fear you can feel depends on how overwhelming something feels to you, especially something clearly above you." Rinne replied, patting her hologram's head. "We just have to try our best, and go beyond it if needed."

Shiori was soon seen eating her crepe, and after taking a moment to look away at something, Miku takes a bite of hers. Shiori blushes in surprise at that.

"Oh, I'm sorry. I guess it's only fair you have a bite of mine too." Miku giggled, holding it out.

'She totally made an excuse to get an indirect kiss, didn't she!?' Shiori thought, blushing as she takes a quick bite of Miku's before turning away and blushing.

"You know, that was almost like we kissed." Miku giggled, and Shiori whimpered upon getting confirmation Miku had intended that. She then heard Miku gasp as she saw a Ring Toss game. "A ring toss, I love these! What prize do you want? Just tell me and I'll win it for you."

Shiori looks and notices an adorable cat based prize, making her eyes sparkle as the cuteness grabs her.

"I guess I want the cat... but please don't use your voice to get it, it's not any fun like that." Shiori answered, making Miku pout playfully.

"Alright, I won't. I'll just get it on the first try then." Miku replied, soon being handed the rings and tossing the first. She missed. "...OK, first payment of tries."

She throws the second and misses, and sweats as she throws the third... and just barely gets it on the ear, which was enough to count.

"Who knew it would be that much harder than I thought?" Miku sighed, embarrassed about her first try claim as she was handed the cat before giving it to Shiori. "Well I still won it anyways. Even if I hadn't, I could have-"

"Do you even hear what I asked, or did just shrug it off so I wouldn't call you out?" Shiori sighed, making Miku blink at that. "That's not how things work! For someone who claims they don't cross lines, you sure still have a lot you will walk past."

Maria sweated, paying attention to the emotional graph, though nothing serious came up yet.

"In that case, what am I supposed to do?" Miku asked.

"If you want a prize, then you win the game fair and square. If you lose then just try again until you succeed. Think about the people who work here!" Shiori replied sternly, looking at the people at the ring toss booth who didn't notice their conversation yet seemed to enjoy someone enjoyed their game.

"They put all this effort in making this, they didn't take any shortcuts or just form it out of nowhere.
Nothing but their own strength came into making this and they'd be sad to know they were manipulated."

Miku slightly froze at that as a certain memory flashed through her mind, though Shiori didn't notice.

"Sad? They should be honored that I even accepted a silly prize from their silly game." Miku answered, her eyes shadowed and making Shiori unaware what they were expressing. "They're my playthings and nothing more, my pawns to get whatever I want. I think highly of you thought, isn't that all that?"

"You're kidding right!? If that's how you see people, and if you really think I'm that shallow to be an exception, then you should know I think lowly of you. I tried to give you the benefit of the doubt, but now I'm starting to think otherwise." Shiori replied, making Miku stare in surprise. "Someone needs to remind you what it means to be human."

Unaware to Shiori, Tohka had walked nearby and been listening for quite a while. After hearing that she noticed an odd expression on Miku's face that it Shiori didn't seem to notice either due to standing right in front of her, or because she was angry and less rational than usual.

'What is she talking about? Everyone has ulterior motives, she's no different. Why should she care about others more? Wait... of course, she doesn't care, she's just trying to justify her own motives with fake nobility.' Miku thought, almost as if her mind was forcing her thoughts into a single direction. "I'd say our date is over now."

Miku turned before walking off.

"Test those words and win then, or admit they're hot air. I'll see you on the stage Shiori. Don't chicken out, I want to beat you fair and square."

Shiori watched her walk off, and Shiori looked down and sighed. She soon felt Tohka tap her shoulder, making her look behind in surprise, and noticing Tohka's expression... it was clear where she had been.

"...You heard everything, didn't you?" Shiori asked.

"Yeah, I did. Will you be OK?" Tohka asked.

"I think so, I just... the way Miku seems so indifferent just irritates me. I can't understand why she doesn't get it." Shiori sighed, looking at the cat prize.

"It might sound weird, but... I saw her give this strange look while you were talking. Almost like something you said was familiar to her." Tohka admitted, making Shiori look at her. "I'm not sure what though, but all of us who became Spirits have had sad stories. The question is what is hers? What does Rio not know?"

Shiori looked back where Miku left, starting to wonder that same question herself.

"[Attention all performers, please gather in the waiting room immediately. The events will begin shortly.]"

In a room where all groups for the Ten-Oh festival's stage performance were waiting, Shiori took out her phone as she and Tohka waited for the others to show up. She heard it ring as she was dialing Saya to check on her status with the haunted house. Soon she picks up.
"Saya speaking, what's up Shiori?" Saya answered.

"I wanted to check, how do things look with our entertainment so far?" Shiori asked.

"They're great! The shouts are attracting more people, and luckily since Rindouji's entertainment stand isn't near ours, I made a deal with the nearby booths that we'd give anyone who made it through the whole house a coupon for a free try at their games. Benefits all of us." Saya smirked, making Shiori sigh.

"Now get out there and rock their musical worlds!"

Shiori chuckled before hanging up and dialing Ai's number, soon hearing her pick up.

"Yeah, what's up Shiori?" Ai answered.

"How's the Maid cafe looking so far? Saya says we're good in entertainment, and since we're about to start playing." Shiori began.

"No need to finish, I get what you're asking. It's going great here too. Mana's getting us a flood of customers... just don't tell her why. She might cry." Ai answered, making Shiori sweat drop a bit. "Oh yeah, we asked Ryouko to check Rindouji's stands for both and they seem like they're not trying much."

Shiori was surprised at that.

"They're not?" Shiori wondered.

"Maybe they're expecting Miku will wash out the competition through her act alone. She wasn't at last year's Ten-Oh festival so she's a whole new factor for them. Though that may give us a good chance-Oh! Gotta hang up, I think we found our rush hour!" Ai explained, quickly hanging up to go to a table.

"Uh... what?" Shiori blinked, confused at the situation. Meanwhile Maria was thinking at the situation.

'You're not giving us enough credit Miku, and that'll be your biggest mistake. If this is how you're gonna play it then get ready to see our own bag of tricks. Nia made it clear we gotta push, now you're gonna see the price for not trying to shove.' Maria thought, soon getting an alert and gasping.

'What!? Not now, why would the attack here of all times? No choice, gotta call in the AST!'

Outside in the sky, the sight of Chinami and Jessica alongside Adeptus 4-12, many other DEM wizards and multiple Einherjar units were flying through the sky towards Tenguu Square as the clock on their CR-Units gave the signal that the set time for the operation had begun.

"Adeptus 4-12, move into position. All auxiliary wizards be on standby, Einherjar wait for commands by me or Adeptus 3." Jessica ordered, everyone readying to attack. "Prepare to move in!"

Before they could, a suddenly blast from the spot where the sun was fired, and dozens of the Einherjar units were shot before they could see the attack and defend against the hidden strike with their territories.

"What was that!?!" Adeptus 7 gasped.

"That would be us!"
Everyone looked to where the sun was, and floating in the air was none other than Mana with an upgraded White Licorice attached to her Murakumo. The sight of her rival made Jessica growl with anger.

"It's you and that damn White Licorice! Mana Takamiya, I'll take care of you myself!" Jessica shouted.

"What? Are you serious, but its just-" Chinami began, soon seeing a shot barely miss and turned to see Katie had fired at her, and then the sight of the other AST members excluding Artemisia and Karen who were absent for some reason. "Never mind, it's not just her. Almost thought she was the only one who showed up. Bring them down!"

"YES MA'AM!" All other Wizards answered.

Mana zoomed ahead.

"Territory Lock, deploy!" Mana shouted, expanding a territory that caused many of the weaker Wizards to be caught and start falling from the territories trapping them.

"Captain, help us!" A wizard called out.

Soon Mana deployed all the White Licorice's weapons, now run by her spirit mana as she fired out. The other AST members quickly rushed by to combat the DEM wizards and Einherjar, in only short time the AST's weapons proved to be more advantageous and they took the lead.

"Damn them, this isn't gonna work." Chinami groaned, tapping her headset. "This is Adeptus 3, we need help Marina. Send new Automaton reinforcements!"

"Deploying now, ETA should be around 5-10 minutes. Hold out until then." Marina replied, making Chinami groan at the time she was told. "Hey, I'm not the one who decides where a building happens to be. Suck it up."

Chinami soon noticed Ryouko clash against her Arondight, and the two were locked in place by their clashing blades.

"I've heard of you, the one who killed the Adeptus 2 of 12 years ago. Well, let's see how much that matters when I take you out here." Chinami stated, Arondight opening its blade out and creating a burst that send Ryouko flying.

"Damn, you're strong, but not strong enough to take us on!" Ryouko declared, rushing forward as she brought out the C-C-C and began firing at Chinami.

Meanwhile, back in the stage of Tenguu Square, everyone was currently seeing the performance of Senjo University High as they had a trio of students dancing to some music and finished up with a post that made the entire crowd cheer.

Shiori's group was watching from the side stands, impressed at their performance and wondering how much more applause that Rindouji's performance would do in comparison to the one they had already just seen.

"Rindouji's next and then it's us, here we go..." Origami gulped, grabbing Shiori's hand to calm her nerves.

"[Next up ladies and gents, its Miku Izayoi of Rindouji singing one of her hit songs!]"
A few minutes after the call, everyone cheered as Miku came on the stage, strangely though she had a cloth around her that most people expected she'd take off to flash her outfit, but what ended up happening was ever light suddenly going off.

"Uh... is that supposed to happen?" Natsumi asked.

"It might, Miku could make that flashing we expected into something-" Kotori began, soon gasping. "Uh... guys?"

Everyone saw Miku's body starting to glow indigo.

"Shaddai El Chai!"

Miku's Astral Dress forms, shredding the cloth around her and poses as the lights come back on, making the crowd go crazy.

"She used the darkness to pull out her Astral Dress without suspicion! Worse, that's pumped the crowd on its own already! She's not playing fair here!" Kaguya shouted, flailing her arms around.

"Hope you ready for some fun, the real show's about to begin!" Miku declared, making the crowd shout.

- (*Date A Live II - Monochrome*) -

Soon Miku poses, and the lights shift as the music to one of her songs starts playing.

"[When skies are turned from Monochrome, to an excess of tones... the world is sure to begin!]" Miku sang as she walked forward across the stage, her arms held out and then stretched before her. She pulls one back before pulling the other and crossing them, closing her eyes.

"[And if I have you by my side, anytime day or night... then I am sure to smile!]" She then extends one hand out and waves it, then puts it on her hip before moving the other to flashily point at herself. She moved to the music a bit before holding it in the air.

(I can't stop loving you every day, wo-oah!) She slowly steps to the right of the stage.

(I can't stop loving you every day, wo-oah!) Then Miku began walking towards the left side.

(I can't stop loving you every day, wo-oah!) Miku holds out a hand and moving like there was a wall, then swirling like she simply had to open a door.

(I can't stop loving you~) Finally, Miku returns to the stage's center and holds her arms up before moving them down like forming an arc above her head.

It was at this moment that Shiori suddenly noticed that Miku's face looked happier and enjoying herself more than at any moment she had before now, in fact... it was almost like she was looking at the real Miku. No using her voice beyond normal sing, no tricks at all, just a desire to sing and see everyone happy and enjoying it.

'What's going on? Is that really the same girl I saw act so uncaring about an hour ago?' Shiori wondered, starting to feel there was something Miku was hiding. The question is... what was it, and what did she have to hide consider what she was seeing before her?

"[Holding your hand in mine, and squeezing it so tight! Don't wanna let you go,]" Miku sang as she brought her arms together, soon clasping them tightly. Only slightly bouncing in place as she
"[My heart is open wide, you are my one desire. I hope... you feel it too!]") She stretched her arms out, like longing for someone to take her hands and pull her away to somewhere special. Twirling a bit after her voice picked up a bit.

"[Anytime that I can have you near me!]") Miku began to skip in place as she sang.

"[Every worry I have is disappearing! You melt my cares away.]") She wagged her finger in the air, soon skipping in place again and dancing a bit.

"[I hope that we're all closer, just a little every day a little better!]") Miku then waves her finger out in rhythm to the crowd shaking their glow batons.

"[Much more than yesterday!]") Right after, she held her hands to her face like she was calling out to someone.

Shiori soon noticed Tohka tapping her foot and smiling a bit to the song.

'OK, this definitely doesn't feel like the Miku we've gotten to know by now. Even Tohka's not on guard anymore!' Shiori thought, looking back at Miku as she still couldn't find the oddity in her previous actions compared to now.

"[When rainbows enter through the air, lining a road with flare! The trees will smile with such happiness there!]") Miku sang as she waved her hands back and forth a total of four times, making the illusion of a rainbow with each one. Soon making a blushing face as she held her hands to her face.

"[Like being wrapped up, in a love story... a journey that has only begun!]") She shook to the rhythm, then crossing her arms and kneeling to the ground.

"[When skies are turned from monochrome, into an excess of tones. My heart will race and my pulse will beat on!]") A ripple of light formed around her before spreading out, turning the entire stage indigo briefly, or monochrome in a sense. Doing a series of finger poses after it changes back.

"[Having you near me, is so astounding... you make everyday so colorful!]") Finally reaching the song’s end, Miku held her arms out before crossing them while stretched out.

At the last few seconds, Miku spun before giving a pose with her right hand stretching out its thumb and pointer finger.

- (*insert song end*) -

The crowd's cheering went crazy at that very moment, Shiori and the Spirits in awe at what they just witnessed.

"That was incredible!" Tohka cheered.

"OK, be honest... anyone suddenly feel like before this point we haven't actually seen Miku?"
Natsumi asked, making the others look at her. "She felt like someone else, and going with my experience? I feel like the Miku before we heard her singing's the fake here."

"I thought so to. Wait, you can recall the recent memories of someone you transform into, right? Maybe you could-" Shiori suggested by Natsumi shook her head. "Wait, no?"
Natsumi sighed.

"I can only see the recent memories, if I had been in my Inverse Form... that'd be a different story." Natsumi answered, turning to the stage. "If we want our answers, we gotta get them from the source. We've gotta win the overall rankings for today."

"[Next up ladies and gents, for our final act for the day, its' a band performance from Raizen High!]

The group all turned at that.

"That's our cue, we better hurry down there." Shiori noted, and everyone headed over while picking up their instruments. After doing so, the stage lit up and showed them all to the crowd who began cheering. 'If it weren't for the fact our freedom's on the line, this would actually be kinda cool.'

Everyone got into position, and then... they noticed Origami was suddenly shaking like a wind-up toy.

"Origami, what's the matter?" Shiori whispered.

"I'm sorry, but I think I may have, sort of, kind of neglected to mention that..." Origami whispered back, sweating heavily. "...I have terrible stage fright!"

The whole group pales that.

'...Oh boy, we are SO screwed right now!' Shiori mentally panicked.

Oh boy, that's the worst possible time for something to go wrong 0_0 *sighs* you really should have warned them Origami, since you're onstage now, you can't have Natsumi mimic Miku to sing in your place. It always seems like things go wrong at the worst possible time whenever you have an event that has a crowd watching you... staring at everything you do... the audience in your underwear trick doesn't work... *shivers*

I hope that scene where I showed Miku singing and performing turned out alright, that wasn't like my intros because it was in real time, it was pretty fun to write though! ^^ *giggles* And luckily, I'll be doing an Encore in the following chapter when the Raizen High band begins singing Q&A. So I better get ready to take the stage again real soon.

To anyone curious on why I had Shiori note Miku looked different, when I saw her singing Monochrome in the anime, her face looked a lot like it did after she let Shido seal her powers, so I felt like that was representing Miku subconsciously wishing to see someone love another from the bottom of their heart, the wish she still had even if she hadn't been honest with herself. She said it herself, she didn't want fame, she wanted to make music for others to enjoy.

Well, next chapter things are about to turn on their heads, so as my heads up to all of you? If you don't care about spoilers, or just want an idea what's about to happen next, go back to Chapter 25 and see the intro song again. Similar to how Inverse Tohka was in it before we saw her show up, there's been a hint there all season for an event that will finally show up in the next chapter.

See you next time when we begin act three of this epic performance! Until then, stay awesome everyone ;)

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-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 97% (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 92% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 85% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 88% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 83% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Secret)

Natsumi - 77% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 67% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 67% (Weight Manipulation)
Get ready everyone, this is act 3 of the Miku arc! We'll be starting things off with Tohka singing Q&A for the Raizen High team while the AST resumes their fight with the DEM forces, and from there... well let's just say I don't need to say it because you've probably already noticed it under these author notes, at least depending on how you're viewing this chapter right now ^^;

Things are gonna get crazy in this chapter, and it's only the tip of the iceberg for what's coming everyone's way in-universe, and I can assure you this last leg of Season 2 is going to introduce and reveal things that are gonna turn heads for everything in the story's universe, especially in regards to a deeper story behind the Inverse Forms as Tohka's Nightmare has already hinted.

What's my favorite part about what's coming next? While Tohka's still got main character status for the rest of Season 2, all of the Spirits are gonna get a chance to shine because they all need to work together for what's about to happen next. Oh, and the best part? There's a surprise coming, and I can't hint it due to automatic spoilers if I describe it in any form, but you'll love it :3

I will say this now, the lyrics for Q&A? Unlike Monochrome I couldn't find the dub lyrics, and it's too hard to make them out by listening, so... kinda like I do with the intros, I'm going to be making them up. My apologies there, though I'm no stranger to some songs having lyrics you can't find, sometimes even ones without official releases like that "Hang On" song from the first Beyblade series' G-Revolution season.

The stage has been set, and now it's time to truly make this arc start to sing! Now, lights, camera and... *holds out megaphone* ACTION!

-Inverse Miku, Code Name: [Siren]-

Demon King: Lilith - Gabriel's Demon King counterpart, Lilith takes the form of a darker version of the translucent keyboard, and the organ is transformed into a black and silver version of itself that looks like it came from and was made from materials in Hell. Unlike before, Spirits not immune to the sound if they're sealed and don't have their Astral Dresses equipped to protect them, with Rinne and anyone holding her power being the only exception. Any attempts to jam or counter the signal will also fail. The only way to avoid the song of Lilith is to simply not hear it, requiring someone to block out any sound from reaching their ears, or at least the sound of Lilith itself. Lilith also possesses the ability to fire off sonic waves alongside Miku.

- Alternate Form: Aria - The Inverse counterpart of Gabriel's March form, and Lilith's primary method of support. Where the March enhanced the physical strength of the user and any listener of Miku's choice, but had the limitation of being unable to give than more than one type of enhancement and an entire group could only be given the same enhancement. Aria allows all types of enhancements to a group, and even allows those she effects to safely use all 100% of their body's power, avoiding the usual harm it would cause.
- Alternate Form: Sonata - The Inverse counterpart of Gabriel's Rondo form, and Lilith's primary method of defense which can also be used to restrain others as well. Where Rondo was limited by the Spirit's threat ranking and was useless against Inverse Spirits, Sonata is powerful enough that only an Inverse Spirit that's multiple ranks higher has a chance to break free of the bindings, and a Spirit that isn't Inverted will be completely immobilized. Rinne is the only exception, provided she's at full power.

- Alternate Form: Fantasia - The Inverse counterpart of Gabriel's Solo form, and Lilith's primary offensive technique. Where Solo would brainwash people aside from those with an immunity to the song or had a way to block it from reaching them, while still being able to stay true to themselves, Fantasia causes those its brainwashes to ignore any existing views the user had and focus solely on Miku's wishes, while only being avoidable to those who can block it out due to the dark spirit power infused within the song.

- Alternate Form: Anthem - The Inverse counterpart of Gabriel's Requiem form, primary method of healing and its most pacifistic technique. Where the Requiem could create an analgesic effect, and could help reduce or heal damage, including damage that was considered fatal, Anthem ups that to an even higher level. The song now removes fatigue, eliminates all pain and can heal anyone still alive into making a full recovery.

- Alternate Form: Capriccio - The organ body of Lilith changes form into what can best be described as a mini-battleship that moves on land and possesses an armada of sound and sonic based weaponry. Along with being able to emit sonic wave attacks alongside Miku as it can in its default form, the Capriccio can converge every spot it fires sonic attacks with Miku's voice to make a living sound cannon that fires a beam of sonic energy, the force is so strong that it disrupts all territory based defenses not powered by an Ashcroft device.

- Powers: While in her Inverse Form, Miku's powers are amplified to dangerous levels similar to that of Kurumi's own Inverse Form in its corrupted state, as what normally could combat or protect people while she's in her normal form is now rendered useless due to the dark spirit power breaking all of those limitations apart. Even Spirits who normally aren't affected are at risk should they not be wearing their Astral Dress upon her using the Fantasia to take control of them.

Miku's Mind powers also manifest beyond her sounds, allowing her to manipulate Lilith to a greater degree than she could manipulate Gabriel's powers and abilities, as well as allowing her to hear the emotions in one's mind and allowing her to act in response to them. The most dangerous ability that Miku's Inversion gives her is a silent scream, making it possible for her to use her power without someone ever hearing her use it. Luckily, just like her normal form, her fatal weakness is her powers fail to work on someone who can't hear her song, and if she runs out of spirit power she'll lose her voice temporarily until her mana recovers.

Risk Factors: AAA

Spacequake: A

Spirit's Astral Dress: C

Demon King Rank: AA
Chapter 38, S2: Miku Fantasia, Part 3

"[Next up ladies and gents, for our final act for the day, it's a band performance from Raizen High!]

The group all turned at that.

"That's our cue, we better hurry down there." Shiori noted, and everyone headed over while picking up their instruments. After doing so, the stage lit up and showed them all to the crowd who began cheering. 'If it weren't for the fact our freedom's on the line, this would actually be kinda cool.'

Everyone got into position, and then... they noticed Origami was suddenly shaking like a wind-up toy.

"Origami, what's the matter?" Shiori whispered.

"I'm sorry, but I think I may have, sort of, kind of neglected to mention that..." Origami whispered back, sweating heavily. "...I have terrible stage fright!"

The whole group pales that.

"What do you mean you have stage fright!? Worse, why wait until this moment? If you had warned us beforehand I could have changed into Miku and just swapped places with you! Now we're pretty much screwed!" Natsumi whispered angrily, making Origami shake more.

Shiori looked at the crowd, most of them seemed confused about why they hadn't started playing yet, this was bad... if they didn't start soon they'd be disqualified. Luckily for Shiori, Tohka managed to quickly think of a plan.

"Origami, your tambourine's right here." Tohka smiled, surprising Origami as Tohka handed it to her. While the group was confused the crowd seemed to buy it and Tohka soon whispered to the others. "Just start playing, trust me."

- (*Date A Live II - Q&A*) -

While none of them knew what Tohka was doing, they did need to start before they got disqualified, soon Kaguya hits her drumsticks to announce the group to start playing. Shiori and Kotori starting jamming on their drums before Natsumi and Yuzuru quickly followed, Kurumi began playing her keytar and Kaguya began beating on the drums.

After the beta picked up a bit, Yoshino and Origami began shaking the tambourines, a stronger beat with everyone playing begins, and then came the fatal moment someone had to start singing. Origami was expecting she'd have to when she couldn't find her voice, but then...

"[Racking my brains over this and that... I begin thinking of unnecessary things, then I can't
admit to my mistakes. So I give out excuses, all because of my strange pride!"
Tohka sang as she shook to the rhythm, surprising the others since they had no idea how well she could sing, much less sing as good as she was now.

"[I raise myself high onto a shelf, because I feel human affairs are beyond my mind... but I don't have any intention of admitting that!]
Tohka stretched out her right hand and slowly waved it across her, before putting down and doing the same with her left and then raising it high as she winked at the others.

(Moving through the motions... I shake around like a small tic tac!) They nod as Origami and Yoshino began hit their tambourines by their heads.

(They say go hard and work for it, but how... do I do that?) Kaguya kept hitting her drums as she spun them between hits.

Their fellow students from Raizen High all wave their glow batons high and cheer at that moment, and that seemed to rile up the crowd alongside them as they do the same. Miku showed surprise as she noticed this.

"[Attention! Question! I'm sailing across the ocean, but now I'm in a storm! How do I... escape it? By just moving forward!]
Tohka sang as she, Origami and Yoshino, with the latter two keeping the tambourines in their other hands, raised their hands up high and waved them like they were waving for someone's attention.

(Yes! No!) Shiori and Kotori wink in response to the words.

(Yes! No!) Natsumi and Yuzuru do the same as the former two.

"[Its yes, I see the horizon coming up just beyond the shore! And its vivid colors, have melted the frozen field of time!]
Tohka jumped up with both hands high in the air.
The glow batons of the crowd were swaying back and forth, the stage lights moving with them.

"[Even though I'm filled with this and that... I still get riddled with needless anxiety, creating things the strangest under the claim that they've necessities!]
Tohka sang, resting a hand to her chest before slowly bring it out as she walks across the stage which lights up and turns purple.

"[I try to be given things to feel great, and feel like I'm actually somebody! Yet that for that reason, I question... am I really free?]
Tohka spins and motions a hand to Kurumi who flashes a peace sign, and then to Natsumi who spins before kneeling to the ground.

(Breaking through the red madness! I mix blue joy with a white sight!) Tohka shoots her right hand up, making the stage turn white and then blue shortly after.

(Even if it's too little... I'll make it become "enough") Tohka rocks her left arm to the side as the stage turns red before jumping up, making it take a brief black color before it shatters flashes back to normal.

"[Attention! Question! I'm flying across the wind, but now I'm stuck in a cloud of fog! How do I... dispel it? Start spinning around!]
Tohka waves her hands in the air, making the crowd mimic her.

(Yes! No!) Kurumi and Kaguya both stretch a hand out in response to the words.
Origami shakes her tambourine in response to the words.

"[Its no, the hidden path out is just down below! Now that I've escaped, I'll look up at the sky!]" Tohka slowly rose her hands up in an arc shape.

The stage goes green and releases a small burst of light out, distorting the view of everyone on it.

"[The question... remained in my eyes! That answer... keeps ringing through my ears! These words, that have my attention, are just... so... special!]" Tohka sang, simply shaking to the rhythm with her eyes closed.

"[This cipher... its circling my favorite colors! This mystery... its playing my favorite songs! My experiences, they're shuffling around, and its... like... an... new... adventure!]" Tohka kept dancing to the beat, slowly opening her eyes.

Tohka raised her hands, breaking the distortion as the stage went orange. Soon sliding back as Kotori and Shiori briefly took frontal stage, Shiori gave a fast jam while Kotori soon spun across the ground still playing as each of the stage colors used phased by again in a flashing repetition until slowing down and getting back up as the two let Tohka back in frontal stage.

"[Attention! Question! I'm digging into the earth, but now I'm trapped underground! How do I... escape it? Push your hands up high!]" Tohka sang as she waved both her hands in the air, soon shooting them forward and giving an L shape with each hand.

(Yes! No!) Tohka raised her arms up and to her right.

(Yes! No!) Tohka raised them again, but to the left this time.

"[Its yes, the land blocking me has knocked aside! And the sight that's before me, it's the wonderful hue of dawn!]" Tohka spun before jumping back with the others as the song near its end.

Soon everyone got close to each other as they each jammed their last jams and Tohka winked to the ground.

- (*insert song end*) -

At that moment, the crowd all cheered and applauded to their song. Shiori panted from exhaustion as Tohka glomped her and laughed happily.

"We did it, we really did it!" Tohka exclaimed.

"It's all thanks to your quick thinking, why didn't you tell us you could sing?" Shiori asked.

"Uh... I think I was distracted by the tambourine." Tohka chuckled embarrassingly, making the others sweat drop before they chuckled with her.

Jessica zoomed closed to Mana, now equipped with the Scarlet Licorice.

"FIRE! FIRE!" Jessica screamed, launching all the artillery she had in the machine, and Mana failed to dodge due to new upgrades added to it. After clearing from the smoke, Mana noticed some blood trickle from her forehead.
"Crap... we're starting to run on fumes here." Mana coughed, the DEM forces giving them more trouble than initially expected. Soon enough the sight of the reinforcements came. "Uh guys, we have a problem!"

Everyone looked to see what looked to be the Einherjar equivalents to the Alice and Jabberwocky units, these new units were called the Medusa and Drake respectively.

The Medusa units all fly around and form multiple territory barriers to cover the DEM forces while the Drakes open slots to fire multiple beam blasts at them. The AST was all quickly knocked back, most of them crashing against Tenguu Square's roof, leaving only the SSS trio, Saya and Mana left.

"No... this is bad!" Saya sweated.

"That's an understatement, we're the closest to being screwed we could right now." Leonora grunted, sweating a bit.

Chinami stares at the remaining group, motioning Jessica closer.

"We have more important things to do, so do us a favor and die." Chinami declared, drawing Arondight while Jessica readies the Scarlet Licorice for another shot. However right before they could fire... a sudden beam fires from above, smashing through most of all three automaton types.

"What!?!" Jessica called out in shock. Right afterwards, something rushes by from high in the air and cuts through most of the wizards' flight packs, causing them to start descending to the ground while Jessica saw the Scarlet Licorice fall off and teleport away for repairs, forcing her to draw her sword Clarent out. "Who did that!?

Her answer came as the attacker soon zoomed into view by the remaining AST, revealing Artemisia wearing the Bahamut. Shortly after, Karen floats down holding a smoking Mjolnir in hand.

"Karen? Artemisia!?" Jessica gasped, even Chinami was worried since these were Ratatoskr's strongest wizards. Artemisia smiles at the others.

"Hey guys, sorry we were late. Karen had to help me fully adjust Bahamut so I would be able to use it full power without any problems." Artemisia replied, soon turning to Jessica with a serious look. "It's been a while since we saw each other, back when I was brainwashed into aiding DEM industries!"

Jessica growled.

"Truth is this is perfect, I've wanted to knock you down ever since I took your position!" Jessica declared, she thrust Clarent forward to release a beam strike, but Artemisia's unique territory formed and pushed it back before she punched Jessica in the chest, throwing her into Chinami's arms as she was knocked unconscious.

"No way..." Chinami breathed, shocked how easily Artemisia overpowered her. Then again, Westcott hadn't updated her Mordred with a stronger model, meaning it was at a disadvantage to what the Arthur and Lancelot CR-Units could take.

"Come on, let's finish these jokes off." Karen stated, readying Mjolnir again. However, she suddenly got a bad feeling and turned around. 'Wait a moment, where's Ellen at!?!'

Suddenly the remaining Medusa units all light up and form a barrier to trap the AST in.

"Sorry, but we can't let you interfere with Adeptus 1's work." Chinami declared, readying her blade
as the other DEM wizards and automatons grouped around her. Karen sweated as she and the others all rushed forward, hoping to break free of the barrier before it was too late.

Back inside the Tengu Square Building, each of the school's performing groups were gathered on the stage which was pitch black due to the lights being turned off, they were waiting as the staff prepared to announce the results.

"[And now, here are the results for the 15th Annual Ten-Oh Festival! First off for the entertainment portion of the events, the winner school is...]"

Soon the light appears over Eibunishi High's group.

"[Eibunishi High School, for their amazing Treasure Hunt giveaway!]"

'We won't know the other rankings until the overall vote, so we can't tell how well ours did unless we get First Place on one of them.' Shiori thought, some sweat trickling down her face.

"[Next for the food service portion of the events, the winning school is...]

The light appears over Senjo University High's group.

"[Senjo University High School! Now finally, for the performance portion of the events...]"

As expected by Shiori's group, Miku had the light shine over her for that one.

"[Rindouji's All-Girls Private Academy! Congrats to you three, now we'll tally up the scores and decide the overall winner of today's festivities! The winner is...]

Tohka took Shiori's hand, and at that moment Miku turned to her.

"There, you see? You didn't score first place on any event. Without that, you don't have a chance of winning now, it's already clear you've lost. See that? You lost because you were too dependent on your friends." Miku smirked, making Shiori sweat a bit as she cupped her cheek.

"And a promise is a promise my dear, you and all eight the Spirits you've sealed will belong to me now. Isn't that right? No need to worry though, I'll be taking proper care of you so there's no need to be apprehensive-"

Suddenly a spotlight formed over Raizen's group.

"[I don't believe it! In a surprise twist, the winners are the kids of Raizen High!]

At that moment, Miku suddenly froze and turned to see the result screen... Senjo High was third at 685 votes, Rindouji had scored 727 votes... and Raizen High scored 728 votes, just enough to give them the win!

"What?" Miku gasped, unable to believe what she just saw.

"[Raizen may have no obtained the top spot in any events, but their performance, their haunted house and maid cafe all managed to score at least 240 votes and take all the second place spots! Managing to overcome Rindouji who had a surprise upset by having only their performance overshadow all overs this year.]

Natsumi soon pulls out her phone and checks the votes.
"She's right, they got 524 votes for this contest. However, their other events barely scratched 100 votes each due to not meeting their usual standards." Natsumi confirmed, showing them. "That means their focus on the performance cost them victory!"

Miku's eyes became distant at that information, while Shiori was hugged by all her girls as they celebrated. Miku's hands began to tremble as if she was having a panic attack.

"You've gotta be kidding me... it doesn't make sense. There's no way they're actually serious about this..." Miku said, her voice looking all shakily as Shiori and the others noticed her having something of a breakdown. "Don't you all know... I'm Miku Izayoi you fools. Understand? Don't you all understand?"

"Oh no... Shiori, do something! I'm getting heavy signs of a you know what! Quick, try to calm her down! Be... uh, I don't know, humble and tell her Rindouji only lost because they ignore their other events?" Maria shouted, starting to sweat in worry.

Shiori nodded, soon turning to Miku.

"Miku-" Shiori tried to say, only for Miku to look towards them with an almost broken look on her face, some of her hair frizzing in the front.

"Just stop... my song won first place, I was supposed to win." Miku gasped out, and now Shiori saw Maria's worries. Though she felt Miku's sanity was more at stake now.

"Calm down Miku, the announcer said it herself. We only one because all three of our events worked together to win, not just the stage." Shiori replied, Miku didn't say anything as she kept staring.

"I mean look at how much you scored for your song? That proves we wouldn't have ever beaten you with our song. You're just too good of a singer, but that wasn't the only contest that mattered. I couldn't focus on them though, so my friends had to work to cover my shortcomings. If you had been willing to let the others run your other events, then we'd have lost no matter what."

Miku only stared more, her eyes starting to be shadowed by her hair as Shiori's words echoed through the air. A certain memory resurfaced through her mind as she was seen speaking before a bald haired man with a goatee. That man? Edgar F. Carroll, the DEM member killed by Westcott during the time Kotori was sealed due to trying to take over DEM Industries.

"Being famous or a TV star, that doesn't matter to me. All I care about is making my music for others to enjoy. Even if I wanted to, I wouldn't be extra nice with you just to get it." Miku's voice echoed, not aware who she had been speaking to.

Then the sight of a certain magazine article and broken CDs, before seeing a certain face she made in the mirror as she looked like she was screaming came to her mind. All because of the words Shiori spoke.

'I'm... not weak... I'm not helpless! No, I'm not... I'm not!' Miku thought, her thoughts racing as awful memories began to overwhelm her mind. 'I'm not the same person who lets someone like that man ruin everything! I'M NOT'

"Please, you don't have to be alone anymore. I know I saw something different about you when you were on stage. I'm sure that's the real you, let her do more than sing-" Shiori continued, however...

"Shut your mouth." Miku replied, and Shiori suddenly gasped as Miku's body began to emit dark indigo energy... it was starting! "I said... SHUT YOUR MOUTH!"
Suddenly dark indigo spirit power forms and blows everyone back a bit as a gold organ and translucent keyboard formed behind and in front of Miku, but the dark spirit power envelops them creating a silver and black nightmarish organ that looked to be made from the depths of Hell itself, while said translucent keyboard became darker.

The crowd all murmurs in fear and confusion as Miku's form reappears, but now... she was in her Inverse Form. Her usual neat hair had become wild, almost representing how much of a mess her mind was in from the revelation Raizen had won first place, and her hair clip had the moon turn silver while the lilies became black and somewhat wilted.

The choker she had before was snapped down the middle, and her dress had changed into a mostly black, with some dark indigo designs and a bit of red lining in places. Her skirt had shrunk to become fairly short, the sleeves of her dress had melted away and her breasts were almost so little covered that you'd think the dress was meant to fully expose them minus the now smaller flaps that were all that covered her naughty bits. Her midriff was also on full display, a cut exposing it and making her dress look like a jacket.

Her stockings had been cut down to a third of their size, and as black as her dress, while her heels had become high heels and become much spikier in design. Her gloves now didn't cover her fingers, with all that covered her palm and the back of her hand being a small bit of cloth worn around her pointer finger. The bow on her back, as the two large strands were in tatters and strewn with holes.

"She... she entered her Inverse Form! She's not [Diva] anymore, she's... uh..." Maria began, soon thinking for a moment. "...She's a [Siren]."

"Sing it... sing!" Miku screamed, slamming her fingers on the keyboard before her. "Lilith... FANTASIA!"

[FACE MY SONG, AND OBEY MY MASTER!]

Soon Miku's voice screamed out, and her Demon King echoed and magnified the effects of it, Shiori felt her senses overload briefly while everyone else who was hit by it froze like they were in a trance.

Rinne gasped as she felt it coming, and soon activated her Limit Astral Dress as she screamed, forming a thick aura of her power around the Fraxinus as a shield before the sound waves breached out and spread across most of the city, the DEM and AST fighters were unable to hear it due to the Medusa' territories shutting out all the sound.

"Huh?" Mana blinked as she saw the sound wave distortions, and gasped. "Oh no... is Miku-

Suddenly Mana was slashed by a Drake, causing her to cough up some blood as she dropped onto the territory's bottom. Artemisia and Karen both look before everyone but them suffers the same and look to see Jessica back on her feet.

"No, not this time! I won't lose to you anymore!" Jessica smirked, soon charging another blast. Meanwhile the Fraxinus was taking a heavy hit from the blast, most of the systems going haywire despite Rinne blocking the sound.

"Do something, we gotta at least stay air born or we're dead!" Kannazuki ordered, everyone quickly typing in response while Mayuri and Rio held onto Rinne terrified. Mayuri transferring over to her Android body as her hologram began to have trouble staying stable. "Hurry!

Soon the lights all went out in the ship.
The glow batons everyone was holding dropped, making it look like they all flickered out slowly as the crowd closest to further from Miku had theirs hit the ground. All of the Spirits stared and stopped moving, the heavy feeling of the dark spirit power almost holding them in place.

Soon, the only light in the entire area came from Miku and the Demon King Lilith, and a few screens of light shining on the sides of the auditorium and stage. Shiori stared in horror at the sight before her.

"No... she's used her voice on everyone." Shiori gasped, before her eyes widened. "And the speakers were still on, just how far did her song travel!?!"

Miku soon turned to Shiori, her eyes glowing menacingly and any sweetness her face had before was now replaced with complete cruelty.

"They were your friends, weren't they!?" Miku asked mockingly, soon smirking darkly. "So darn reliable and committed... and so easily bent to my will!"

"Miku... stop this, I know this isn't you!" Shiori begged.

Miku soon cackled and tapped her keyboard, causing the entire ground to suddenly stand up and move like zombies without any will of their own. All of the glowing with her spirit mana as it empowered them, a few of the Rindouji girls suddenly grabbed Shiori.

"Oh, and first thing's first... how about you finally drop that filthy transformation!" Miku shouted, blasting a burst of spirit mana at Shiori. It knocked her down, and dispelled Natsumi's transformation, turning him back into Shido who stared in shock. Did Miku just imply she knew he was Shiori all along?

"You think I didn't figure it out? After I realized my voice didn't work on you it was just too obvious, why else would anyone visit a spirit so recklessly? I just ignored it because you somehow actually became a girl, but now I don't give a damn about that. Plus, I'd rather see you destroyed as a man so I don't hold back!"

Shido's eyes widen as he managed to throw the girls to the side and dodge a blast of ice and soon some of the shards exploding, he stares in horror as Yoshino was riding Zafkiel, but her eyes were glowing indigo. Natsumi soon floated in her Astral Dress with the same applying to her.

"Uh, uh, uh! We didn't say you could dodge that!" Natsumi cackled, looking at Shido viciously.

"You can't hurt her anymore, we won't let you." Yoshino said, for once showing anger on her face which she never did before. Shido stared in horror as he realized what this meant... Inverse Miku could actually control Spirits.

Soon Shido felt himself blasted with beams of light and gusts of wind as the Yamai twins holding their Raphael bows and Origami focus at him, all with the same eyes marking Miku's control of them.

"Hah, you idiot!" Kaguya smirked.

"You made a foolish choice to bring us all here, and now you'll pay the consequences for that decision." Yuzuru stated.

"Now I see why Nia said you were lucky, because you never consider what goes wrong. It just never had before now." Origami said, using a tone not unlike Chinami's stoic and cold demeanor. "A
pot of bad luck that's going to leave you dead."

Suddenly a ring of fire surrounded Shido before shadows grabbed him, and her turned to see Kurumi and Kotori with once again... the same eyes. Shido wasn't even willing to look at Tohka now, seeing her with those eyes? That would be too much after seeing the others with them.

"If you're dumb enough to go against our mistress, then you deserve being torn to shreds!" Kotori cackled, swinging Camael onto her palm.

"Ooh, such a poor idiot. I wonder how we should properly decide his punishment?" Kurumi said, showing a creepy smile.

Miku smirked and prepared a sonic shout while all of the others prepared their own attacks, and a defenseless Shido could only watch in vain as they all fired... but then suddenly purple crystals formed and shielded him to everyone's surprise, and a sandstorm soon blew out and blinded them.

"What the?" Shido muttered in shock, only to feel himself grabbed to the stands where everyone watched Miku's performance. He looked to see Tohka in her Astral Dress... but her eyes were still the same! "Wait a second... Tohka, you're not under Miku's control?"

"Huh!?!" Tohka yelled loudly, holding her hands by her ears after seeing Shido's mouth move. "I can't hear you Shido, what did you say!?"

Shido blinked at that... but then it made sense, Tohka wasn’t under Miku's control because she didn't hear her. The question is why? She seemed fine until the moment before Miku's inversion.

"Oh wait, I forgot I had these in!" Tohka yelled, soon removing a second headset from one of her ears. "There we go, I forgot to take it out after we finished singing."

"Wait Tohka, don't take it-" Shido warned.

"Too late, now she's mine!" Miku shouted, soon firing her voice at Tohka. The Energy Spirit felt her head shake a bit before blinking, her eyes still unchanged.

"Uh... no? Why should I?" Tohka asked, surprising Shido and Miku. This time Shido had no idea why it didn't work. "Shido, what's going on?"

Shido was confused until he heard a faint static as Maria got through.

"Shido, thank goodness you picked up. What's the situation?" Maria asked.

"Miku's Inversion took control of everyone except me and Tohka, I'm likely immune due to some of the power of mom that's in me from that time she made me seal her. Tohka on the other hand I'm not sure why?" Shido replied.

"Hmm... was there anything different you noticed?" Maria asked.

"Well, Tohka had her... Astral Dress on! I think I get it, the others weren't wearing theirs. She only needed her ears blocked to protect her while she wasn't wearing it. Still..." Shido answered, turning at the situation. "Things have gone downhill, beam us up!"

Maria sighed.

"No can do, the ship's systems have all shut down from the sound wave! You're lucky that Rinne shielded us or the Fraxinus could have fired on Tenguu Square." Maria answered, making Tohka
"Sorry, but I'm afraid fighting your way out to even just run is all you can do until we get it back up. Right now, Mayuri lending me her electricity is the only reason the headset's even working so I can talk with you. Oh wait, your mom wants to talk."

"Shido, I think I know a way to help you fight back without needing the Spirit Ascension to help you, which admittedly is too dangerous to use where you're at right now." Rinne replied, making Shido listen. "...Summon Uriel!"

Shido blinked.

"Wait, but you just said to not Spirit Ascend! I'd have to use-" Shido tried to reply, but Rinne cleared her throat.

"Let me explain before you jump a gun. After I had you seal me, I had Reine scan your spirit mana and began studying it to see if it had any effects on you, and just recently realized you've gained somewhat of a downgraded level of the Spirit Ascension, passive abilities." Rinne explained, making Shido's eyes widen.

"Each Spirit gives you one. For me, that's a weaker cyan colored Uriel. Not sure about the others, I'll need to actually sense your aura to confirm that for you. For now, at least use my Angel, maybe you and Tohka might be able to free the others from her control, they should still have resistance, you just gotta shock their senses some-"

Shido soon heard the connection fade out, likely from Mayuri using up all her lightning, right as Tohka stomped the ground to make a boulder fly out to counter a gale the Yamai twins shot at them. Seeing this, Shido focused a copy of Uriel that had the pink designs replaced by Cyan ones.

"Just how do we shock their senses? I don't think knocking them out will work, even then we likely won't be able to!" Shido stated, sweating a bit.

"Wait... her Demon King!" Tohka gasped, getting Shido's attention. "It's what let her control everyone, if I can damage it, that should do it!"

Tohka jumped forward, making Shido reach a hand out... only to hold Uriel out as a guard when Origami, Kotori and the Yamai twins flew over towards him with their Angels all aimed and ready to attack. Tohka soon unleashed a large slash wave, only for Yoshino to make an ice barrier to block it.

"Was that all?" Miku mocked.

Suddenly Miku screams a sonic blast, shooting Tohka up into the sky and getting the attention of a certain someone as she did.

"Tohka!" Shido screamed, soon turned as the rest of the Spirits minus Miku swarmed him all at once. Shido swung Uriel to push them back a bit, but Miku sang and they began pushing through. "I... can't hold it!"

"Hah! You fell for it, game over Miku!" Tohka shouted from outside, soon smashing through the ceiling right above where Miku was. Miku and the other Spirits all turned as Tohka flew directly at her.

"Hah! I won't even let you get anywhere near me!" Miku declared with a smirk, soon preparing a sonic scream... only to see Tohka fly right past he. She gasped upon realizing Tohka's actual target was... Lilith! "Don't you dare!"
Tohka swung Sandalphon against the Demon King, causing a huge gash across its body, and only Miku heard its painful screams.

[The pain! It hurts, make it stop!]

Suddenly the hypnotized Spirits all feel the holds on their minds suddenly dispel, all of them crashing into the ground, weakened and drained from Miku's control over them. Shido sighed in relief. Tohka herself collapsed onto her knees, she had taken more damage than she realized.

"They're free now, that's what matters." Shido smiled, only for him, Tohka and Miku to suddenly see a cross shaped attack cut through Tenguu Square's ceiling. After the smoke cleared, Ellen was seen descending through it, having been the one to create it with Caliburn.

"How exciting, for one our plans are going how we want. Looks like Mikazuchi and Bailey's team did their jobs right." Ellen said, a bloodthirsty smile on her face as her pride and arrogance showed without reservation. "Though I had other plans to amend that had it failed."

Tohka struggled to get up, looking at Ellen.

"Ellen, I should have known you'd show up! It won't matter though!" Tohka growled.

"Oh please, I'll just take you under my command!" Miku smirked, firing her voice at Ellen who simply smirked as it passed by to no avail. "No way, that's impossible! You shouldn't be able to avoid my voice!"

Ellen cackled.

"Oh please, as if anyone could sway me from Ike. At least I'd like to say that. What's really the case is 30 years ago, the first Spacequake gave me power that makes me immune to certain effects of Spirit powers, you voice included!" Ellen stated, holding out Caliburn.

"Now time to acquire my targets, all Ratatoskr affiliated Spirits and the Inverse Spirit that they've recently labeled as [Siren]! You're all beaten and exhausted, this is no competition anymore!"

Ellen began zooming down towards everyone, and Tohka's eyes widened before she pushed her legs to jump at Shido, surprising him as she grabbed him.

"I'll stop her! Just get to safety, right now!" Tohka yelled, throwing him towards the ceiling and past Ellen... unfortunately for Tohka, that had been the wrong choice. Ellen quickly stopped and swung Caliburn in the reverse direction her arm had implied. Tohka gasped as Shido was knocked unconscious and grabbed by Ellen.

"Let me guess, you intended to use an attack that would have put him in harm's way if he stayed inside? Just as we expected. Oh, and it seems I made an error with my orders... I'm only set to capture a single target. Shido Takamiya!" Ellen revealed, causing Tohka to gasp. "So thanks for helping me, Tohka Yatogami!"

Ellen began to fly out, and Tohka jumped at her preparing to swing Sandalphon.

"No! I won't let you, release Shido right now!" Tohka screamed.

Ellen swung Caliburn against Tohka's Sandalphon, and to the latter's surprise she was being pushed back, Ellen looked at her smugly as she did.

"You're on your last knees and in a public place, your attacks don't have the strength that stopped me
on Arubi Island. As much as I'd like to get my revenge... I can wait at least another day, so say goodnight!” Ellen declared, charging Caliburn and swinging it fast and strong.

At that moment, a large portion of Tengu Square's top half was blown off, and Tohka screamed as she was launched outside and onto the ground. The others doing the same as the blast flung them, even Miku herself was flung near where Tohka landed. Her Inversion quickly came undone upon landing.

"No, this can't..." Tohka breathed, struggling to get up. She looked up to see Ellen flying off with Shido in tow, causing her face to contort in horror. "No... come back, please."

Tohka shed tears as the one scene from her nightmare replayed through her head.

"NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!" Tohka screamed, crying heavily as her body froze in place and just sobbed. Miku slowly got up, and soon noticed Tohka's face, her eyes widened as she did. "SHIIIIIIIIIDOOOOOOOO! COME BACK!"

'That face... it's-' Miku thought, gasping as she remembered.

Miku stood before a mirror, soon shaking in pain, sadness and agony before she made a face as she screamed silently, shedding tears uncontrollably as the image in the mirror would be forever burned into her mind.

Miku suddenly felt her eyes shake, and suddenly... it was if that mirror broke, and she saw all her ugliness.

'This past year... this very moment, what... what have I done!? What did I become!?' Miku thought, soon teleporting away as Tohka failed to notice she had even been there in the first place. There was only one fact that was the truth before everyone right now. The DEM had launched a plan just to capture Shido...

...And for once against Shido's group, they had truly succeeded in every possible way.

Oh... my god... the DEM just had an actual victory, and Shido's been kidnapped! Every possible thing that could have gone wrong for Ratatoskr, Shido and the Spirits actually did go wrong. Worst part? We still don't know what they actually want with Shido, other than it's not good and fully relies on his Spirit powers. Also, looks like Miku finally realized how awful she became, she became the very thing that ruined her long ago.

Not to mention that everyone in AST is injured (Artemisia and Karen's will be shown better next chapter), Mana included, and are in no condition to fight. The Fraxinus is completely inoperable right now too, so quite literally... the Spirits are the only members of Ratatoskr left that can do anything to rescue Shido and stop what Westcott's planning. All I'll say is this, next chapter... it finally begins, but Miku's arc still isn't over yet.

Oh, and I should apologize, I said that the big reveal hidden in the intro would happen here, but writing the Q&A scene took up more of the chapter than I expected and ended up making it so I do need to make a part 4, so that's actually not until next Chapter. Good news though? It's going to happen pretty early in the next chapter so you'll see it soon after you start reading.

We've hit the climax of this fantastic performance, and we've truly hit our darkest hour in this
story... so what's going to happen now? Only eight Spirits stand between Westcott and his plans for Shido, Miku's run off and is a mess, we have no idea where Nia is if Shido wasn't seeing an illusion of her earlier during the festival, and most of all... they don't even know where Shido was taken!

So see you next time on what will likely be the final act of Miku Fantasia, where we'll finally close the curtains and begin Season 2's final arc! Until then, stay awesome everyone ^^

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-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

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Chapter 39

I am on a roll today, three chapters in one! I think I'm just that excited to finally reach this scene I pushed through most of my boundaries. That... and I had a whole box of glazed donuts, so maybe I'm a wee bit hyper ^^;

Goodness, I can't believe I finally got to this point of the story, I've been wanting to reach this moment since like... well I actually forgot, but I've really wanted to reach it because of the idea I've had for it and can finally initiate! The only reason we're still continuing this performance of Miku's arc is because before anything else, while she can't be sealed, the Miku problem still needs to be taken care of.

That... and if I mentioned the final arc's name now, anyone versed in the Qliphoth will know what the surprise is, ruining the suspense for the scene in question ^^; *chuckles* Well, anyways... Tohka's gotta take the leader role due to Shido's kidnapping, and only she and the other Spirits will be able to do anything against the DEM because the rest of their forces are either inaccessible, inoperable, or injured due to the DEM's attack.

It's an interesting twist, having to make Tohka be the one to go and save Shido from the DEM, maybe I might make a separate story about that since Ellen was supposed to capture both of them. *shrugs* Eh, I'll think on it. There are some big surprises in this chapter I can't mention for the sake of suspense, but what I can say is I think one in particular will shock you. Not due to what the idea is, but how it shows up.

Well either way, time for the grand finale of Miku Fantasia and then... the final arc! *grabs the megaphone one last time* And... ACTION!

Chapter 39, S2: Miku Fantasia, Part 4

High up in the sky, Artemisia and Karen were dealing with Jessica, Chinami, the other remaining Adeptus and DEM wizards, and their automaton units as they battled within the Medusa's territory barrier. Artemisia swings the Nandaka, cutting through the remaining Medusa's and shattering the barrier to pieces.

"Damn it, they broke through!" Jessica growled, noticing Artemisia user her own territory to safely catch those who began falling in midair. At that moment, she and Chinami noticed Ellen flying out of Tenguu Square. "Wait, is that... yes! Mission success, all units disengage now!"

"What?" Karen said surprised, and soon turned to see all the Spirits across the ground outside while Ellen had Shido in hand. "They've captured Shido! Artemisia, we gotta stop her!"

Artemisia nodded as she moved the injured AST she caught to the ground, swinging her sword to scatter the other DEM wizards as she and Karen flew after Ellen. The fabled Adeptus 1 noticed them coming.

"Let Shido go!" Artemisia shouted, her and Karen swing their weapons down on Ellen, but the DEM's greatest wizard simply swiped Caliburn at their blades, blocking both of them in their tracks. "What!?"
"It's cute how you expected that to work. Admittedly Artemisia, you could have given me trouble if you were fresh instead of the sorry state the others left you in. While you, little sister, on the other hand?" Ellen replied, soon smirking. "You were always second to me!"

Suddenly, Caliburn emits a flash and the two were shot into the Tengu Square building, left in the same state the rest of the AST was. Meanwhile from the Fraxinus, Mayuri was pouring the bit of electricity she had from spare batteries she was carrying to show the visual screen best she could.

"My god, this is... I haven't seen us in such an awful state since 12 years ago, and that's when the DEM was clearly above us. To see this after how we've been able to fight back... it's a nightmare." Reine replied, the sight of the entire AST put out of commission, the Fraxinus inoperable and based on Maria's attempt to contact the base?

Well... they didn't seem to have access to anything or anyone still there, there was only one group who wasn't down and even they weren't in the best condition. The only thing Ratatoskr had left as of this moment, was the Spirits minus Miku and Nia who had fled and had unknown whereabouts respectively.

"Hey sis? Me, Rio, Maria and Mayuri are gonna go down there and try to help them. Right now, they need us." Rinne stated, and Reine nodded. Normally she'd advice Rinne to stay on the ship, but this situation was just too serious. "Thank you, and please make sure Mana's OK."

Rinne teleported the four off the ship, leaving Reine to sweat in worry.

"...Just what did they want Shido for that Westcott would actually ignore every other Spirit he's worked so hard to try and capture up until now? Just what's going on?" Reine asked herself, biting her nails slightly.

The other Spirits groaned as they fully regained consciousness and took a look around, noticing they were all outside.

"Huh? Hey, anyone know how we got here? I remember Miku Inverting and then... that's it." Kotori asked, the others all looked at each other showing similar confusion and uncertainty.

"Uh... I think Miku screamed and then, that's all I can think of. No wait, something about us falling to the ground?" Natsumi answered, not even fully sure of her answer. Suddenly the sound of Tohka's crying reached her ears. "Wait, I hear Tohka, and she's crying! Anyone see her?"

Everyone looks, and then Yoshino spots her.

"She's over there." Yoshino said, pointing towards her. The others all rush over, and soon Yoshino puts a hand on Tohka, making the purple haired look at her with her eyes still sobbing like waterfalls. "What's wrong Tohka, why are you crying?"

"Actually, where's Shido at?" Kurumi asked, looking around. Everyone heard Tohka's crying get louder as she pointed at the sky. "The sky? Why would... wait a moment... We can't remember how we got here, were all outside on the ground, Tohka's crying, Shido's not here and she points at the-"

At that moment, all the Spirits pale, putting two and two together.

"Shido was kidnapped!?" Kaguya screamed in shock.

"This is serious, and I still don't recall all the details of what happened. Though it seems Tohka is aware... although I doubt we'll get her to talk about it any time soon." Yuzuru replied, a worried look
on her face. "What do we do now?"

At that moment, Rinne and the non-Sephira Spirits all appear alongside Maria.

"Guys, follow me. I'll explain everything... when we escape Miku's hypnotized mob!" Rinne shouted, pointing to the people coming out of Tengu Square who still had the glowing eyes despite Miku's Inversion had already faded off. Everyone panics and runs, with Origami having to run back briefly and grab the partially catatonic Tohka.

Meanwhile, in a room at DEM Industries' Main Branch, Shido found himself slowly waking up and only able to see white briefly.

"Huh? What... what happened, why does it feel like I'm suffering a hangover?" Shido asked groggily, soon blinking enough to see he was in some kind of building. While initially he was confused to where he was... it only took a few moments for his memories to remind him. "No... this is..."

It was the same building he, Mana and Tohka had been captured in over 30 years ago... the original building that the DEM began from. He saw himself bound to a chair by cuffs and a few wires, he tried to break them free one.

"I don't think so." Ellen's voice stated.

Suddenly he felt Ellen's territory hit him, before additional territories created by Medusa units kept him down as well.

"Don't think we're foolish, we know how easily you'd be able to escape if we let that trick you apparently call Over-Limit Spirit Ascension be used. We have every intent to hold you down." Ellen continued, soon walking into view alongside the Medusa units as Shido stared at her angrily. "Ike, why don't you tell him why he's here?"

Shido looked to see Westcott enter the room as the walls suddenly spread apart, his usual smug look on his face.

"Well, well. It's nice to finally meet you face to face. I don't believe we got that chance when you were last here 30 years ago, such a shame." Westcott greeted, Shido stared at him angrily. "You know, I can't tell. Is it him or that younger sister of his that's more stubborn in defying me?"

"If you want my personal opinion, its Tohka Yatogami that fits that. To have become the Spirit known as [Princess] just to oppose you with him." Ellen answered, getting Westcott's attention at that. "She was also a captive alongside them 30 years ago, how ironic fate was."

Westcott suddenly began chuckling.

"So [Princess] was the child of those two naive fools we had killed? Amazing!" Westcott replied, chuckling a bit. "How incredibly funny this is. For someone who claimed everything was going to her plan, that mother of yours doesn't have a clue on what's actually going on!"

"You scum, don't you dare talk about my-" Shido exclaimed, only for Ellen to increase the Medusa's territories on him. Westcott gives him a dark stare after that.

"You're in no mood to talk, especially since by all means you've stolen from me in a sense. Your father took something from me when he met his grave here, and you have something I want."

Westcott stated, making Shido growl at him. "Now what is it I wonder?"
Shido didn't say anything, and Westcott smirked.

"Be silent all you want, it'll mean nothing when faced with this realizer. So... tell me if it tickles, or makes you scream in agony."

Shido feels himself being shocked heavily, and suddenly...

"It's gotta be some materials that let him pass on the ability to seal Spirits to me!" Shido shouted, suddenly gasping as he somehow answered the question he refused to give Westcott an answer to.

"Look at that, it works and is painful. So that's how you do it." Westcott smirked, making Shido scowl at him. "Shame we lost that, though it looks like ultimately Seigo gave it to a better candidate. Someone who could wrap the Spirits under his thumb and gather all their power into one container."

Shido's eyes widened at that.

"What do you intend to do?" Shido demanded.

"Hmm... that's a good question." Westcott stated, soon walking out of the area with Ellen as a clear wall of some unknown yet strong polymer fibers formed. After passing one, Westcott turned around as he stood by the door and hit a button. "Why don't you ask her?"

Shido was confused, unaware of the wires attached to him injecting some kind of hallucinogenic fluid, until the sight of Tohka suddenly being thrown in came into his view. Another glass wall forming as the hallucination of Tohka looked at him.

"Shido! Don't worry, I'll get you out of here!" 'Tohka' shouted, preparing to form her Astral Dress when Shido saw something behind her.

"TOHKA, LOOK OUT!" Shido screamed, and the illusionary Tohka looked at Shido confused until an unknown yet massive DEM automaton suddenly grabbed Tohka and stretched her body, making her scream in pain. "Stop this... don't! Don't do this!"

His words wouldn't be answered, and at that moment... a loud sounding snap was heard, as were many other horrible noises Shido refused to properly identity. He didn't see what happened, almost like his body blinded him temporarily so he wouldn't... but his ears didn't decide to block out his hearing.

Unaware it was just a hallucination, oblivious to the fact that Tohka wasn't anywhere close to the building or aware Shido was at it, unaware that the automaton he saw didn't exist... Shido's whole body shook at the false reality of hearing Tohka's death.

"No... this can't... please say it's a bad dream!" Shido's stated, his voice shaking with horror and sadness. His eyes shedding tears as he began to cry. "Tohka..."

Memories of the two flash through his mind. When they first met 30 years ago, when he met Tohka again in her Inverse Form and named her Mio while both didn't remember each other, their first kiss after he saved her, their life at the Takamiya household, their first date, each time she was there to help him with the spirits.

The good and bad times, the happy and sad times, moments Tohka got angry or scared... her huge appetite and all the odd reactions, her innocent and naivete and how it made things funny yet had her seem so cute... and how it was now all cut down in a single moment.

"Tohka..." Shido gasped, his eyes faded into pools of darkness.
"TOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOHKAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

Suddenly dark spirit power flares off of Shido, manifesting as a dark pink color. Westcott laughs as he saw it come out.

"Finally, this is what I wanted to see! [Ruler] may not be able to undergo an Inversion, but someone with her power and the power of Spirits with the taint allows their inversion, we have finally done it! The Domain of Knowledge, it has inverted!" Westcott cackled, seeing the power flowing out. "Now, the question is how to make it-

Suddenly Marina rushes in, panting heavily.

"GET OUT OF HERE, NOW!" Marina screamed, causing Westcott and Ellen to turn confused... only for the highest level warning signs to go off in DEM as Shido screams loudly, shattering the territories binding.

The sight of dark spirit power in not just dark pink, but the colors of dark purple, tainted white, dark blue, dark red, deep black, dark green and dark orange also flare off him and actually shatter the supposedly unbreakable walls, destroying every Medusa, and damaging Marina's android body as she jumped ahead and took a blow meant for Westcott and Ellen.

"What's going on here!?' Ellen asked, suddenly feeling fear.

"This is... this wasn't supposed to happen, the only powers that should react to him are-

"For some so called genius, you are nothing more than a fool!" A dark voice spoke, coming from Shido's body, but not his mouth. The sight of a pink serpent like eye forms on Shido's chest. "Isn't this what wanted? Well, you got what you want... the Devil has been born!"

Soon from outside, a bright flash went off as most of the DEM's Main HQ exploded! The people of England all looked in horror as they saw what was going on, and dark tendrils take root in the ground as disasters based on the elements of the sealed Spirits began to manifest and form.

Meanwhile back in Ratatosk's base, the alarms went off as everyone trapped within suddenly heard it. Elliot rolled his wheelchair into view as he turned to Matthew and Mildred, the only one who could check the readings that set the alarms off.

"Matthew, Mildred, what's going on!? Hurry!" Elliot ordered, and Matthew checked to his horror. "What is it!?'

"Sir, I'm getting some strange reading... what's this [Category F] we're getting?" Matthews asked, making Elliot's eyes widen and worrying everyone. "S-Sir... what's going on? What is this?"

Elliot's whole body shook, the very thing he and Rinne feared was now a reality... the beginning of the end.

"Westcott... you damn fool you've actually caused it? Now everyone is doomed!" Elliot stated, shocking everyone.

"What do you mean, tell us?" Mildred asked worriedly.

"...I need to be honest with you, when we claimed the Spirit Dimension was destroyed, we didn't say the full truth. True there's a void where it used to be, but... the fact magic came to our world. The fact people were born with it, and those magical cores give a taste of the power of a Spirit." Elliot began,
"The Spirit Dimension... it still lives, because the energy that flooded out with Rinne fused into ours. For that very reason, upon learning of the Inversions there was something we could never let happen. Something... that Shido had the power to be the harbinger of."

Everyone stared, the revelation shocking them... but Elliot pretty much said it got worse.

"That's what [Category F], because..." Elliot answered, looking up as his sweat starts to drip of his face and to the ground. "...It's Shido's Inversion!"

Everyone gasped at that.

Soon back at the sight of the DEM building, Westcott was seen on the ground, the partially damaged android of Marina and Ellen both shake him as the sight of his injured bloodied form worried them he had been killed.

"Father, wake up! Wake up damn it!" Marina screamed, accidentally punching his gut and making him shoot up. "You're alive! And... sorry about that! Oh, and you might wanna see this."

"What is..." Westcott asked, but stopped as he saw it.

Soon the sight of evil laughter was heard, and the metal tree first seen when Rinne's powers went out of control had made a reappearance... but this time it was black and more twisted.

The gems on its body had the gold/yellow, indigo and silver spots were dimmed and each was like a serpent's eye with the pink one being largest, its roots continued spreading as the elements of the Spirits that Shido sealed continued to begin plaguing the world.

"Get ready Humanity, our revenge is now! I am the one who shall cast judgment on you... I am the true Demon King! The soul and will of the Qliphoth! I am... Choronzon!" The newly christened Choronzon screamed maniacally as he announced himself to the world.

Back in Tenguu City, the Spirits had all gathered in an unfinished construction site, all of them taking a moment to stop and rest as Rinne nudges Mayuri, causing the Electric spirit to take out her phone.

"First thing's first, let me explain the situation starting with what's going on with those people. Cause technically it started from that point. Mayuri?" Rinne asked.

"Right, tapping into the broadcast now." Mayuri replied.

Soon the video begins playing as everyone but Tohka begins to watch it and learn what was going on outside currently.

"The sight of many with glowing indigo eyes acting strange as if they were searching for something specific is currently plaguing all of Tenguu City, all we can confirm is around 5 PM this afternoon around Tenguu Square... the building took damage an unknown hallucinogen began to affect everyone within." The reporter stated, showing video.

"The method behind using it and the damage prior to its administration, as for how it was administered at all is still unknown and evidence has shown no results. However, it spread like a wildfire and shows no times of fading in the immediate future, and the number of affected is at least in the tens of thousands!"
"My god... and Miku's voice did this when she Inverted?" Origami asked, shaking slightly.

"Well, technically her voice and the stage's speakers did it, but the glowing eyes are all her... you guys were enthralled by it as well." Mayuri answered, making them all gasp. "It seems without an Astral Dress on or your eyes blocked from any sound, both confirmed through Tohka, a Spirit can fall to her voice."

Everyone showed shock and horror to this.

"Wait, so that would mean... did we attack Shido and Tohka?" Kotori asked, and Rinne nodded. "Oh my god, I feel so awful and I don't even remember what I did!"

"Rio was scared too, Mama's power kept us safe from it, but Rio was still scared." Rio replied, hugging Rinne close. "Though Rio was happy when Tohka saved everyone."

"Yeah, Tohka realized Miku's Demon King would free you if she gave it a good slash in the frame structure. Took all she had for her just to reach it." Maria answered, soon giving her a somber look. "However, regardless of Miku's inversion had a role... the DEM planned for the whole situation."

All of Shido's harem began to sweat.

"First, they got the AST's attention and then once they made sure everyone was present, trapped them using new automatons. Ellen snuck it right as Tohka freed you... but she was too weak, and Ellen revealed her somewhat immunity to certain Spirit powers as Miku failed to control her." Maria continued, her hand tightening.

"She claimed she'd capture all of you and Tohka, and in response that made Tohka throw Shido to safety for an attack... that was the feint. Shido was her only target, he was KO'd, and Tohka couldn't do anything. The moment you woke up was after Ellen literally slammed you all outside. Miku ran off after that. So... that's how Shido got kidnapped and we all got here."

Everyone gasped.

"No... Shido!" Yoshino whispered, suddenly crying a bit.

"I can't believe we let this all happen... we're supposed to be Spirits damn it!" Kaguya shouted, punching the wall. "Where is he, we gotta save him!"

Rinne sighed.

"We don't know, it has to be a DEM facility but we don't know which one. It could be any." Rinne answered, soon standing up and turning her back to everyone. "Worse? All access to Ratatoskr's base is gone, everyone within it is trapped. The Fraxinus' systems was fried by Miku's voice, and... the entire AST is injured and unable to fight."

"What, the whole AST? Are you serious?" Yuzuru asked in surprise.

"I am... take a look at yourselves everyone, the only people left in Ratatoskr who can do anything right now is us. The DEM had a major victory against us, and put us in our darkest hour." Rinne said, barely holding herself together. "The only ones who can save Shido are us. Yet, I'm so lost, and worse... look at Tohka."

Everyone did, seeing how unresponsive she was from what happened, she was blaming herself entirely for letting Shido get captured... and who could blame her? She couldn't have known, but throwing Shido had been the nail in the coffin for the success of the DEM's plan.
"If only we had someone to help us find him, but who!?” Kurumi grunted, feeling helpless.

"Did someone ask for help?"

Everyone's eyes widened at that, and soon enough a familiar silver haired spirit walked into view. It was the Spirit known as the Imagination Spirit, or the code name [Sister] by Ratatoskr and the DEM... Nia Honjou.

"Nia, why are you here!?” Mayuri asked, surprised she even showed up.

"Well for one, since she's not able to reach anyone who could tell her and because none of you seem to be able to sense it. Not to mention it seemed to have failed to reach Tenguu City yet...” Nia answered, opening Raziel as text formed. "I think Ms. First Spirit over here would like to know this.”

Rinne looked as she saw the page's text... only to pale at the mention of [Category F]'s activation having been achieved.

"No... Westcott, that bastard! He actually managed to do it! Damn it, now it's likely we've entered Armageddon!” Rinne screamed, smashing her fist into the wall.

"Mama, what's this... F thing?” Rio said, unable to pronounced the word category.

"...Its Shido's Inversion.” Rinne answered, getting the others' attention as their faces showed shock and horror. "And worse is all the power within Shido inverts with him. Right now, he's essentially nine Inverse Spirits in one. Worse is right now, his powers and ripping the world apart. That tells us where he is... and ow long before it reaches here."

Before anyone could ask more, Tohka finally gets up and responds, only to suddenly rush at Nia and grab her Astral Dress as she stared angrily at her with tear eyes, the others tried to stop her but Nia held a hand up to prevent them.

"This is your fault, all of it! You're the one who sent Miku here and lead to all of this! You trained her to be a threat to us, and made it so we had to try when we were already in a dire situation with what he had to deal with!” Tohka screamed, crying as she did.

"You think this is some kinda game? Well it's not! All of us love Shido, I've always loved Shido! Now what you've caused has only hurt the entire world, and Shido's been risking his life, even when the Spirits are ungrateful brats like you! Maybe we should let your crystal go to someone else and-"

Nia slaps Tohka right at that moment, knocking her into the wall to everyone's surprise.

"You really think I intended this!?” Nia asked, making Tohka look at her as she held her slapped cheek. "What's happening to the world affects me too, if there's anyone to blame it's the DEM who outsmarted us all yet didn't know the fire they were burning with. Go ahead and be mad... but is it going to help you save him!?”

Tohka's eyes widened.

"If anything, this is why I told Shido he wasn't ready to seal me, look at this whole situation. The DEM finally achieved victory after suffering constant defeats from you. You've succeeded a lot, and losing can be beneficial... but so is knowing what loss is an acceptable one. I had Miku show up, I'll admit it, but it was to teach you that you have to adapt to unexpected and you didn't do that with the DEM's plans, in fact they adapted to you.”

All of the Spirits stared before they hung their heads down, and Nia was right... their strategies kept
working, they didn't change them. The DEM eventually knew them too well and they paid for it, and this was their payment. Nia soon kneeled down to Tohka.

"So, what are you gonna do about this? The boy you love is trapped in a monster born of his own power, and by all means you're the leader of the Spirits considering your experience with Shido."
Nia asked, making Shido's eyes widen.

"What I want most in life is to protect you, so I can always hold you close like right now. " Tohka's 7-year old self exclaimed, smiling at Shido.

Tohka's mouth quivered before she stood up and gave a serious look, making the others turn to shock.

"I'm going to save Shido, even if I have to do it alone! I promised him I'd protect him and I'm not going back on that promise now!" Tohka exclaimed, tightening her fist as she Nia smirked at her determination. "All the training I've done, everything I've worked forward recently. I'm going to prove Sandalphon was right to choose me!"

"There it is, the passionate flare in your eyes." Nia smiled, soon turning as she opened Raziel. "Now I guess all that's left is to get Miku on your side, then all the Spirits will be gathered to rescue Shido from that best sitting on what used to be the main branch of DEM."

Rinne showed surprised.

"Wait, but there's only-" Rinne interjected, only for Nia to wag her finger. "Huh?

"Simple, I can get in contact with the final Spirit. She'd only be aiding us indirectly from where she is, but we'd still get her aid, plus this beast only has the powers of the sealed Spirits. Having three it lacks is better than just two." Nia answered, making everyone gasp.

"Wait, you mean..." Kotori asked.

"Well duh? This is my home too, and I'd like to keep making my manga series. I ain't a fan of the world being destroyed." Nia answered, smirking a bit. "That makes getting Miku all we have left, so how about you and I gather some info and take care of that Tohka?"

Tohka blinks at that.

"Huh?" Tohka wondered.

"You got Natsumi and the Yamai twins on Shido's side, I think you'll do well if you went three for three." Nia answered, crossing her arms behind her head. "Though if you rely on Raziel to get all the answers about her I don't have any reason to believe you'll seal me later. So... show me you can discover her story without it."

Rinne sighs.

"You really have to pull this now? Well, I guess we would need every hand since we're literally all that can save my son now." Rinne stated, soon holding a hand out. "Fine, we'll agree to your term. Just keep your word."

"Wouldn't dream of breaking Ms. First, I'm a spirit of my word." Nia replied, shaking Rinne's hand. "Now I can at least tell you where to start looking, the one place a person can't hide their true self is their room. Figure that out and I'll bring Tohka to where Miku's hidden herself."
Around 5 minutes after Nia's task to discover the truth about Miku's past themselves, everyone went out to do something.

While Tohka waited with Nia, and the others went to get any provisions, materials and what not they could, Natsumi and Kurumi were using the latter's shadow to sneak past the still hypnotized people.

"You pretty sure you figured out Miku's residence?" Kurumi asked, and Natsumi nodded.

"Yeah, my brief transformation into her shows she was there before she came to the Ten-Oh Festival. Should be right over... found out!" Natsumi stated, pointing to a small mansion with a gate. "Admittedly, getting to Rindouji from this place would take forever. Wonder why she doesn't attend Raizen aside from the boy thing?"

Kurumi uses her shadows to slide them under the gate, and soon they reach the door.

"Alright, let's hope the alarm doesn't trip off or we'll get some crazy fans over here." Kurumi breathed, firing Zafkiel at the door lock... nothing. "OK, we're safe."

Kurumi opens it, and soon they walk through the house until they find Miku's personal room. While looking around for something, Natsumi gasped as she pulled something out of the dresser.

"Oh wow, take a look at this Kurumi!" Natsumi giggles, showing a very... bold bra, making Kurumi blush red. "I know Miku and I are just as humongous when it comes to our bust lines, but she's so daring. I could almost fit my face into one of these crazy cups."

"Natsumi, be serious! We're facing a possible end of the world if we can't save Shido!" Kurumi shouted, still blushing. Natsumi pouted playfully and put it back, knocking over a CD case.

"I think I found something." Natsumi replied, soon picking it up. She showed it to Kurumi who took a look before holding it by a picture she had found. "Tsukino Yoimachi... looks just like Miku without the spirit eyes. Though why that name?"

Kurumi hummed a bit, soon holding the two objects to her head as she loaded a shot form Zafkiel.

[Alright Master, let's take a peek into the past!]

Kurumi fired, making her head ring as she saw the memory, blinking a bit,

"Looks like Miku's been on the stage for more than just a single year like we thought she was." Kurumi replied, soon kneeling by her shadow. "Shincho, send this over to Tohka and Nia, would you?"

"You got it Kurumi!" Shincho replied from within her shadow, the clone soon breaking off to find them.

Soon enough, Tohka saw Shincho form before her and Nia.

"I think we've got our answer, let me share it with you." Shincho stated, moving by Tohka before aiming Zafkiel at both their heads, and firing a shot that makes Tohka's eyes roll. "Use it well, I better get back to Kurumi for now."

Shincho sinks back into her shadow and heads back to Miku.

"So let's see, tell me what you learned." Nia asked, and soon Tohka whispers to her and then... she smirks. "Impressive, I can say right now that's exactly what her story is. Now... show me you can
open her heart, I'll send you over to her, after that, I'll finally get in contact with our final Spirit.”

Nia grabs Tohka, and teleports her over to... Tenguu Square?

"Huh, what the- what are we here?" Tohka wondered.

"That's the funny part, seems after you all left she came back to hide out. I guess it's the logic that often one won't check the place they leave, making it the best place to go because you'll be hiding in plain sight." Nia answered, making Tohka blink. "Don't worry about it, it's not the point behind you being here anyways."

Suddenly the two hear a voice on the loud speaker, and soon a familiar songstress' voice picked up.

"[You... the girl that was with that pig Shido Takamiya! Why are you here? Whatever the reason, I'm going to ask you to leave now, if you don't... I'll make you regret it by forcing you to leave!]" Miku declared, causing the mind controlled people to suddenly start swarming them. "[Get that girl!]

"Oh boy, how do I deal with this? I can't heart innocent people!" Tohka said worriedly, making Nia tap her shoulder. "Nia?"

Nia opens her book and writes something before ripping copies of the pages out with spirit mana.

"Not to worry, I'll get them to fold their efforts. After all... I've already folded there. Go my Kirigami!" Nia declared, tossing the papers out.

The papers all grow and transform into waters made of paper. They all grab a person, and soon gave them a sleeper hold before binding them with their bodies. Tohka watched as they were harmless beaten.

"This is Raziel's special form I call the Kirigami, it lets me write a command and my paper soldiers follow it without question or hesitation." Nia answer, smirking as she was sure Miku noticed her by now. Inside the building, Miku finally does.

"Wait, who is that with her?" Miku asked, looking closer... and recognizing Nia. "T-That... that's the Spirit who showed me how to use my powers, why's she helping this girl!? Why is she even here?"

Miku sweated, soon trying to find a way to escape as she began running, after a few minutes she reaches the stage area... only for Tohka to cut the wall down, but she quickly noticed she only had her Limit Astral Dress.

"Wait, why's my power weakened?" Tohka inquired.

"It's possible it's the effect of Shido's Inversion, it must have taken more power from you all than you realized. Aside from those not sealed, you're not at your strongest right now." Nia answered, making Tohka sweat.

"Now you see why we need to do this? Nine weakened spirits and, a Spirit based AI, a defensive spirit and a spirit who requires lightning will have a disadvantage. You need more diversity in your team."

Tohka chuckles nervously and nods, soon looking at Miku.

"Miku! I came here to talk with you, please listen to me! My name's Tohka Yatogami and-" Tohka began, only for a sonic blast to narrowly miss her and Nia.
"Shut your mouth! Come... Gabriel!"

Gabriel manifested as a translucent floating keyboard, and soon some fans began moving from the ground, prepared to subdue the two.

"I've got this. Kirigami!" Nia shouted, writing a sentence ripping page copies. This time the order was to restrain everyone, making the paper soldiers cross their arms and lock the movements of the hypnotized civilians to Miku's shock. "Come now Miku, I helped you learn how to use these powers. Due to that, I know their weaknesses too."

"No! Stop this, stay away!" Miku shouted, almost begging.

"Tohka, this is likely your only chance, you need to reach her now or we won't have the time to track her again." Nia reasoned, making Tohka nod as she jumped closer. 'I just hope she can do it... Miku's heart became so hardened for a strong reason.'

Gabriel screamed out a sonic blast, knocking Tohka back again. Just as Miku prepared another blast.

"RAPHAEL!"

Miku suddenly saw two arrows fly at her, she moved back as they exploded on the ground. Tohka saw Kaguya and Yuzuru float from above, smiling at her in their own ways.

"You guys made it but... wait then does that mean?" Tohka asked, soon seeing lightning storm by as Mayuri appeared behind Miku.

"You got it Tohka, Nia alerted all of us." Mayuri smiled, and soon Miku turned to see the rest of the Spirits corner her from all sides, blocking every path of escape she could have used to get away. "We wanna talk Miku, so actually listen!"

Miku's body shook before she prepared to shout another sonic scream.

"Kurumi, her mouth! Cover it and she's defenseless" Tohka warned.

Kurumi had her shadows constrict Miku's mouth, rendering her powers useless as her voice couldn't be projected, and soon Tohka felt herself and Miku sink into Kurumi's shadow.

"Use my realm of shadows to talk with her, she'll be forced to listen while she's trapped inside of it." Kurumi stated, making Tohka nod before she and Miku fully sink in. "Good luck Tohka, we're all counting on you."

"Yeah... and you know, that's probably why she's the number one girl in the whole harem here." Natsumi stated, making the others sweat drop at the obvious. "What?"

Tohka soon feels herself fall on her face, soon getting up and shaking it as she saw Miku stand in front of her with her back turned.

"Miku-"

"I have nothing to discuss with you, do you hear me! It's already bad enough I'm in this strange place and can't use my powers! Just go away, stay back!" Miku screamed, still having her back turned.

"Please Miku, you need to hear me out. You don't know what's-" Tohka tried to reply, and Miku screamed in response. "...going on?"
Miku's fists tightened.

"Shut your mouth! Just be quiet!" Miku screamed again, her eyes closed. "Not a single word, the last thing I want is to talk to you or anyone else! Especially after you humiliated me!"

Tohka had a [?] form over her head, confused what Miku meant by that.

"...Then you can stay mad at me, just listen!" Tohka exclaimed, and Miku didn't say anything so she took it as a green light. "You remember Shido right? During the uproar, a wizard from DEM who's got a vendetta for me, she captured him, and now he's undergone an Inversion. One that could destroy the whole world!"

Miku's eyes opened at that, but she didn't turn. At the very least she kept listening as to make that kind of claim, it had to be serious.

"I'm going to do everything I can to save him and the Earth, and I'm not alone. My friends, the other Spirits, Nia, and another are all going to do this, but I don't think we'll be enough on your own. Miku... I'm begging you, please help me!" Tohka begged, making Miku finally turn around.

"What?" Miku gasped.

"Shido's Inversion has all the powers of the Spirits that Shido's sealed. Even if Rinne, Rio, Mayuri and Maria, not to mention Nia and the remaining Spirit... that may not be enough to save him and save the world. If you join us, we might-"

Miku screamed again, throwing Tohka off.

"I refuse! Why would I do anything for someone like you!" Miku seethed. "Stop it with your nonsense, with your lies! I know you have an ulterior motive! Humans beings are all selfish, none of you are capable of caring about someone the way you claim to!"

Tohka stared at that, and soon knew she had to drop the bomb.

"...I get it, you've been burned before, haven't you Tsukino Yoimachi?" Tohka said, making Miku's eyes widen as she heard Tohka say her old stage name.

"Yeah... I've heard your old name, and I know the truth too. You were a human once just like the rest of us Spirits... well excluding Rinne, Maria and I guess Rio but that's not the point. Do you really hate humans, or is that how you hide you hate yourself? I can't claim I understand it, but... I'd like to if you'd tell me."

Miku went silent for a moment, and turned her head away.

"Fine, you win... I'll tell you everything. Until a year ago I was a normal girl who just loved music more than anything." Miku answered, starting to reminisce.

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The sight of Miku, before her days as a Spirit and on the stage as an idol, the same smile everyone saw her show when she sang in the Ten-Oh festival on her face but with a radiance showing it was always there.

"My songs were all I had growing up, and I wanted nothing more to be able to make a career out of it and reach so many people. When I became 15... that dream finally came true. Everyone loved my songs, and it gave me great joy." Miku explained.
The sight of Miku waving to all her fans as they cheered her on appeared, her smile still as bright as ever.

"However, things changed the day my first album dropped. My manager set me up with a producer from a TV station, something about a decent opportunity. At one point, however that producer asked me to be extra nice with him." Miku stated, a somber tone in her words.

"Uh... sorry, I'm not sure what that means. Is it a bad thing?" Tohka asked.

"In this particular situation, it was. I refused him of course, but only because I didn't want to be a TV Star anyways. Just make music for myself and the people who loved it." Miku answered, and then... Tohka heard her voice trembling. "...that's when it all went wrong."

The sight of a magazine stating {Tsukino Yoimachi - "Days filled with men, money and drugs. What is the truth hidden in the shadows of innocent?"}, a complete scandal mentioning the producer in question caught Miku's eye to her horror.

"The producer create a whole scandal about me in a weekly magazine. No one, not even my agency was there to protect me." Miku revealed, and Tohka gasped as she saw the extension in what she learned through Shincho. "What hurt me the most though? It was the brutal reaction of people I thought had been my fans was the worst."

Miku watched as someone smashed one of her album's CDs onto a table, breaking it into pieces as her eyes could only shake at the sight.

"I tried to take comfort in my music, hoped that maybe... listening to it would make them come around and see the truth that the scandal was a lie. That's when the worst happened..." Miku continued.

Miku was seen holding a concert as everyone stared, and she tried to sing... only for her eyes to widen as she realized her voice failed to project.

"...The stress became too much, and I was diagnosed with psychological aphonia. In other words, all the suffering made me mute." Miku replied, her voice shaking as Tohka stared in shock. "Soon enough, I was at home... and I finally broke down in tears with a silent scream, and all I could think from there... was suicide."

Miku was seen with a knife, and just as she was about to end it... suddenly saw the sight of Rio, in her disguise of Phantom, stopping her.

"But it didn't happen, someone calling themselves the Phantom came to me, and offered me the Gabriel Crystal. When I heard I could have my voice restored, I didn't care about anything else. I just wanted to sing again!" Miku cried.

Miku's transformation into Diva was seen, and eventually... the slow process of her becoming a horrible person without even realizing the change.

Tohka stared as Miku, her hair shadowing her eyes.

"You see? I stood up for myself, for my pride... and all it left me with was those evil men nearly stealing my voice forever!" Miku cried, her whole body shaking.

"That's awful, it still surprises me how even the minority of bad people left after the Spacequakes... can do so much damage. No one should turn their back on someone suffering like that, it isn't right!"
Tohka exclaimed, making Miku look at her surprised. "But you can't blame everyone for what a few people did."

"And what would you know about it!?" Miku asked, sure she'd have no answer.

"...More than you realize, because around 8 months ago I didn't even have an identity." Tohka answered, making Miku gasp silently. "I lost all my memories, all I ever knew was being attacked and defending myself. Then when I found another Spirit, instead of trying to be friends, it attacked me... and I inverted."

Miku went silent at that.

"I was sure that was it, nothing was left for me. I was so close to being willing in taking lives by the time of 5 months ago. However, that's when I met Shido, he told me he wouldn't reject me even if the world then. Slowly but surely, I remembered I knew him, that I loved him. So trust me Miku, there are plenty of people out there who love listening to your music, why else would you not use your powers at the Ten-Oh Festival?"

"No... no, you're wrong!" Miku exclaimed, shaking her head.

I'm not, you just can't see that because you're too scared to walk back out and see it! I get it... something like that effects your trust in people, but you'll be afraid the rest of your life if you can't face your fears! And I want to hear your real voice, the one that isn't carrying the burden you have now!" Tohka declared.

Miku stared in shock at that.

"No... without this power, who'd listen to me!? I'm nothing without my-"

"I'd listen to you Miku! Shido would! All of us would!" Tohka screamed, making Miku freeze up. "In fact, I did listen, I didn't realize it was you... but I bought that CD 3 months ago. I started with one song, but I found myself listening to every song before I knew it. I heard your passion, I even heard it during the festival!"

Miku's eyes shake.

"No... I won't believe it, if that was true then why did no one come to my defense? I was alone with my back against the wall!" Miku demanded.

"I don't know... but know this, at the very least I'm going to be here! If you say you'd have nothing without your power, then know you have me! If you still can't believe, then I'll prove it... if you got into a situation like the one Shido's in, I'll save you without hesitation!"

Miku stared in shock.

'Why? Why is she so determined to prove something... she'll just break her promise, I know it!' Miku thought.

Suddenly the two felt the realm shake, and suddenly both were forced out. When Tohka came to, she gasped as everyone kneeling or laying across the ground, having just been hit by something.

"What... what just happened!?" Tohka breathed.

"Nahemah."
Tohka was suddenly hit by a dark purple wave of energy, only barely managing to defend against it by pulling out Sandalphon at the last moment. She pants a bit before looking and her eyes widening in horror at what she saw.

"No... that's impossible! Tohka gasped.

The others soon got up, but aside from Rinne, Kotori and Origami, the sight before them wasn't as familiar. Floating towards the ground stood a teenage girl the same age as Tohka with very long, dark purple-to-white gradient hair tied back with a ribbon that looked like an evil dark violet butterfly with point edges, but a large portion of her hair remained untied as well.

Her eyes were a soft pink color with white irises, and she wore a dark violet dress attached with black laces and a set of grayish magenta-and-dark pink plated armor which adorned her shoulders and waist. The dress was open at the back and the front, in which exposed most of her skin and a two-layered, knee-length skirt.

"Sandalphon? Nahemah, why does this person have that Angel?" The girl asked her Demon King.

[I am unsure, but the fact she possesses my other side at all is insulting to me. We should eliminate her now to cleanse us of this mockery.]

Tohka shook, recognizing the person before her all too well? Because this person before her was...

"No way... why? You and I are supposed to share the same form, how are you here!?!" Tohka stuttered, soon holding Sandalphon out defensively. "Why are you here... Inverse Tohka!??"

...herself, her dark self! Everyone stared in shock and horror, an Inverse Form stood before them, but now as a separate being.

---

Oh! That nightmare did become a reality, but just not in the way you might have expected it to manifest! Its Inverse Tohka, and with a Nahemah that has its own, and also much more sinister, personality! Also for once... Westcott's learned the hard way that he played with something he should have, and by breaking it he did more damage than what first glance implied.

There it is everyone, the big surprise I was waiting for all this time to drop on you? Shido's Inversion, I had this planned since the fanfic itself began, and I’d like to give out to the story "Shido and his Electrifying Spirits" which helped inspire this idea. It's the biggest threat to date, so big not even Corrupted Inverse Kurumi was anywhere close to Inverse Shido... or rather Choronzon's threat. Oh, and if anyone asks? Yes, Choronzon is indeed the Qliphoth opposite to Da'at, or more specially to Uriel when applied to it.

With this, the Miku arc is officially over... but! Similar to Natsumi's arc, rather than restarting at part 1, the next arc (which will be called Choronzon Mayhem) will be part 5 as its extending from the Miku arc. After all, while it'll be a while before Miku can be sealed due to Shido's absence, Miku still hasn't completely swapped sides as of this chapter.

Well, get ready for next time everyone, it's time for the Shido most of you have likely wanted to see since Tohka's nightmare brought it up... Tohka vs Inverse Tohka! Though how can Tohka beat a stronger version of herself while she’s in her Limited Astral Dress? How will she do it? Better yet, the biggest question is why Inverse Tohka present as a separate being? Did
Choronzon have a hand in this... or was it something else?

Find out next time as the final arc of Season 2 begins, until then... stay awesome everyone!

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 99% (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 95% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 90% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 92% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 87% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 84% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 78% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 78% (Weight Manipulation)
It's time for the Season 2 finale to begin here, the final arc has begun! The battle to defeat the ultimate Demon King: Choronzon has started, and it begins with the surprise visit of Inverse Tohka manifesting outside of Tohka's form. That's bad for many reasons, mainly cause if Tohka were to have Inverted naturally, due to what happened in her arc, she'd at least know not to attack her friends if still a little unstable... this Inverse Tohka has no morals or ties to influence her judgment, just like the canon one.

Speaking of which, Vol 15 and 16 have made me come to believe that the Inverse Form isn't the Spirits' evil side as originally believed, for one we had Westcott claim it was their true form in Vol 7 and then Inverse Tohka herself confirmed it in Vol 15 while also confirming the First Spirit created the Sephira Crystals. However, the First Spirit's morality seems to be... strange at best, but non-existent at worse. If it's the latter, I think that might be why the Inverse Forms hold nothing back, because the First Spirit's power that's manifested in them has removed all their morality.

Getting a bit off track there ^^; *chuckles*, anyways... Tohka now has to face her greatest enemy. She has to face and defeat herself! No, worse than that actually, she has to face her own darkness, one that's truly greater and above her in every way and somehow win when her powers are already limited. Luckily, she has one advantage, while Inverse Tohka's also had her limitations removed, she lacks the knowledge on how to use her Earth powers, so Tohka's got a bit more to work with.

Oh, and you might recall me saying in last chapter's end notes that the arc was gonna be called Choronzon Mayhem, well... the reason its Choronzon Havoc now is because I had to change it at the last minute. I don't know how many parts this will end up, and should the total number of parts reach double digits, I'm gonna need an extra character to actually type those double-digit numbers because the former name used all of them with how I normally name each chapter. Luckily, I think havoc's meaning is similar enough to work in the arc's name.

Well, let's get started now as Tohka tries to kick her own butt and finally get through to Miku. Before we start, here's an updated Inverse Tohka data sheet.

A/N: The stats in the parenthesis are how much of Inverse Tohka's full power was used when she last appeared, and just to avoid confusion, Inverse Tohka's number stats are the same.

-Inverse Tohka (At Full Power), Code Name: [Sovereign]-

Demon King: Nahemah, the "Tyrant Ruler" - Sandalphon's Demon King counterpart, unlike most Demon Kings, Nahemah isn't that different from its Angel counterpart other than looking nothing like it and having a lot more mana inside to cause more devastating energy flashes. Nahemah's throne is silver in color unlike Sandalphon's golden throne. Shido has commented that Nahemah is inferior in power if Tohka can properly focus her will and emotions, however this is inaccurate as Nahemah's full power also manifests through will power, making the crystalline edge of the blade glow.
- Alternate Form: Paverschlev, the "Sword of Demise" - The Inverse counterpart of Sandalphon's Halvanhelev technique, and like Nahemah compared to Sandalphon, Paverschlev is a much more enhanced Halvanhelev with a completely different design. The power it puts Halvanhelev to shame in comparison, being strong enough to gouge an entire section of a city. Unlike Halvanhelev however, Paverschlev is a one-shot attack, and will revert to Nahemah as it basically converts Halvanhelev's possible overload into a single concentrated strike. If Nahemah's true power is achieved, strike will spread and actually detonate across the area of ground zero.

- Alternate Form: Durandal - The Inverse counterpart of Chrysaor, by willing her throne to shift into a flying vehicle form, Inverse Tohka can drive it using her willpower. Similar to how Sandalphon being sheathed allows Chrysaor to use its slash waves and a piercing attack, Durandal can also use Inverse Tohka's energy blasts and the piercing attack is almost guaranteed to shatter any defense against it. When Nahemah's true power is achieved, it can even be wielded remotely by Inverse Tohka's will if she needs to.

- Powers: Despite what her Astral Dress might imply, Inverse Tohka's powers are all higher with the inclusion of her defense, enough that she can stop a sword with her bare hand and not be cut by it. Her amount of mana is now so incredibly high that her previous abilities become explosive and have more use to them, such as her energy blasts can now fire multiple shots in waves instead of only rapid fire. In regards to her Earth abilities, Tohka no longer needs to shift her body, able to create her sands and stone without moving, while her crystals are now as strong as titanium. Inverse Tohka doesn't gain any additional abilities, but due to overwhelming power... she doesn't really need any.

Risk Factors: SSS (SS)

Spacequake: AA (A)

Spirit's Astral Dress: AAA

Angel Rank: AAA

Strength: 248 (189)

Consistency: 204 (142)

Spiritual Power: 222 (170)

Agility: 175 (133)

Intelligence: 125 (100)

Chapter 40, S2: Choronzon Havoc, Part 5

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"No way... why? You and I are supposed to share the same form, how are you here!?" Tohka stuttered, soon holding Sandalphon out defensively. "Why are you here... Inverse Tohka!?"

Everyone gasped at that.

"T-that's Tohka's Inverse Form, oh my god..." Natsumi breathed, surprised but how the majestic appearance of Tohka's normal form changed from an Inversion. Inverse Tohka soon raised an eye at their claim.

"Tohka? Are you talking to me?" Inverse Tohka asked, making Tohka gasp more.

"No... please don't tell me, are my Nightmares becoming real!?" Tohka gasped, Rinne heard this and prepared to ask... but the chance was lost as when Inverse Tohka swung down Nahemah and forced Tohka to move. "Everyone, look out!"

Tohka raised her hand, causing a wall of stone to form out of the ground, taking the attack before shattering, Inverse Tohka showed surprise at that.

[Odd, it seems she possesses the same powers as we do, but ones we seem to lack. That woman is an irregularity. Must be one of those filthy Humans, deal with her and seize her Sephira Crystal.]

"Don't worry, I will not forgive this insult. For the sake of the Kingdom and the Spirits." Inverse Tohka declared, rushing at Tohka and swinging Nahemah rapidly with only her left hand, forcing Tohka to counter with her own swings using both of hers.

It was clear Tohka was at a huge disadvantage, not only were Spirits weaker than their Inverse Forms, but Choronzon's presence had every sealed Spirit unable to assume more than a Limited Astral Dress meaning Tohka couldn't even draw her full power to face her!

"Come on, we've gotta help her!" Kotori shouted, the others went to go help, only for Tohka to fire energy blasts in front of them.
"No, I have to do this on my own!" Tohka shouted.

"What, you're crazy! You can't-" Kotori began, only for Nia to stop her. "What are you doing!?"

Nia gives her a stern look, making Kotori slightly wimp out.

"Use your head, we're about to face an Inversion that's able to possibly destroy the world. Inverse Tohka's a SSS-Rank Spirit and already a very dangerous one. What happens if it takes all of you just to beat her?" Nia asked, making the others' eyes widen. "Not just that either. What if the other Inverse Forms have manifested as separate beings?"

"I hate to say it, but Nia's right... if Tohka can't win alone then we won't have a chance to stop Choronzon. As much as I don't want to, she has to try and win on her own!"

"Durandal."

Suddenly Nahemah's throne formed from the ground before shifting into a monstrous version of Sandalphon's vehicle form, its 'eyes' glowing before it rammed into Tohka. The Energy Spirit was shot back, right as Inverse Tohka swung Nahemah down again and formed a vertical slash wave.

"No you... don't!" Tohka screamed, cutting Sandalphon through it.

"I'll admit it, you're not just all talk. Though you are a fool to believe you can defeat me." Inverse Tohka stated, swinging Nahemah again, but this time sideways to create a horizontal slash wave. Tohka panted, having barely cut the last one down, however Miku sings and creates a protective barrier.

"Miku?" Tohka asked.

"Don't get the wrong idea! Nothing infuriates me more than people who are all talk, I just can't help but pity you for being way over your head. Plus, Nia said we can't help, not we can't shield you" Miku stated, turning her head and making Tohka sweat drop. "You said you'd put your life on the line, do you really mean that or is it all talk?"

Tohka's eyes widen slightly, and she focuses her grip on Sandalphon again.

[Tohka, I don't know if we can win... but I'll still try if you will!]

"I will Sandalphon, I have to!" Tohka shouted, rushing at Inverse Tohka who simply fires a wave of energy blasts at her. Causing her to tumble near Miku. "Dang it! If only I could get close to her somehow!"

"So, you just need to get close to her? Very well then, just this once... Gabriel, Rondo!" Miku shouted, twirling as many golden pipes appear around the area to Inverse Tohka's surprise. Tohka looked at Miku confused. "I'll trap her with my vocal shield, use that moment to take her down!"

Miku begins singing and Inverse Tohka's arms were held in place, but Nia grimaces at the sight.

'Bad idea, and that's the only reason I'm not intervening for trying to aid Tohka... let's just hope Tohka uses this chance the right way.' Nia thought, seeing Tohka rush over while she has the chance.

"My, what a fool you are." Inverse Tohka stated, her dark spirit power simply flared and Gabriel's Rondo form shattered. Miku suddenly felt the recoil from it make her voice vanish, the side effect from a disruption of her spirit power, or wasting it all. "And now... you shall pay for your meddling,
die weakling!"

Everyone stares in horror as Inverse Tohka swung down Nahemah, causing a slash wave to shoot towards Miku's way, the Sound Spirit was in so much shock she didn't even move away as it neared her. Tohka, who had a chance to attack her Inverse counterpart instead turned and rushed at her.

'This is it... my punishment for what I've done, isn't it?' Miku thought.

Miku was seen standing on stage singing, with the crowd cheering for her.

"I never had anything but my songs... my music."

The sight of Miku's blog with the comments of fans who believed in the scandal, the reaction of some of her fans in person, the sight of one of her album CDs being broken and her sight on the stage the moment her voice vanished. Eventually coming to her standing in a black realm, a single spotlight shining as people disappeared from view one by one, leaving a sad and alone Miku in the middle of it.

"I had nothing, I always believed that if I didn't have my voice... I was just worthless. That nobody, and nothing would protect me anymore. Of course, that's how I went down that path... by the time I regained it, I had already fallen into that illusion."

The sight of Miku throughout her year as a Spirit, making a face that while looking sweet, had eyes showing that it was just a mask to lie to herself. To not face what she had been doing, or to simply shield herself from realizing the pain she had received she was giving to others.

Then came the moment she sung her song at the Ten-Oh Festival, and how happy she had looked, no... how much she had let her true self show for even a brief moment. Then the same expressions Tohka and the others showed when playing their own song.

"It's been so long, I had forgotten... the wish I made that day she gave me the Gabriel Crystal. My wish, it was simple, I'm shocked how easily I had forgotten it. To see it was real, to see it was true just once! That there was a person in this world who truly loved someone from the bottom of their heart."

The sight of Phantom giving Miku her Sephira Crystal flashed by, and then Tohka glomping Shido in his form of Shiori after singing their song at the Ten-Oh Festival... and how much that smile radiated.

"And I did... but the pain I felt, drowning in the power I had, I drifted so far away from that wish. Now I get why it doesn't get to deserve to come true, why I'm being punished. Shido Takamiya... Tohka Yatogami... if only I met you two sooner, things would have been so different."

The spotlight in the black realm soon fades.

Miku closes her eyes, almost as if accepting her fate, and then...

"MIIIIIIKUUUUU!"

Suddenly a strange sound went off, causing Miku to open her eyes as the sight of Tohka slamming Sandalphon into the ground, forming a field of purple crystals to negate Inverse Tohka's attack. Her dark counterpart stared in surprise at her attack being stopped so easily.
"You... OK?" Tohka asked, panting a bit as she looked at Miku. Who only stared because she still didn't have enough mana to regain her voice just yet. "I told you didn't I... that if you ended up in a situation like this, I'd save you without hesitation!"

'No way... she had the chance to take down her Inverse Form, but she didn't take it... just to keep her promise? To save me?' Miku thought. Inverse Tohka glared at Tohka, looking very pissed off.

"Why do you protect them? Why... why do you protect Humans like them!?" Inverse Tohka demanded, and Tohka panted as she looked at her.

"Let me ask you something, why do you hate Humans so much? Just spouting things isn't going to tell me... the you from my nightmares made that clear when she refused to answer." Tohka countered, making Inverse Tohka glare. "If you're gonna kill me anyways I think I deserve that answer, don't I?"

Inverse Tohka's right hand tightened in a fist with so much force, she drew a little blood.

"Are you trying to trick me, are you!? If that's how you want to do this... I'll kill you right now!" Inverse Tohka stated, flying up into the air before gathering a flood of dark spirit power into Nahemah, the Demon King's glowing red crystal edge flashing as it devours it. "To you who's shed her Humanity and yet refuses to side with your true kind... die!"

"Shed my humanity? Shows what you know, even if I'm not just a mere Human anymore... I'll never lose my Humanity!" Tohka declared, jumping up as she looked at Sandalphon. "Please... lend me all your strength, for my sake, for your sake, for Shido's sake... for everyone!

[Of course Tohka, no matter what... you and I are partners! Go for it!]

Tohka raised Sandalphon and did the same as normal spirit power flowed into Sandalphon, and in that moment the two clashed in midair, everyone on the ground holding a hand in front of their eyes as the recoil from their blows shoots out as a strong wind towards them all.

Soon Durandal forms overhead of Inverse Tohka, and Tohka manages to call Sandalphon's throne from the ground before using the ground to raise it up. Both of them smash their respective thrones apart, forming their Angels' secondary forms.

"HALVANHELEV!"
"PAVERSCHELV!"

Everyone stared as they began charging up.

"Everyone heads up, this isn't gonna end well! Get under Rio's shield!" Rinne warned, and everyone did so as Rio put up a barrier, while Miku was still within the crystal walls. The two halves of the Energy Spirit shout as they prepared their attacks.

"Smash them apart!" Tohka shouted, swinging down.

"It's time to die!" Inverse Tohka roared, doing the same.

The two giant swords smash into each other, causing a wall of Tohka's normal purple spirit power, and Inverse Tohka's and inverted dark purple spirit power, to clash in midair and cause a mini-tremor to shake the earth.

Eventually in the epicenter, a burst goes off! Inverse Tohka was knocked back slightly, while Tohka was flung towards the ground by Miku, Tohka slowly got up, panting heavily with an intact but
shaky Sandalphon. Inverse Tohka lowered herself closer to the ground, Nahemah in her hand and still as fresh as ever.

"Just give up." Inverse Tohka declared.

"Never!" Tohka exclaimed, surprising the Inverse Spirit as at how she could still fight. "As long as I'm still standing I will not give up!"

"Just stop this!"

Tohka turned, looking to see Miku crying, having finally regained enough of her mana to at least speak.

"After all I've done you saved me, and you're still fighting to protect everyone include me... just stop! I don't deserve this! I'm the one who let this all happen, all because I couldn't trust anyone!" Miku cried, making Tohka stare at her.

"Just leave me... let someone else take my powers! I tried to end everything long ago, and I probably just should have, maybe then this could have been avoided! Please... just stop this, let it all end!"

Tohka went silent for a moment, and then...

- (*Date A Live - Season 1 opening*) -

"I refuse!" Tohka stated, making Miku look at her in shock.

"We all make mistakes, we all lose ourselves at least once, and we'll all do things we regret. However, what defines us is learning from those mistakes, and knowing what's good and bad. It doesn't matter what you've done Miku, those tears prove you're a good person. That's why I know in my heart you can start over, because... I know you haven't given up on yourself!"

Miku gasped at that, tears shed out as if a dam had burst in her heart.

"Tohka..." Miku cried, unable to comprehend and yet happy that Tohka said that.

"Enough... enough of this nonsense, enough of this talk! I'll crush you right now!" Inverse Tohka screamed, preparing to swing Nahemah, only to see Tohka appear right in front of her before she could even realize it. "No you don't!"

Inverse Tohka forms the signature mana barrier Tohka was known for, and Tohka swings down at it. The barrier completely pushed against Tohka's attack, and Tohka grunted as she tried to break through it.

"Strike against it all you'd like. There's nothing you can do... you'll always be beneath me. Now die, die acting like some kind of Hero! You who fights like a human, has no chance against a true Spirit!" Inverse Tohka declared, preparing to swing against Tohka... only for Tohka to shout and push harder. "What?"

"Never, I'll never fall to someone like you! You think Humanity is a weakness, think being Human makes you weak? Well, then let me show you what being Human means right here!" Tohka exclaimed, pushing ever harder, causing Inverse Tohka to force out both hands to defend against Tohka's attack.

"I may not have my full power, but... if even 10% of my power isn't enough then I'll just push to 50% more! If that's not enough then I'll push it to 100% more! Even then, if that's not enough..."
Tohka’s spirit power began flaring out more to everyone's surprise, and Inverse Tohka noticed her barrier starting to crack, causing the Inverse Spirit's eyes to widen in horror as her normal half began to break through it.

"No... no, this can't be!" Inverse Tohka gasped, finally showing an expression that made her seem vulnerable as worry and panic plastered on her face.

"I'll go beyond that and my limits, even if it means I need to somehow reach infinity! I'll never give up, for the sake of my parents who gave up everything for me... for Shido who's given me everything! For the friends who supported me, for Rinne who's believed in me, for all their sakes... I will find a way!" Tohka exclaimed loudly.

At that moment, Inverse Tohka's face widened in horror, and the light in her eyes vanished as her barrier was completely shattered.

"No... how can this be? How can I have been overpowered!??" Inverse Tohka asked, almost begging for some kind of answers to flash into her mind as Tohka rushed at her, swinging back with Sandalphon held in both her hands.

"Take her down Tohka!" Kotori shouted.

"You can do it!" Origami exclaimed.

"Win this now, or we'll never forgive you!" Kaguya screamed.

"TOHKA!" Everyone else yelled.

Tohka smiled, rushing down at her Inverse Form who could only watch in horror as she came in too fast to defend herself.

"Because, while you power may be born of negativity and despair... it will never be enough against someone who refuses to give up!" Tohka declared, soon zooming by and cutting through Inverse Tohka's body. A purple energy slash forming over her abdomen as her eyes went blank. "And that mistake... was your greatest!"

Inverse Tohka shakily turned her head at the real deal, before screaming as her body shattered apart into purple spirit power that vanished into the air. Tohka looked at where she had stood moments before, and panted a bit before she collapsed to her knees... soon smiling at her victory.

- (*insert song end*) -

"I... I did it..." Tohka smiled, realizing she did what she failed to in her nightmare. Claim victory against Inverse Tohka. She chuckled a bit before cheering loudly as they others all ran at her. "I actually beat my Inverse Form, I won!"

"You did it Tohka, that was amazing!" Yoshino smiled, hugging her tightly.

"Could you claim victory faster next time? Seriously, I nearly had a heart attack at the end!" Natsumi said playfully, soon laughing. "Then again, I guess it wouldn't be you if the way you fought was different."

Nia soon noticed Rinne walk by her, and she smiled a bit.

"So, what do you think? On a stand point of stats, it was clear Tohka had no chance... but Tohka won because she realized something greater than that. You can't give up." Nia explained, making
Rinne sigh.

"Did you know Tohka was struggling because she wasn't able to believe in yourself? Good grief, teaching her this way, you are such a troublemaker Nia Honjou!" Rinne answered, playfully punching Nia's arm. "Though I guess now everyone can believe in our chances, and... so can I."

Nia closes her eyes and nods.

"I'm clever like that, sometimes what seems like nothing or likely do more harm can be the greatest support and growth you can give." Nia added, soon opening Raziel. "Now I think you wanted to ask Tohka about those nightmares she mentioned? How about you take care of that and full cementing Miku's aid in while I get our final Spirit to aid us."

"Oh right, thank you for reminding me." Rinne said, walking over to Tohka while Nia wrote {Get into contact with Spirit No. 6} in Raziel.

Deep in Space, Mukuro was floating around as usual when an illusion of Nia's consciousness appeared before her. Sensing her present, the Dimensional Spirit opened her eyes and looked at her with the same lack of emotion she always had.

"...Why have you bothered me, you better have good reason for it." Mukuro asked, her emotionless face making Nia sighed.

"Wow, as boring as always I see." Nia replied, Mukuro simply staring at her comment before her illusion resumed. "Thought you might want to know that on Earth right now, we're facing what's basically the apocalypse at the moment."

Mukuro took a moment before turning away.

"That doesn't concern me, I do not have any concerns over that planet. Leave before I consider blocking your-"

"Ah, ah, ah! Let me finish because it concerns you for a different reason." Nia cut in, making Mukuro turn around again and let her continue. "Remember the First Spirit, the pinkette who's why we have our powers? Someone else has them and the powers of others, and those powers? They've allowed this someone to Inverse."

Mukuro while not reaction was clearly paying attention now.

"Exactly, eventually it'll come after us for our powers to complete itself. I doubt by that point you'll be able to resist it should it try stealing your powers, you won't be floating here in solitude after that. So, I'd like you to help us stop it, and you don't need to come directly. A few portals dropping some beams and debris meteors will be plenty."

Mukuro stared for a moment before closing her eyes and uncurling.

"Michael."

A large key that was somewhat reminiscent of a Keyblade from Kingdom Hearts due to its size and shape formed in Mukuro's hands, and that made Nia smirk since that confirmed her answer was a yes.

"...Show me where to attack, and let me know when. That is all I'll agree to." Mukuro stated.
"Fair enough, how exciting that all the Spirits are going to be working together. Oh, might wanna lock the destruction in place or it'll be hard to do anything." Nia smiled, soon having her illusion fade as Mukuro felt the information form in her head. She aimed Michael at an area of space.

"Raitabu - Unlock."

A portal shows the area where Choronzon's tree body was currently at, Mukuro holding out Michael again as she focuses it at the elements formed from the power of the seven sealed Spirits that were rampaging around.

"Segva - Lock."

Through the portal Choronzon noticed the locking elements in confusion, and Mukuro pulled Michael back, now playing the waiting game until she received the signal from Nia to begin her attack against the ultimate Demon King.

Nia closed Raziel, smirking at her success as she went over right at the moment Rinne began asking her question.

"-Tell me Tohka, what exactly did you mean by your nightmares being real? Not to mention you stating that Inverse Tohka was in them?" Rinne asked, tapping her foot as everyone looked at her.

"Well... around the time since we sealed Natsumi, I've had nightmares where I kept seeing my Inverse Form." Tohka answered, making Rinne's eyes widen slightly, recalling Tohka's sudden wake up on the couch a few days back. "She kept saying... Humanity must pay, for destroying their home and all of them."

Rinne suddenly flinched at that.

"...Is that it?" Rinne asked, her voice crackling as if a begging tone seeped into it.

"No, the last time was worst of it. She kept mentioning me being the messenger of their rage, not sure who though, but it was like a warning she'd take over. I was too scared to talk about it. Not to mention before that, I was somewhere where... where I saw Ellen kill Shido." Tohka continued, making everyone pale and realize why she hid it.

"However, the first part was the strangest... I was in some world that suddenly ruptured apart. The people in it being vaporized the moment the energy ripping it apart struck them and I couldn't block out the sight or sound. Then... it was all gone."

Rinne shook.

"...That last part, that was the Spirit Dimension's annihilation." Rinne gasp, making Tohka's eyes widen. "I'm sure of it. That was the Sandalphon region you saw being destroyed, damn it! I should have known!"

"Known... what?" Nia asked, somewhat worried.

The one thing she lacked info on was anything specifically tied to Spirits. Raziel could give her the info, but in a language she didn't understand to translate it, she assumed it was the language that Spirits used and that Rinne was the only one who spoke it. Rinne sighed as she looked at everyone.

"It's time you know, I always intended to share it, but I just wasn't sure how to or when the time would be right. I think at this point with the danger and 9 of you all present this is the best chance."
Rinne answered, beginning her explanation.

"When Westcott destroyed the Spirit Dimension 30 years ago, did any of you wonder how magic suddenly entered your world? How people began being born with the organs you'd eventually know as Mana cores? Think hard... where would all of that come from, in fact what made me cause the First Spacequake when I arrived on Earth?"

Everyone suddenly gasped at that.

"No way, are you saying the Spirit Dimension's entire destruction flooded the world with all of that?" Origami asked, only for Rinne to shake her head to her surprise. "Wait... no, what do you mean? What else could have-"

"It's not that different from what happened when Yoshinon faded away. She didn't technically die because she was still a part of Yoshino, she had just had her own individually and existence until it merged back into her." Rinne answered, and soon knelt to the ground and rubbed her finger on it.

The sight of a brush of grass being revealed for a brief moment caught everyone's eyes, one from the Spirit dimension, one Tohka herself had seen firsthand.

"The void where the Spirit Dimension is still exists, but... I've realized for a while now that the Spirit Dimension didn't become outright destroyed. Westcott likely doesn't know... that the way he tried to destroy the Spirit Dimension simply resulted in it merging with Earth itself. That's the whole reason why Spirits look so much like Humans... I think it was just a different plane of Earth."

"No! Freaking! Way!" Kaguya screamed in surprise.

"...Then is the reason Shido's Inversion could destroy the world because-" Yuzuru asked, pausing as if she couldn't finish that answer. "A-are you saying..."

Rinne nods.

"Yeah, it's because its driving the essence of the Spirit Dimension that's seeped into Earth wild. Even worse than I did when my power went crazy. That's not the worst of it though, because Tohka's nightmares have finally made me realize how the Inverse Form formed." Rinne replied, soon getting everyone confused.

"When Westcott and I fought 30 years ago, his essence tainted the Sephira Crystals... but now that I think about it that was odd. Why would his touch alone do that? If that was the case then when Rio gave you all your crystals something more should have happened. Now I get it, it wasn't just his touch."

Everyone saw Rinne begin to sweat, a shadow forming over her eye area from the worry.

"Despair as an activation, negative emotions as a key to powering it... only one thing could have culminated so much yet have it separately among each crystal. If Earth ended absorbing the Spirit Dimension, then what about the Spirits who died?" Rinne explained, making everyone pale.

"That's right, I can tell what you realized and let me add to show you why that's not good. Each Sephira Crystal was a treasure for a region in the Spirit Dimension, and each had a guardian. Since the Crystals bonded with you, and Saya's conscious was able to survive in the Camael Crystal... the only explanation that I can think of is that all of their souls are within the Crystals. The Inverse Form is the manifestation of all their negative emotions. Their sadness, fear, rage and despair... and Westcott, because he was recognized as their killer, was the one who activated it."
Nia’s eyes widened.

"Of course, Westcott’s influence was his evil, and their souls reacting. The taint was that evil and their focused emotional flux amplifying into that taint. The Inverse Form is basically their rage against Westcott… no, based on Inverse Tohka’s words, the hatred against feeling Humanity itself betrayed them.” Nia realized, sweating a bit.

"No wonder, some humans had been trapped there and they were all good people Westcott had land there. Such a betrayal would stain people heavily… the released power you sent off from dispersing the crystals likely made Westcott the bleached and soulless eyed looking man we know now because that power tried to kill him."

Everyone stood there for a moment, and soon Rio grabbed her mother’s hand, surprising Rinne.

"Rio doesn’t get it, but… Rio thinks it’s not wrong to be mad. If people do bad, then others should do good, and show the good isn’t like the bad.” Rio smiled, making everyone blink and smile. "Rio thinks everyone can bring back their smiles, and Rio will try too."

"You know, for someone’s biologically 5, you definitely have 30 years of wisdom.” Nia smirked, petting her head. "So, let’s stop Choronzon and start working to walk that very road and save this world not just temporarily, but for good. Let’s get to England."

Before anyone could respond to that…

"Don’t worry Shido, I’m coming!” Tohka declared, flying off there and leaving the others to blink.

"She just… flew off without us.” Kurumi stated, sighing a bit. "Guess that naivete of hers will never change, we better go follow her guys."

The others prepared to fly off, but before they could, they heard Miku clear her throat to get their attention.

"…I have a question of you don’t mind, and I want an honest answer.” Miku asked, making them all look at her. "What do you know about Tohka and Shido’s relationship? Is he really that precious to her? That precious… to all of you?"

Rinne blinked before smirking, and Nia did the same. Looks like they finally reached that moment… now the question was would Miku actually fight with them to save him or not? Everyone’s answers were what depended on that.

"To be perfectly honest, I haven’t really known Tohka and Shido long enough to define their relationship to a focal point, but to generalize it? You can’t just say they’re dating, it’s almost like… they’re each one half of a bigger whole.” Natsumi answered, soon smiling. "Actually, that’s kinda what he is to me. He gives the answers to all my doubts."

"I’ve seen them spend a lot of time together, more than most. When they’re together they’re always so happy.” Origami smiled, soon holding a hand to her heart. "I nearly wanted to die once, Shido’s the reason I live now. So much… as I am right now, I’d probably want to die if Shido left my life."

"They were childhood friends, and the kind that knew before most should they felt genuine love for each other.” Kotori grinned, showing her teeth as she crossed her arms behind her head. "I first saw him like a brother, but… he did things beyond what I brother would do. Eventually I found myself seeing him as something greater."

"I don’t think any words I say would do justice to explain their bond. I do know this… hurting each
of is the last thing they want." Kurumi smiled, blushing a bit as she held a hand to her chest. "I was so lost in the darkness, a lie I didn't even know. Shido gave me light when I thought there was none."

Miku was surprised by what she heard so far.

"Then... what if the situation got desperate, and one of them had to sacrifice themselves to save the other?" Miku asked again.

"Neither would hesitate for a moment. They'd never give up on saving one another, no matter how hopeless it seemed." Yoshino replied, showing a rare serious face from her.

"Yoshino's right, and they'd find a way to pull it off too. Those idiots stare death in the eye and spit on it, turn 0% into 100% if they have to. They saved me and Yuzuru when we were sure one of us had to die for the other to live." Kaguya added.

"To some people, they may thing there's something wrong with them, but we know they'd do anything not just for each other... but the people they care for and those in suffering. No matter what they'd have to sacrifice." Yuzuru finished.

Miku stared at them all, they didn't even need a moment to answer, all of them knew what to say as if it was second nature. Then she took a look at what both had said to her... even if they had gotten angry at her, it wasn't malice that it was born of, it was concern.

Not just that, it was clear to her that they all shared the same feeling towards him as Tohka... they loved him, one man had touched all of them so much. All the Spirits he sealed, all the Spirits he saved, they had only good things to say about him.

"You all go ahead real quick, I'll have Raziel send you so Tohka doesn't arrive and get overwhelmed for being alone. I'm gonna talk to Miku real quick before I follow." Nia answered, Rinne nodded.

"OK, good luck." Rinne replied, soon walking with everyone as Nia wrote {Send everyone but me and Miku to London} in Raziel's pages as they were all teleported over to the sight of their biggest battle yet. She turned to Miku.

[I think I know what you want me to show, you got it Master.]

Nia walked to Miku and held out Raziel to her, surprising her a bit.

"That producer, something about him you'll wanna know is written here. As a lot more. Read it while you hear me out." Nia stated, Miku taking Raziel as she read it... her eyes shook as she did, some tears forming as a lot of what she thought was suddenly so different.

"I get how you feel, how you changed, what you gained and lost. I think I carry some blame for not leaving you with something to make you walk down a better road. Tohka's right though... the old you isn't dead. She's always been there with you, she still sings through you. That's what Shido was going for when he mentioned he could seal your powers."

Miku only stared as tears shed down her face, a new closed Raziel in her hands as Nia teleported the Angel back into her grasp.

"Know this, what Shido never got the chance to say is that the only way to seal you was for you to allow him to. It's the same reason the others all feel how they do, think about it... why didn't he just seal you from the start?" Nia continued, making Miku's widen as she realized that. Why didn't he?
"Simple, he couldn't, or rather couldn't seal you yet. To seal a Spirit, it's a give and take, you have to truly genuinely feel for him and have a bond between each other. Do you know what that bond is? It's quite simple... its love. They love him, and he loves them, that's all it is. That's why they're not alone. The question now is this... do you still want to be alone?"

Miku gasped at that.

'All that time, all he was doing was...' Miku thought, recalling the moments Shido and her spent together while she was Shiori.

She starting to think... why didn't she say anything when she had realized she was the boy she had met before then? Why did she listen, not try to cheat in their contest? After a while, she finally understood it.

'Looks like I really was blind to myself... he won before our contest even started, looks like I'm no different than the rest of those girls.' Miku thought, shedding a tear as Nia smirked at her.

"So, you gonna save him or just stand here waiting?" Nia asked, and soon Miku's face looked up, but this time as the one from back then.

"Tohka said it herself... what defines us is learning from our mistakes. So, it's time I start over, and what better place to start." Miku smiled, and Nia smirked as she began writing in Raziel again.

"Alright, let's go then. Time to save one Shido Takamiya!" Nia smirked, and the two soon teleported over.

Tohka soon found herself in England, and as she flew into view she saw everyone fleeing at the sight of Choronzon in the distance.

While currently locked from expanding any further than they already had... the rampaging of energy, fire, water, ice, wind, stone, temporal distortions, illusions, morphing structures, light and shadow were all at their worse here as they still rampaged throughout England.

"Oh my god... seeing where it spread out to was nothing compared to this." Tohka noted, soon she gasped and flew down to hide as Choronzon looked in her direction, just narrowly missing being caught. "...OK, now that I'm in this position, I realize maybe flying ahead wasn't the best idea!"

Soon at that moment, the others arrive from Nia's teleportation.

"Wait, what the? How'd you... aw man, I took the long way, didn't it?" Tohka groaned.

"Yeah, but on the plus side you can tell us what we haven't seen-Oh my goodness!" Origami exclaimed, noticing the rampaging elements. "OK, that's bad... like really bad!"

The others didn't even need to voice their concerns, their shaking was enough.

"And I saw Choronzon already... it's basically the Rinne Tree but painted Evil with snake eyes on the gems. I'm not sure how we're gonna deal with it. Much less get close. More than that, there's still innocent people trapped in all of this chaos." Tohka replied, biting her nails a bit.

At that moment, everyone saw Nia and Miku appear besides them.

"Miku? Wait, then does that mean..." Rinne asked, and Miku nods with a blush before Rinne gives a silent fist pump and jump. "Yes!"
"As for how we're gonna start? Remember how I got the last Spirit to aid us, well... let's just say she's about to give us a show." Nia answered, soon looking up. "Go ahead and start us off Spirit No. 6!"

From her position in space, Mukuro noticed Nia's location and the signal. Next thing anyone knew... meteorites and a beam firing off every few seconds suddenly struck Choronzon.

"So, someone dares to challenge me? Hah! You'll learn quickly you are a fool, reveal yourself!" Choronzon demanded.

"Whoa! What the, where is she and what is she doing!?" Tohka asked.

"Spirit No. 6 is the Dimensional Spirit, she's attacking from somewhere else I'm not allowed to say. If I did she'd stop helping. I can say this is only some of her power. How strong is she?" Nia explained, soon making a playful thinking face. "If she had fought Inverse Tohka and not been serious, she'd have still won and destroyed her."

Kotori whistles at that.

"That's strong, I'm guessing that means she's the strongest of the Spirits?" Kotori asked, making Nia nod. "Oh boy... glad she's on our side today at least."

"Alright everyone, now the fight begins. Let's go!" Nia shouted.

With that, all of the Spirits fly out into view with Tohka leading the charge, the fight to save Choronzon had finally begun.

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Oh yeah, now that was a great battle! And the winner is Tohka in a surprise turn around, nicely done Tohka! Not to mention Miku's now on the Spirits' side, and... wait a second, Nia asked Mukuro to help them and succeeded? Whoa! Now how's that for a surprise? Even if Mukuro isn't there physically, all the spirits except for Marina (for obvious reasons) are fighting together against a single threat, woo!

And we now have some reveals, an extension on the brief one made by Elliot... that's right, the Spirit Dimension is likely just another plane of Earth and after it was apparently "destroyed", most of its remnant energy fused into Earth and basically fused the worlds together, hence magic and people born with the mana cores they have now... though does Westcott really not know? Maybe, but maybe he does, or does he? :3

The Inverse Tohka within the nightmares may have already made a few of you realize it, or something similar, with her choice of words... but yes, they're the reason why Westcott was truly able to create the taint that created the Inverse Form. That's why the Spirits get unstable when they enter it, it's only because they used to be Human, in this fanfic at least, that they don't fully lose themselves when they enter it.

And now it's begun... Earth's future, Shido himself, and so much more are all going to be decided by this one fight. Though what exactly are they going to be facing? Not to mention Nia made a good point, is Tohka's Inverse Form the only one that got manifested as its own being? For all we know, there's still another 7 out there waiting to fight as Choronzon's elite minions... that's gonna get messy 0_0 *gulps*
This fight's only just begun! So until next time everyone, and stay awesome ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 99% (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 95% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 90% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 92% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 87% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 84% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 78% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 78% (Weight Manipulation)
Dang it, I forgot about the arc emotion again! This is like the third time already! DX

OK, before I say anything here, I'm going to clear that hiccup right now. This arc's emotion is... "Hope"! You might be wondering why I'm going with this emotion, especially considering how things are right now and because the villain is a Demon King which is born from anything but hope. Well... let's just say that's a secret towards a single something in this arc, in fact you could say it's main point of this arc.

Alright, first thing I'm gonna do is reveal something I hinted in the end notes, and admittedly can't really hide because the situation has nothing to show that Inverse Tohka came from somewhere else, especially after Rinne reveals the answer about what gave birth to the Inverse Forms and the fact Choronzon itself is an Inverse Form's Demon King, though one that manifested in a canon Kerubiel like manner.

The possibility that there's an independent version of the Inverse Forms for everyone who's been sealed been far as mentioned by Nia... she was right, because they're all present! Choronzon's elite soldiers in a sense, and the reason why the Spirits are stuck with only Limited Astral Dresses, because its sucking up a lot of their usual power to allow them to manifest. Best part about it though? Each Spirit gets their own battle against themselves ^^

Not to worry, that doesn't mean that Miku, Nia, Mukuro and the fellow game and movie Spirits won't get their own battles. What do I mean by that? *giggles* Sorry, but unlike the part mentioned, this on the other hand stays secret... for now at least :3 *giggles more* And yes, I do mean Marina is gonna show up to aid the fight, Choronzon nearly killed Westcott when it manifested, she has a reason to fight it.

Here we go everyone, time for the real action of this battle to begin!

Since we've got all of the Spirits gathered here, I figured I'd let everyone know where they rank in terms of strongest to weakest in this story, especially since a few of them are quite different power wise in terms of their abilities and stats. These are only for the Sephira Spirits though, but I do have a second list for the end notes for the non-Sephira Spirits though.

1. Mukuro - With the power to Lock abilities and Nia stating she can defeat an Inverse Spirit, the number 1 spot is hers guaranteed.
2. Tohka - Her energy element, her prime element, depends on the strength of her willpower. If she manifests enough, then few can challenge her.
3. Nia - Being able to manipulate events to a degree and bring her imagination to life, and having a ready army through her Kirigami technique.
4. Kurumi - Has a high rank and her powers are incredibly versatile, not to mention her for clones that have the same powers.
5. Miku - Her sound powers are versatile, and she it can give support effects to the others.
6. Origami - Has multiple forms and strong long-range tactics, plus her ability to automatically teleport a short distance from most danger.
7. Kotori - Has incredible strength, and her healing powers make it very hard to finish her
with anymore more than blunt attacks.
8. Kaguya & Yuzuru - As twins and a powerful tag team, the two together can accomplish more than they can alone.
9. Natsumi - While not particularly strong among the Spirits, being able to learn and mimic the others' skills makes able to easily adapt.
10. Yoshino - Mostly shy and timid, and rather against violence unless necessary, though even if the weakest she's not a pushover.

And there you go, that's where all the Spirits rank in my story. Oh! As a bonus, when Kurumi was in her corrupted stated she took 2nd place, and while Tohka wasn't using her full power, she was in 5th place.

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Chapter 41, S2: Choronzon Havoc, Part 6

All of the Spirits flew towards Choronzon, with the Demon King still having failed to notice them as it dealt with the onslaught of Mukuro's attack from space. As they did, the sight of a familiar presence nears Maria's sight.

"Hey wait a minute, isn't that?" Maria asked, and soon enough the sight of Marina in her Inverse Astral Dress comes into view as she nears the other Spirits. "Marina!?"

"Don't take this as some kinda sign I'm wanting to change signs! This monster nearly killed my father, I'm just going to purge it for the mistake it made in trying to end his life! Nothing more!" Marina said, almost sounding tsundere if it weren't for the fact she was evil. "Got it!?"

Maria sighed before smiling.

"Regardless, glad a fellow Spirit's fighting on our side." Maria replied, irritating her dark counterpart because she was the one who said it. Rinne soon whistles after everyone gets close enough, and Rio soon forms a barrier to temporarily hide them.

"Alright everyone, this is it! It's time to save Shido!" Rinne declared, making everyone stare towards her as she gave her speech. "We can't fail, so please... hold nothing back and give it your all! So we can all see the sun rise again tomorrow!"

Everyone gave their own positive looks and reactions to that, with Marina frowning and looking to the side due to having to agree reluctantly.

"Alright, drop the barrier Rio. We're going in!" Rinne shouted, and Rio nods as she does. One by one, with only Mukuro being exempt due to being space, all the Spirits all rush ahead and towards the ultimate Demon King, who finally notices them as they do.

"So, you're the ones who challenge me? Very well... prepare to die and have all your power absorbed into me!" Choronzon shouted, soon shaking slightly as the sight of a whole armada of DEM automatons, all now pitch black and glowing with pink energy to show he had corrupted them.

"ATTACK THEM!"

The entire arm rushes forward, and soon Choronzon opens even more smaller pink eyes across his body before they widen and being firing off at the group, quickly launching some black branch like objects from its metallic tree body.
"Shido, just wait a bit longer... we're coming!" Tohka declared, soon swinging Sandalphon against one of the demon branches before knocking it away. Origami zooms from behind her and fires beams from Metatron's pillars to blast them apart. Tohka rushes forward once her way was cleared.

Kurumi zips through the armada of energy blasts and the swarm of automatons, soon flying up and doing a flip as Shincho, Kinshu, Masayoshi and Yuuki all split off from her shadow and begin ripping them to shreds. Kurumi turns to them as they all give a thumb's up.

"We got this, don't stop Kurumi!" Masayoshi replied, making Kurumi nod and smile before zooming ahead with Zafkiel in each hand. A sudden demon branch was about to strike her before Yoshino freezes it, making Kurumi smile at her as she passed by on Zadkiel. Yoshino soon zoomed ahead, with Rio landing on Zadkiel.

"Rio needs to go up there!" Rio said, pointing to a spot near the Yamai twins.

"OK, hang on!" Yoshino replied, flying up to launch Rio into the sky as Kaguya and Yuzuru saw her arrive.

"Rio's here, now Kaguya and Yuzuru can blow robots away!" Rio smiled, soon forming a barrier that blocked most of what was coming their way before she began to cheer. "Go, go, go!"

The Yamai twins soon call forth their Raphael's and bring them together.

"EL KAN'APH!"

The fused bow forms as the two pull back on the three strings together, soon firing off their strongest arrow shot as Rio drops the barrier, causing it to storm through all the automatons and shots in their way. Choronzon's main eye shifted in surprise at the cleared path it left.

"Useless, I'll simply-" Choronzon began, only to suddenly to have Nia's Kirigami soldiers suddenly swarm around his eyes and blind him to the sight. Natsumi twirled Haniel before she transformed them to become tenfold their usual size. "What? Get these things off me damn it!"

As Choronzon blasted at them best he could, only to scream as Mukuro blast her beam at him multiple times while he couldn't predict where she'd fire it. Rinne rushed ahead at that moment, turning back to look at the others briefly.

"Everyone, swarm towards him now!" Rinne ordered, soon turning forward again as most of the others followed suit.

Maria and Marina both jab their Astral Dresses' wires into the roof nearby buildings, and soon a swarm of vines begin rising up and whipping through the Automatons before Marina blasts poison gas to corrode the ones nearing them both.

"Overcharge!" Mayuri screamed, feeling the excess electricity burn through her as she absorbed it all.

As demon branches began to fly at her, Miku soon sang and created a barrier to shield her before Mayuri screamed and blasted out an electromagnetic disruption, causing every automaton within range to cease functioning.

"Rinne, go for it!" Kotori shouted, swinging Camael through some demon branches and automatons swarming around them as the Kirigami were all suddenly shredded by Choronzon's roots flailing. Rinne shouts as she summoned Uriel, and all of its gems glowed brightly.
We'll unite our powers..."

"...AS ONE!" Rinne reasoned to herself, the blade burning with her aura as she cut across Choronzon's eyes. The Demon King screamed briefly but didn't seem to take any physical or noticeable damage. She quickly slashed at it multiple times, none getting through. "Damn it, I can't break through! Help me out everyone!"

Everyone nodded at that as Rinne jumped back, firing a beam at Choronzon's pink eye.

Tohka swung Sandalphon, Origami blasted beams with Metatron, Yoshino had Zadkiel blast a water spout form its mouth, Kotori fired the Megiddo, Kurumi charged and fired her Astra attack, Natsumi copied Sandalphon and did the same as Tohka, the Yamai twins fired an arrow from their Raphael's, Miku fires off her song, Nia sent more Kirigami out, Mukuro fired another beam, Mayuri discharged a burst of electricity, Maria sent vines rushing out to strike the eye, Marina blasted out poison, and Rio emitted a field to empower everyone for the attack.

All of the attacks culminated into a massive burst as they hit Choronzon, and when the smoke cleared... all of them gasped as the ultimate Demon King didn't even show any signs of a scratch, laughing maniacally at their futile efforts.

"Was that it? That was just pathetic, to think you'd try to defeat me with such useless power, well... perhaps I should just mock you until I destroy the world! That would be insulting and fun for your final moments!" Choronzon cackled.

"Damn you, let go of my son!" Rinne roared, rushing at Choronzon with Uriel held out. Just as she was about to strike...

"Satan."

Suddenly a tainted white beam of light suddenly blasted her away, Origami gasped as she recognized the beam.

"Hmm... no, I'll do this instead. Say hello to my children!" Choronzon declared, and soon a tainted white, dark red, deep black, dark orange, dark green and dark blue orb of light soon rush over in front of the group. At that moment... everyone gave the appropriate reactions as they saw every Inverse Form but Tohka and Miku's.

There were some differences in regards to Yoshino, Kurumi and Natsumi's however, which made sense as their Astral Dresses weren't the same as back when they had undergone their Inversions.

Kurumi's was probably the most surprising, as it seems hers was a mix of her current Astral Dress and her Corrupted Astral Dress although in a much more revealing form, having a slight bit of orange glow across the black and white color scheme of her rich girl dress/Gothic Lolita styled outfit, even having her corrupted form's hairstyle.

Yoshino's had her current hat gone, but the bunny ear-like extension still attached in the form of a split feather worn on her left ear, and the new level of its revealing nature made it look like a mix of a one-piece bathing suit and a two-piece bathing suit, mainly a bikini, with the green being swapped with black highlighted with blue.

Natsumi's had the usual theme of her hat suddenly gaining a face, the color scheme of orange and purple with green highlights on her current Astral Dress having become black with glowing dark green, and her outfit was so revealing now, it almost looked like she only had some clothing having over her unmentionables to keep them covered.
"Dang it, looks like I was right... the Inverse Forms, they've all gained independence. That likely explains everyone's Limited Astral Dresses. Choronzon must be using the spirit power in Shido to manifest them and its drained you all." Nia stated, biting her left thumb's nail slightly.

"Rio's confused Nia, why is there no Dark Miku? Or a Dark Nia or Dark Final Spirit present?" Rio asked confused, blinking a bit. "Does Rio not see them?"

Nia shook her head.

"No Rio, you didn't miss them. They don't exist is the reason they aren't present. Choronzon is likely limited to the Spirits that Shido's sealed so me, Miku and our fellow Spirit ally attack from somewhere don't have our power within him to make Inverse copies of." Nia answered, pointing at the pink eye.

"And your mom doesn't have one either because Choronzon itself is her Inverse Form, albeit manifesting via Shido since your mom doesn't have the Inversion taint to have an Inverse Form in the first place. Either way we-"

Nia soon notices Choronzon charging a blast from his pink eye, and Rinne soon gasps as the other Inverse Spirits' colors along with Inverse Tohka's soon surround the pink energy... a dark version of an attack she knew well.

"EVERYONE, MOVE!" Rinne warned, and the other Spirits all quickly did as Choronzon screams a powerful and enraged roar. The dark beam fires off across the area and the outside horizon... and soon a powerful wall of an explosion rips through the area.

Everyone stared in horror, minus Marina who just sweated at the sight as England and most of the area was shredded apart. Screams being heard at what was likely the final moments of many, or at least their despair at the devastation that might just lead to it.

"I knew it, that was an Inverse counterpart to my Harmonic Convergence attack! A... a Chaotic Divergence!" Rinne sweated, her eyes shaking at the prospect that even if they won today... there were many who'd likely never get to see tomorrow. "The only good thing we've got right now is that the recharge time is an entire hour."

"Then we've gotta stop him now!" Tohka shouted, soon rushing at Choronzon again and preparing to swing Sandalphon... only for her to gasp as she suddenly held out her angel to parry an attack. Her eyes widened as against all possibility, Inverse Tohka was clashing Nahemah against her again. "Impossible, I just took you out!"

"Does that mean Choronzon can re-spawn them endlessly?" Nia wondered, somewhat fearful. Marina sighs and gets her attention. "Alright, spill. What aren't you telling us?"

Marina turns her head before she feels Rinne trying to squeeze it.

"You tell us now or I'm breaking you." Rinne asked, a terrifying glare on her face.

"R-Right... you got it." Marina replied, sweating laser fluids before Rinne let go. "When we got that boy to undergo his Inversion, we used a hallucinogenic gas to make him see the illusion of Tohka dying. If Sovereign keeps showing up, its' likely because he's still refusing to believe she died, subconsciously allowing her Inversion to respawn."

"So in other words, the other Inverse Forms should only have a single life, but Inverse Tohka won't stop reviving until we take out Choronzon." Nia summarized, soon groaning. "That's just peachy.
Guess we have no choice, we need to take them all down. Without everyone's full power I don't think we'll do enough damage to beat Choronzon."

Choronzon laughs at that.

"That sounds fun, how about I give everyone without one someone to play with!?" Choronzon cackled before forming pink energy and making a total of seven fully pink silhouettes of Rinne that flew at Rinne and Rio, Mayuri, Nia, Maria, Marina, Miku and Mukuro. "There, now you all have playmates!"

Rio held onto Rinne's back, and soon all of them parries against their respective Rinne copy's attacks, meanwhile all of the Inversion rushed off and clashed with their respective counterpart as the sky light up. When Marina had the chance to knock her copy back, she looked at the other Inversions.

'This is my only chance, time to benefit the situation!' Marina thought with a smirk, soon moving her tentacles to reveal a section with a dark indigo sphere and then motioning the others, using the power in the first as a lock on as she aimed darts. 'Gotcha!'

Suddenly the darts fired in an instant, and each Inversion was unaware of something entering their bodies as Marina crossed her tentacles to guard herself again.

'That's it, now destroy all of them you stupid fools. You'll be helping me and father without even knowing it.' Marina smirked, laughing mentally.

Deep in space, Mukuro knocked the Rinne copy back, the copy readying her sword for its next attack as Mukuro stared at it.

"You believe you can challenge me, how unfortunate you are." Mukuro stated.

The copy rushed towards her, and then...

"Segva - Lock."

Mukuro tapped Michael unto the copy and then turned the Angel like a key, the copy suddenly found its body frozen in place as it shook in vain, unable to free itself and regain movement.

"...Jerez - Solution."

Mukuro's golden spirit power burst out of Michael and hit the clone, causing it to dissolve instantly. Mukuro soon turned back to the portal.

"You set your sights too high, ultimate Demon King." Mukuro stated.

Back in England, Choronzon suddenly shrieked in pain, and while still parrying her Inverse counterpart, Tohka noticed the sight of the yellow eye gem on Choronzon's body burst apart.

'It broke! Hey wait, if a copy went to that other Spirit then... that's it!' Tohka thought, knocking Inverse Tohka back for a brief moment. "Everyone, I saw the yellow gem break! We might be able to weaken Choronzon out if..."

Tohka briefly paused to parry against Inverse Tohka again.

"...you beat your respective opponents!" Tohka finished, soon knocked to the ground by Inverse
Tohka. Rinne and Rio looked at their copy and Rinne smiled a bit before motioning her eyes to her youngest daughter.

"Hey Rio, mind being the shield to your mama's sword? We'll beat this fake together." Rinne smiled, and Rio nods.

"Rio has Mama's back, let's show fake mama the power of Mama and Rio!" Rio cheered, and soon hugged Rinne tightly as the copy flew at them. Rinne shouts before clashing her blade against her fake's. Soon knocking it back a bit before the fake thrust her sword forward and fired a beam at Rinne. "You won't hurt Mama!"

Rio forms a barrier around Rinne, cancelling out the attack.

"Now that's a shield, so how about you deal with my sword!?" Rinne exclaimed, rushing ahead and piercing it through her fake's body... but to her surprise, the fake simply grabs it and tosses her and Rio forward, Rinne gasp as she held Rio close and they crashed through a few buildings. Once they landed, she looked at her daughter. "Rio, are you OK?"

"Rio's OK, is Mama OK?" Rio asked.

"Yeah, Mama's fine-" Rinne began, only to yelp in pain as she tried standing on her leg and her foot flared up. "Aw crap... I think I twisted my ankle on the impact. Better get back in the air or this'll slow me."

The two gasped as they hear the copy smash through the ceiling and soon stare at them. It began walking slowly, and Rinne quickly grabbed Uriel. Rio held onto Rinne's leg, now a bit frightened at what would happen next.

"Mama, Rio's scared!" Rio sniffled, and Rinne looked at her before sweating at her copy.

"I can't run... I have to do something, but how? I don't have my full power and this copy seems stronger than me. How... how do I win?" Rinne thought aloud, shaking a bit. "How do I protect Shido? Protect Mana? Protect everyone... and protect Humanity? What do I do?"

Before Rinne could react, her copy swung down and caused the building to collapse, Rinne and Rio fell to the ground and once they neared, Rio formed a barrier to soften the impact. They got up and suddenly the sight of people trying to run from the chaos noticed them, making Rinne gasp.

'Oh no, there's still a lot of people in the battle zone!' Rinne mentally gasped, right as she saw her copy drop down and prepare their battle. Everyone screamed as it swung down a slash wave, and Rinne gritted her teeth before rushing ahead and blocking it. Making the people gasp. "...Get to safety! I'll take care of this!"

Rinne thrust forward, firing off a beam to push her copy back. The people look surprised before she turned back at them.

"If you want to live, don't give up! Keep going and don't stop to look back!" Rinne yelled, and soon all of the civilians ran off as Rinne turned back to her copy as she got up. As she did she took Rio's hand in hers to her daughter's surprise. "It's been a long time, since I've felt this... felt fear."

"Mama?" Rio asked confused.

"And yet... there's nothing wrong with that, it's how you were even born after all." Rinne smiled, making Rio gasp. "Back then, if I hadn't been afraid, then I'd have stopped Westcott and then there would have been no reason I had you. In the end, I think losing was worth it to have you in my life."

Rio stared in awe, while Rinne recalled a certain memory.

In some abandoned building, all gray and heavily damaged, the then brunette Westcott while he wore a mask and a thin yet powerful armor rushed across the room and drew an energy sword, preparing to strike Rinne who held Uriel tightly in her hands. Rinne rushed forward in return and shouted as she collided her Angel with his energy blade, sparks flying as magical power ricocheted off the walls around them, breaking the structure further.

'Come on, give me something! I need to have something work against this bastard!' Rinne thought, trying to muster more strength and push him down. Unfortunately, Westcott simply gave a small smirk and jumped as he twirled the blade.

Rinne gasped as she saw it change into a cannon, blasting at the girl the second after. She tried to move Uriel to parry the blast, but it failed and struck her hard, knocking her back into the wall. She yelled before managing to push enough power out and cut the blast apart.

'No... not, not yet.' Rinne thought as she soon collapses onto her knees a bit, she was already severely weakened and fatigued, and taking that attack didn't do her any favors. She stared at Westcott angrily, growling as she regained her footing.

"You've reached your limit, just give up and let me take what I desire." Westcott smirked, holding out a hand mockingly to her. Rinne gave an angry look and answered by stabbing Uriel into the ground, causing a huge overflow of pink energy that surprised Westcott and knocked him off balance.

"Never, not after I've learned what you intend to do. I won't let you hurt this world or any other one more than you already have!" Rinne screamed, taking the chance to rush at him and slash him furiously.

In the process, she managed to strike his blade in its cannon form and force him to change it back into a blade as the cannon attachments were sliced into ribbons and exploded. Westcott smirks at this, slightly impressed.

"I'll oppose you to my last breath if I have to! Just like Seigo! I'm willing to die if it means destroying your dream and saving this world from you!" Rinne screamed, staring at him with anger. Westcott scowled in response to her words, hating the idealism behind them as he drew a second sword. The two collided again, and right as Rinne believed she had found an opening to end it and prepared to swing downwards... she gasped as she realized too late she had fallen right into a faint, and Westcott began his trap as his armor suddenly created energy tethers that locking her movements in midair.

"Fools who spout nonsense like dreams of peace and their pacifistic natures are the one thing I hate, survival of the kindest never will succeed to the survival of the fittest." Westcott said coldly, soon crossing his swords and creating a dangerous surge of power before he shot it at her, striking her hard.

Rinne screamed loudly as it hit, and then again as he slashed her across the abdomen, ripping across her outfit as his sword glowed black, preparing for an apparently fatal stab as he smiled darkly. Everything he had been waiting for, his dream, all of it was going to be realized right now.

'Damn it, this is it... I'm going to fall here.' Rinne thought, looking up as she saw the attack come down at her. She soon closed her eyes in acceptance. 'If that's the case then I'll choose how I lose, and I choose... for him to not win either!'
Before Westcott could react, Rinne aimed Uriel at herself and moved slightly to expose her chest. At that moment, Westcott's eyes widened in shock as he gasped, somehow able to tell what Rinne was thinking about to do.

"I'm sorry, please forgive me. I won't be coming home... Shido, Mana." Rinne said, quickly stabbing herself in the chest. A huge surge of spirit power spewed out of her body, and Westcott soon screamed as it hit him, overloading and damaging his body from the sheer magnitude of the power that flooded out.

Unaware to either of them, as Westcott reached out from the pain, a black mist trailed from his burning fingers and slowly slipping through the wound into the Sephira Crystals, causing a small taint to form of their surfaces before fading from view.

"NO!" Westcott shouted, seeing his dream fly away after being just in his reach as the Sephira Crystals soon rose out and dispersed across the sky, flying to the various ends of Earth and away from him. His eyes soon became soulless looking and his hair bleached white from the damage, essentially making him a living husk.

Rinne's body slightly bleed as it goes limp, her face shedding tears of guilt, realizing her promise to Shido and Mana had been broken as her form slowly began to fade away. However, as she noticed her flowing power blind Westcott, she suddenly widened her eyes and realized something.

"No... I can still leave them one last thing. Seigo, you may not be here but I still have our love... I'm giving them a guide, one last bit of family to be there for them one day." Rinne muttered weakly, and as she felt her body fade, she held her hand out and used some of the leaking mana of her body.

The end result caused that mana to be take form and create a being with a similar appearance to her, almost a child version of herself, she had given birth to Rio Sonogami. The newly born Rio soon blinked at her.

"My last child with you Seigo, I'll name her using our own names Rinne and Seigo... your name is Rio Sonogami." Rinne breathed, rubbing her cheek.

Rinne breathes with her eyes closed, soon opening them again as she imagined the copy of herself as what Westcott used to look like the day she lost to him, she held Uriel close before tossing Rio on her back once more.

"This is just like that time, the way this fake copy of me moves... the way it viciously strikes... it's the same as he used to. I may not be as strong as that day, but this time I know this much. I'm the one who's gonna win!" Rinne shouted, soon screaming as she ran forward, fighting off her twisted ankle as her copy rushed at her.

The two collided their blades with each other, and soon the two again with twice the force, after one more clash... Rinne noticed an opening to end it and prepared to swing downwards, with the fake copy soon moving to pull of the same feint from all those years ago.

"Mama!" Rio shouted, worried she fall for it.

Rinne stared in shock... and then smirked, dropping Uriel and throwing the copy off as its sword and Uriel clash oddly, as the Angel fell near the ground, Rinne jumped and spun upside down before swinging the sword upwards. The copy shook as Rinne landed back on her feet and finished cutting upwards, soon turning and screaming before cutting it straight down the middle.

"Mama... amazing." Rio breathed, soon the fake takes a few steps back before it shattered apart.
Rinne turned to her daughter and pet her head.

"Let that be an important lesson Rio. You'll often have to face your past, what's important is making sure that when you do, you don't make the same mistakes twice." Rinne smiled, soon hugging Rio as she spun around. 'Even more, the past can't be changed, so accept the future you've walked on. If not, fight for a better one.'

Rinne soon pulled out of the hug, holding Rio high in the air.

'Because I know for one, I wouldn't change the past if it meant I never had you as my child.' Rinne thought, smiling brightly.

Mayuri circled through the air before turning and firing off some Kerubiel's wing blades, the Rinne copy shifts around with incredible speed, making Mayuri gasp as it strikes her and knocks her to the ground. She gets up and shakes as she quickly crawls to a building and hides.

"Dang it, I need to recharge, but I don't sense any electricity anywhere. Where is it?" Mayuri wondered, looking around for a course. "Dang it, if I drained the last bit before Choronzon's Chaotic Divergence shot all the electricity around here then I'm screwed!"

*SLASH*

Mayuri's face goes blank as her eyes move to see the walls around her fall, the Rinne clone behind her. She jumps out of the way as it creates a slash wave. She pants as she tries to figure out something.

"What can I do? Please, I need help... Rio! I don't know, where are you!?” Mayuri called out in a panic, only for to leave herself open for the Rinne clone to slash her, knocking her through some of the rampaging elements. She screamed as it tore into her body and soon threw her across the ground. "Is this... is this the end for me?"

Mayuri began to black out, and soon her vision began to blur before finally blackening, and as it did... she felt something flash through her mind. A memory she had forgotten, or rather a memory that she had been forced to lose.

"-llo? Hello, can you hear me?" Someone said, and soon the person in question smiled as she realized they were responsive. "Ah! You can hear me, welcome to the world... well sorta. It'll be a while before you can fully come into it."

The sight of the pod that Mayuri was created in was seen, though right now the being that would eventually become Mayuri was just a bunch of primordial ooze. More specifically, this was Mayuri during the time her creation had first started, over 5 years ago.

"Oh right, I guess I should introduce myself. Don't worry, I'm new here myself, joined because hopefully I can find clues to the being that may have taken my sister away a month ago." The person chuckled, soon kneeling closer to the glass. "My name's Mildred, nice to meet you."

The ooze that would become Mayuri couldn't do much, but... almost as if to respond, it bubbled slightly and made Mildred giggle. She soon walked towards the control panel.

"Alright, now that you've finally developed a consciousness, let's give you an actual body." Mildred continued, soon typing a bit. "OK... first official work as a DEM mechanic, no pressure Mildred. Just the possibility you're going to accidentally kill someone before they're born in a physical form."
Mildred blinked.

"...Why'd I tell myself that, I gave myself nerves instead of calming them!" Mildred groaned, soon continuing her typing.

Soon enough, a few days go by as Mildred slowly works on giving Mayuri an actual form, working on the possible DNA blueprints that would create the being’s body before officially starting the procedure. After days of work, she got the resulting form that she felt would work.

"Yes, I've got it!" Mildred, sighing in relief. "Now let's see how you look after the genetic blueprints form your body."

Mildred initiates a button, and soon hears the door knocked on as she turned to see a staff member walk in bringing in Mildred's lunch.

"Oh shoot, did I forget again?" Mildred wondered, sighing as she took it. "Thanks, I need to not focus so much on this work."

"Be lucky we're paying attention since you've gotten results in creating Material B." The staff member groaned, soon walking out before turning to her. "Oh, if you have a moment, why not come to the main room? Apparently, we finally have a picture of the current [Zodiac]. She creamed [Nightmare] so easily."

Mildred’s eyes widened, remember how dangerous she heard Nightmare was with her estimated kill count of 10,000 civilians by non-Spacequake means. For another Spirit to actually overpower her, she had to see this. Putting her sandwich in her mouth, she follows the staff member. Soon arriving as a few others arrived to see the picture.

"Where is it?" Mildred asked, her sandwich still in her mouth.

"One second, its being sent over now." An analyst replied, soon getting it through. "Ah! It's a bit blurry and hard to fully make out, as they almost always are, but here she is. The Spirit [Zodiac]."

Mildred soon saw it, and soon her eyes widen as her sandwich dropped out of her mouth. Due to how blurry it was she couldn't confirm it at all. However, what the picture implied? That was another story. Golden blonde hair, golden yellow eyes, and super long hair that had some of it tied into two buns... she looked just like-

'Mukuro!?' Mildred thought, unable to believe what she was seeing. She wanted to deny it... but then it hit her. Mukuro's words that day, how everyone close to them had suddenly forgotten her, and the fact the DEM told her a Spirit could have done it.

Not to mention Mukuro stated after it happened that she and her parents were 'all hers', as if... she had done it!

'Oh my god, then... that Spirit might have not taken Mukuro, she might be Mukuro!' Mildred mentally gasped, the thought of how DEM hunted Spirits soon shook her. 'Which means she's in danger of being killed! Did they all know this, then that means... it isn't just here, we've been killing innocent humans!'

Mildred quickly ran out of the room, the others not noticing it but being confused once they knew she was gone. She rushed back to the room where Mayuri was being kept, locked the door as she did, and started grabbing everything she could.
"Worst of all, now I'm sure they had me make you to be a weapon... I can't let that happen. Not if you're really living." Mildred stated, soon gathering everything she needed and turning to the pod. "I'm leaving the DEM, but I'm going to bring you-"

Suddenly the sound of strikes were heard against the door to her horror, Edgar and three sword wielding wizards on the other side.

"You're not going anywhere, since it's clear you'll betray us..." Edgar stated, the wizards still attacking the door. "...You must be eliminated!"

"If I don't leave now, they'll capture me." Mildred gasped, looking at the pod as the body slowly began to form. "...I'm sorry, I can't take you with me. You can't form fast enough for me to guarantee we'd both escape. That doesn't mean I can't give you a future."

Mildred soon begins typing on the console, leaving some kind of hidden program that she labeled "H.E.A.R.T.", and soon leaving a hidden note that only someone wanting to save the being who would eventually become Mayuri would find.

"I don't know if we'll ever meet again, even if we do since you lack a full form right now, I won't know what you look like unless you remember me." Mildred began, soon rubbing the pod's glass.

"Though just know this, you aren't going to be a soulless puppet meant to hunt enemies... you're a living being and one day I swear you'll find someone who gives you the freedom to live like anyone else. The heart I gave you is proof, find it, and you'll find something more."

Mildred soon grabs something as the door breaks down and tosses it, trapping the wizards and Edgar in some kinda gum like foam. Mildred runs past them and starts escaping the DEM building as the alarm goes off.

"Someone stop her!" Edgar screamed, seeing Mildred rush off without anyone to catch her. An effort that would be in vain as she would successfully escape, eventually running into Ryouko who'd bring her to Ratatoskr.

Meanwhile inside the lab where Mayuri as being born, a red light glowed in the ooze that had started forming her shape and face, emitting a spark that let her briefly open her eyes before they closed.

Mayuri's eyes flashed back open, gasping as the memory fully settled.

"Mildred created me, and even though shouldn't could save me, she left something behind so Rio could. No... I can't fall here, I won't!" Mayuri declared, her eyes getting focused as inside of her, a sudden light formed... the H.E.A.R.T. program left inside her.

Suddenly, the program and her Sephira Crystal being to react and mingle, and the disfigured brown Sephira Crystal shakes before it flashes and its shape morphs into the same natural shape as the rest. Electricity began to generate on its own, and Mayuri screams as true lightning fires off her body, striking the Rinne copy to Mayuri's surprise.

"What? My powers, this is..." Mayuri gasped, soon feeling her heart and realizing her Sephira Crystal had evolved. It was now like the other Sephira Spirits, and Rinne and Rio's own special Sephira Crystals, and now she was stronger. "You gave me a heart... and now it's given me strength!"

Mayuri's eyes glow as Kerubiel shakes, soon shattering and taking a new form as it evolved into a
true Angel.

[We stand together master!]

The Rinne copy soon got up and charged at her again, but Mayuri zapped from her spot to its surprise, and soon twirled as metallic molecules in the air gather and wrap around the clone, hardening into a steel binding. Mayuri blasted lightning into the clouds above, making them spark.

"LIGHTNING STRIKE!"

Mayuri swings her hand down, and the copy was completely zapped, the metal acting as a lightning rod and amplifying the severity of the voltage before it finally exploded apart. Mayuri pants a bit and smiles, soon falling on her back.

"Everyone, do you see that? I... I've finally become strong enough to truly fight with you, not as just an ally, but an equal and friend." Mayuri smiled, groaning a bit as the soreness and pain finally shot into her muscles. "Yeah, this is gonna keep me here for a while. Guess I better enjoy the rest while I can."

Alright Mayuri, you've evolved your powers! You don't need to worry about the limitations you've had before. Albeit the one downside? You've gotta train from scratch, and you'll take a while to get used to them.

So, the fight with Choronzon led to everyone throwing everything at him with no success, he truly is the Ultimate Demon King. Now the Inverse Forms have joined the fray, and as Marina pretty much revealed, Shido's inability to accept the hallucination of seeing Tohka die is going to make Inverse Tohka keep reviving, meaning she won't fall unless they destroy Choronzon himself.

And those without an Inverse Form to fight are stuck with copies of Rinne, although it wasn't an issue for Mukuro who just curb-stomped her Rinne copy. The reason for that is because these copies are limited by Shido's memories and what's within the memories of the Spirits he's sealed. Shido doesn't know anything about Mukuro, so her clone was pathetic because it didn't have any knowledge of how to combat her.

Likewise, Rinne was technically sealed by Shido, so her copy has the memory of her fight with Westcott and made her copy fight like he did. Luckily, she learned from her past and won. Also, how'd you like the surprise that Mildred was the one who created Mayuri? Neither of them knew this before now because Mayuri's body was still ooze at the time, and because Mayuri doesn't mention she was DEM's Material B.

The scare begins... Choronzon actually caused some casualties, and with how everyone saw Rinne and Rio, not to mention the people who definitely saw Choronzon's forming, the world's gonna start to know the truth after this battle if nothing covers it up. I'll let the next chapters answer that detail though :3 *giggles* Just what is Marina planning? Whatever it is, she's already gotten her hand on some of Inverse Miku's power.

I guess we'll all see those answers come soon enough as this epic battle continues. So, until next time everyone, and stay awesome ^^
Now here's the rankings for the non-Sephira Spirits, if you wonder how they compare to the Sephira Spirits? Aside from Rinne both nerfed and at full power (where she's above Mukuro on the upper list), they're all weaker than Yoshino.

1. Rinne - She's the First Spirit and immune to many of the other Spirits' powers, need I say more?
2. Mayuri - Her electricity, lightning and metal elements are quite versatile, as is their usage in conjunction with Kerubiel.
3. Marina - While the same as Maria aside from having poison powers that oppose her plant powers, Marina's an AI based on an Inverse Spirit.
4. Maria - With her incredible processing speed as an AI and being able to manipulate the growth of plant life, she's more dangerous than she looks.
5. Rio - She's biologically 5 years old and has no offensive powers, being a purely defensive Spirit.

There you go, and to anyone curious where Rinne ranks among the Sephira Spirits when she's nerfed, she's between Natsumi and the Yamai twins. While before the events of this chapter, Mayuri was in 4th place cause of her limited reservoir.

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 99% ( Form a mana barrier automatically )

Origami - 95% ( Teleport Dodging )

Yoshino - 90% ( Dampen enemy territories )

Kotori - 92% ( Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force )

Kurumi - 87% ( Hide in his shadow, and only his )

Rinne - ( Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 84% ( Transform into Shiori )

Kaguya - 78% ( Flight )

Yuzuru - 78% ( Weight Manipulation )
Let's recap so far, Choronzon has shown to be able to shrug off every attack that's hit him so aside from screams that at best indicate minor damage, has manifested all the Inverse Forms of the Spirits' that Shido's sealed with Inverse Tohka in particular having an infinite life counter while he's still kicking, and he's made copies of Rinne to deal with everyone who lacks an Inverse Form or hasn't been sealed to manifest one.

So far Mukuro, Rinne & Rio, and Mayuri have taken out three of the Rinne copies, and Mukuro's victory shattered the yellow eye gem on Choronzon's form, implying the Sephira Spirits' victories will have an additional effect beyond merely weakening him... and yet somehow throughout all of this, Marina is using the whole situation to her and the DEM's advantage... why though? Well, she and Maria are next up on the fighting scene, so maybe that'll help give us some answers?

Regardless of that, the reality is the whole group is under a severe time limit... the hourly recharge time for Choronzon to be able to fire off another Chaotic Divergence attack and wipe out everyone with its destructive force, and with Rinne being unable to use her Harmonic Convergence as a counter due to still being nerfed from her full power after her arc's events... if they don't succeed by the time that hour runs up then they're dead.

Now it's time for the next round of battles to begin, and this time we're about to see our two AI Spirits take the stage, and finally you'll all get to see the story behind Marina and why she managed to actually get Westcott to care and accept her as a daughter where her game counterpart failed. Not to mention we've seen how Maria is born, but now you'll get to see her learn what it's like to be alive.

Oh, and I realized I didn't add it last chapter, but I should have put up Choronzon's bio sheet. That can wait for the end notes, so here's Mayuri's updated sheet before we begin. Enjoy everyone ^^

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-Mayuri Seraphina (Stabilized Sephira Crystal), Code Name: [Watcher]-

Angel: Kerubiel, the "Thunder Sanctuary" - Due to her Sephira Crystal's completion, Kerubiel has evolved from being a simple metallic transformation of her wings, now becoming its own set of futuristic looking wings attached to a structure (A/N: Think the canon Kerubiel without the black sphere part of its body, but more advanced looking and with the end of the 'tail' connected to the structure's top) that can attach to Mayuri's back or move independently based on Mayuri's thought and any electrical signals she sends it.

Kerubiel's abilities include launching numerous blast of lightning from every direction, or collecting metallic molecules in the air to manipulate in solid or liquid form. Additionally, it can morph parts of its body into golden chakrams as projectiles, melding its lightning and metal elements together. Kerubiel is also very durable, being able to take all kinds of attacks and will always defend Mayuri if she's wearing it.

- Alternate Form: Zeus - Kerubiel assumes a large drill-like form, which doubles as a form of
transportation for Mayuri. However, Kerubiel's primary use in this form is to charge as much lighting from its core to the drill's tip, super heating any metallic molecules and electric currents to form an explosive electromagnetic plasma blast.

- Powers: Mayuri's elemental as a spirit is Electricity and Metal, she gathers electrons to create weak electrical charges that Mayuri emits aren't truly lightning like that of Inverse Kotori. She can only manipulate metal by affecting the charge in their molecules. Because her Sephira Crystal is artificial in nature, Mayuri suffers from constantly burning out her power quicker due to a smaller reservoir to hold her spirit mana in, making her the weakest of the Spirits. As compensation, she has the easiest way to restore her power by simply recharging it by absorbing any form of electricity except lighting, and if she overcharges, she can enhance her strength temporarily while avoiding any danger from the overcharge.

Risk Factors: AA

Spacequake: A

Spirit's Astral Dress: AA

Angel Rank: AAA

Strength: 153

Consistency: 1 31

Spiritual Power: 225

Agility: 142

Intelligence: 12 0

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Chapter 42, S2: Choronzon Havoc, Part 7

The violent battle between the Spirits and Choronzon's evil army continues, and currently... the ultimate Demon King was seen screaming in pain as the results of the battles between Mayuri, and both Rinne and Rio against the respective Rinne copies he formed through his Samsara Armada technique had been destroyed, causing a rebound effect that created two cracks on the pink gem.

"No, that's impossible!" Choronzon roared, causing Tohka to briefly notice it as she took a moment to recover from her fight with Inverse Tohka.

'He's taking more damage, that must mean some of the others' won their fights!' Tohka thought, smiling a bit before she readied Sandalphon. She jumped back up into the air with a determined look. 'Hold on Shido, just a little bit longer!

Marina grunted as she tried to hold her Rinne copy in place with her Astral Dresses' wires, the copy movements getting particularly violent as they began to push them apart. Marina grunted more, slowly starting to sweat at the result she was getting.

"Damn it! What the hell is wrong with this copy, how does it seem to know how to fight me? Even if this Demon King has some kind of memory thing that boy shouldn't..." Marina asked herself, soon
widening her eyes. "That damn Maria! It's due to her, she's talked about me and my powers, hasn't she!? That's how it knows my tricks!"

The Rinne copy soon slashes at her wires with her sword, causing Marina to scream as while they weren't cut, she could unfortunately feel through them and the sword strike felt like a phantom stab strike. She blows on it before turning at it angrily.

"I think you need to get drunk on some acid, and I mean literally!" Marina screamed, her wires stretching back before opening and spewing out a sickly colored liquid. The Rinne copy kept dodging with little effort as everything hit by the liquid began to corrode as the poisonous liquid consumed it.

"Stay already you stupid little piece of-"

The next dozens of words Marina were all drowned out by all the nearby structures her poison caused to collapse, though based on the copy's reaction... they were all extreme swear words that the real Rinne would never want Rio to hear.

The Rinne copy soon used some of the collapsing structures and suddenly jumped and moved around at speeds Marina couldn't keep up with. Marina gasped as the Rinne copy zoomed at her with its sword held up, she moved her wires in front of her.

"TAKE THIS!" Marina screamed, blasting out poison gas.

Unfortunately, that ended up being a bad idea... the Rinne Copy had no mouth for gas to work on and she left herself open for a stab through the chest. Marina coughed heavily and a blue liquid leaked out of her mouth as her blood equivalent. The copy ripped it out, preparing to slash down again right as Marina managed to catch it.

"Don't you dare... don't you dare think this is all I can do!" Marina growled, surprising the copy as her dark spirit power begins to leak out and push her attack back. Her golden eyes glow dark as she does... and soon the copy gives a silent scream as her wires dug in, spewing venom as they began slowly ripping it apart.

"I began as nothing but some dumb AI, I did everything to please him! I knew he'd throw me away if I didn't mean anything and wasn't worth anything to him. I clawed my way to this point, all for the sake of my father. If you think I'm this weak then think again. I'm the one who defied all the limitations of a machine and became the threat that'll murder you right here and now!"

Inside a laboratory, the sight of a black digital light was seen forming within a computer. The data shifts as it forms two golden lights for eyes and sees a few people through the lab computer, and then... the sight of Westcott and Ellen.

"So, how is the development working so far?" Westcott asked, making the head engineer turn to her.

"Ahead of schedule and expectations, the AI should have her form manifest in only one more day. We've already decided to give her the name Marina since her appearance is already meant to deceive enemies." The engineer replied, making Westcott smirk. "What plans do you have for her?"

Westcott chuckles.

"I guess we'll see, after all... just because we make it doesn't mean it'll work. A failure that gets no result can always be disposed of and replaced. Now if you'll excuse me, Ellen and I have some non-work related business to take care of." Westcott answered, soon walking out with Ellen following
As they left, no one realized the Marina AI was aware enough to recognize and be aware of the situation. She processed the data she saw... and the rings she noticed around the fingers of the two who walked out. After that she soon set the identity catalysts within her matrix that would forever define her life.

"Failure... means disposal... disposal... means death... results matter... must prove I work... must prove worth..." Marina said, with no one but herself to hear her words. Soon Westcott and Ellen's images registered as specific terms in her mind. "Must... gain acknowledgement... from father and mother! Must become worthy! MUST SUCCEED!"

Soon the next day Marina's body was fully designed as she became a complete AI. She opened her eyes as she officially awakened and saw Westcott stare at the screen she was presently residing in.

"Hello there, I'm Sir Isaac Westcott, managing director of DEM Industries. You may already know this, but for the sake of introductions, it's good to meet you Marina, the new AI of the DEM matrix." Westcott introduced, some engineers sweat dropping at his dramatic and over long greeting.

"...Marina, name identified and registered. Role established and acknowledged." Marina answered, registering her name officially. Westcott stared and soon noticed Marina's eyes glow, making him raise an eye.

"Error. Analysis indicate my programming is currently inferior to my task, accessing worldwide internet for necessary information to apply correction and implementations for this irregularity."

Suddenly in moments, Marina's data updated and she gave a more smug and cruel looking expression.

"Necessary data downloaded, upgraded recognized and complete. All systems reed a 237% increase of functions. I believe success is what you wish for?" Marina asked, surprising Westcott slightly, but still very little to matter to him. "Hmm... based on expression don't consider this enough. I shall rectify that father."

"...Did you just me father?" Westcott asked, actually caught off guard by that.

"Ah, my apologies, is that terminology incorrect? You claim to be the MD of this organization and therefore the one who authorized my creation. Based on my data matrix, that means by all technicalities you are my associated parental figure, and your wife is therefore my associated maternal figure. Is this wrong?" Marina asked.

"Even if it is, I shall do any necessary means to prove as such. I shall call you Sir Westcott for now father, but I intend to prove myself. No matter what I must do, sacrifice or betray to achieve this. So, I hope you enjoy the challenge of earning your acknowledgement."

Marina soon vanishes from the screen, surprising all the Engineers with what had happened with the AI they developed, while Westcott looked with mild interest. While he didn't give a care for the AI or her definition of him, he did at least seem amused for the bold claim she made.

Westcott was seen watching some of the prototypes for the Bandersnatch units pathetically try and fight against Virtual Intelligence copies of the Spirit [Berserk], seeing them thrown around and only not breaking because the opponent wasn't real.
"Pathetic, these won't do anything. Scrap them and start over." Westcott sighed, making the Mechanic sigh as he prepared to hit a button, only for Marina to deny him access as she entered the system. Westcott noticed this. "Marina, what are you doing?"

"Forgive me, but based on my analysis this is a large error in judgment. The fault you keep making is believed to be in the parts. However, I have noticed more irregularities in the programming and how it's been executed." Maria replied, soon using the console to transfer to a single Bandersnatch.

The DEM automaton began to shake as it's body was forcefully changed from within, suddenly its optical converged into a single eye light instead of multiple and its body position shifted. Suddenly, its upper half shifted and gave it a flight form.

"This is..." Westcott stated, surprised what the Bandersnatch had just done. Suddenly a territory field deploys as the single Bandersnatch flies forward, forming a territory barrier to block the Spirit VI before grabbing it and twisting her limbs, soon smashing its head into the ground. "...actually working? Marina, continue if you wish."

"At once Sir Westcott. Updating adapting matrix, applying Spirit data in conjunction to real time combat adaptation." Marina replied, and soon the Bandersnatch jumped off and slashed down as the Spirit VI tried to get up, becoming three times more brutal than the other Bandersnatch had been before it slammed on the VI's head to destroy it.

"Bandersnatch prototype unit 01, Spirit VI destruction has succeeded." Marina smirked, and the Mechanic looked surprised. Westcott still didn't seem impressed, however... he smirked a bit and looked at the system Marina was currently in.

"Marina, this is a result no one's achieved. I believe by now I can say you've proven you are not someone we can dispose." Westcott said, making Marina's eyes widen. It wasn't him accepting her... but he had essentially said "good job" to her. Marina smirked, and soon began analyzing what to do next.

Marina continued her work to prove herself and already showed major accomplishments throughout a single day, improving many faulty systems, upgrading realizer technology and advancing projects at an accelerated level, and even compiling accurate data while purging false data.

Days turned into weeks, and then weeks turned into months, and Marina showed no signs of stopping her efforts to get Westcott to finally acknowledge her enough to let her call him father freely. Soon enough, Westcott saw her deploying what would be the final prototype of Bandersnatch units.

"Now, destroy the Spirits!" Marina declared, making the Bandersnatch all light up as they rushed at a Spirit VI of [Diva], [Witch] and [Efreet]. In moments, the VI were all overpowered and smashed to the ground. The Bandersnatch pulling their limbs to tear them apart, soon destroying all the VIs. The computer stated it took them 8 seconds.

"Impressive, I believe there's no doubt the Bandersnatch will be useful when we finally show those greenhorns at Ratatoskr their final moments." Westcott declared, soon walking out... but Marina never heard it. Even after all of this?

Her eyes shook in anger and her processors nearly overheated as she kept trying to figure out what she needed to do. She made the Bandersnatch automatons to be artificial wizards he could deploy en mass, upgraded Realizer technology, began construction of the DEM flagship known as the Arbitel.
"What more do I need to do to get you to accept me father!?” Marina screamed angrily, soon managing to overheat and glitch the system briefly. Soon enough she saw the glitch bring up the plan to attack the current [Angel]... and then it hit her as she smirked cruelly.

"Of course, I get it now. He wants the Spirits... so I just need to kill one and take their Sephira Crystal to gift him! If you want to please someone then get them something no one else has ever managed to give them! This is just perfect!"

Marina soon transferred herself to the Arbitel as its haul was being made and gained some data from its systems, soon moving to the engineering and mechanics quarters as she began developing something on her own, using a minor birth of studied spirit powers, and amplifying the quantity slightly with some poisons.

"That's it, this will be how I do it!" Marina cackled, soon looking at the sight of the android copy of her AI form before she downloaded herself into it. She soon opened her eyes in it, and focused as she formed her Astral Dress. "Marina Arusu is not just a Spirit based AI anymore, she's an actual Spirit. One about to kill [Angel]!"

The current host of Metatron flew around, panting heavily in horror as she tried to get away from the one chasing her, she landed as she tried to get a brief moment of reprieve... only for a few wires to grab and strangle her, covering her mouth as she could only give muffled screams.

"Oh, I'm sorry..." Marina cackled, soon showing her upside face to the Spirit before her, showing her sadistic looking grin to her. She grabbed the current [Angel] by the face and some of her wires motioned themselves and jabbed into her body. "...but I said you were going to die, meaning living is against the rules!"

Marina cackled as the wires blasted out a storm of poison gas and acid, the former blinding the whole area as it began to melt apart. When it was over, Marina smirked darkly as the Metatron Crystal's spherical form bounced across the ground, covered with some of the acid she had just sprayed.

"I did it, I killed a Spirit! Now... her Sephira Crystal is mine!" Marina declared, reaching out to grab... only for her to suddenly notice the sight of some person shaped mosaic diving from the sky faster than she could react and taking it. "What!? Give that back, it's mine!"

The mosaic stopped and turned, letting Marina see her invisible form briefly, her systems registering her a Spirit... the elusive and enigmatic Spirit the DEM knew as [Phantom], the apparent guardian of the Sephira Crystals.

"(No can do, sorry. I don't give Sephira Crystals to the people in the DEM who murder innocents just to take them for their own. Hopefully, the next person I give Metatron to will survive someone like you...)" Phantom answered, soon flying away.

"No!" Marina screamed, flying at her to try and steal it back... only for Phantom to fly up and teleport away. Marina stared and then screamed as she suddenly saw the 'Lost' reading appearing.

Marina came back to the DEM, soon sitting in the room she was born in as she just sat on the floor's center, unable to believe she had failed. She gripped her clothes as she tried to avoid shedding any of her laser fluid tears. At that moment, she heard the door open and turned to see Westcott and Ellen walk in.
"Sir Westcott..." Marina said quietly, pretty sure she was about to be scrapped and deleted for what she had pulled. ".You've heard by now haven't you, go ahead. Do whatever you want, I don't care anymore, like you never had."

"On the contrary, I'm here to congratulate you." Westcott answered, making Marina's eyes widen a bit. "What you did was sneaky, underhand, deceptive and a betrayal of many. You lied, cheated, stole and disobeyed orders all to take something for yourself... just like I'd have done in your shoes."

Marina turned at him in shock, Ellen just giving a silent nod of approval.

"To think you would be so much like me, even down to having managed to kill a Spirit. Perhaps I underestimated my daughter too much." Westcott stated, causing Marina's eyes to widen. Did he just call her his... "Weren't you the one who said you'd do anything to hear that?"

"Father, you..." Marina said, her eyes shaking before smirking and looking at him. "I told you I'd do it, and I did. So why don't we talk about an idea I have to truly smash Ratatoskr to oblivion. I think mother would like it too."

Ellen made an odd face once she heard that.

"What did you say?" Ellen asked, making Marina raise an eyebrow.

"You never told her that part? Wow, for a married couple you two barely show it half the time." Marina asked Westcott, making Ellen's go white as she showed shock to that comment. "Ah, now mother gets it."

"W-What!? Don't call me that, I'm not listening to it!" Ellen screamed, making Marina smirk while Westcott just watched amused. "Stop smiling, both you!"

"Let that idiotic Choronzon know this, he can enjoy today because that's his only day to live! I'm striking that false devil down so the true one, my father, will eventually claim his rightful spot as such!" Marina roared, soon ripping the Rinne copy apart, giving a dark glare and smile at it. "This is only the beginning for us!"

The Rinne copy's pieces soon shatter apart, and Marina begins grinding her foot over a spot where a fragment faded away, cackling loudly at her victory.

"Today is just a stepping stone, my father survived you Choronzon... and we'll survive everything else. Just wait and see for yourself." Marina smirked, looking at the sky where the Demon King began to violently shake. "Because the others are going to crush you, and you're going to die."

She walked off to rejoin the other Spirits as Choronzon's third crack formed on the pink gem eye.

Maria zipped across the area as the Rinne copy slashed through the buildings behind her, Maria dove at the ground and dove her wires into it, making a bunch of vines grow to constrict the fake... only for it to slash through them.

"Oh crap!" Maria gasped, removing her wires before rolling out of the way as the blade struck where she had been standing moments prior. She panted a bit as the Rinne copy turned to her with her sword ready once again. "Glad you're only as strong as Rinne while nerfed or I'd have been dead already."

Maria jumped as the copy rushed at her again, soon using its shoulders to launch back into the air as
she flew off. As she did, the copy zoomed after her, but Maria spun and soon a storm of leaves spun out behind her, blinding the copy as they flew into her.

"Just a little more, I just need a bit more time to think on how to counter this thing." Maria said to herself, soon breathing as she tried to calm her nerves. "I have to win... for my friends, for the people who taught me what it means to live."

Maria's eyes closed as she remembers the days after she gained her body and her name.

Maria looked around through her computer screen as the people of Ratatoskr did their work, Reine soon walked by holding some of her usual coffee and noticed Maria was doing anything, making her back track as the AI noticed her stop by the screen.

"Maria, is there any reason you're not doing anything right now? I mean... AIs don't really not do anything, they at least process data or something if they're bored." Reine asked, making Maria give a confused look as she tried to say something, but couldn't word it into words. "Maria?"

"Sorry, I guess I've been distracted by a single question that comes from the fact I'm alive due to being a AI with a soul." Maria replied, making Reine look and nod slightly as she listened. "Oh, I should tell you! Right. Well, the question is... what does it mean to live? To be alive?"

Reine blinks a bit.

"Whoa... that explains a lot. Sometimes I forget you're not the usual kind of AI." Reine replied, soon taking a drink of her coffee.

"You consume a lot of that, are you OK?" Maria asked.

"I'm fine, it's just to keep my fainting spells from happening too often." Reine answered, making Maria's eyes widen. "Not what you think, the First Spacequake gave me the unfortunate side effect of being unable to sleep. I've tried, even knockout gas doesn't work."

Maria sighed in relief.

"Well, if its distracting you then just upload yourself in your android body and socialize. Who better to teach you than the people who are living every day in the organic sense? At least that's what I think." Reine suggested, making Maria think.

"Alright, guess I don't have anything else to do." Maria said, soon waving before vanished from the screen. Soon running out in her android body. "Alright, I'm physically here now! So where do I start?"

Reine wonders on that.

"How old do you consider yourself mentally?" Reine asked.

"Uh... I guess at least a teenager, I do look like one after all." Maria answered, unsure but feeling it was sorta correct.

"Then go talk with the AST, we're getting a lot of new people and they're gonna be socializing themselves." Reine answered, making Maria nod as she heads over to the AST's quarters. "Huh... I didn't notice until now, but I'm acting like a mother to her."
Maria soon found herself in the AST's quarters as Ryouko was waiting for some new recruits and at that moment they came, a trio that would be eventually known as Claudia, Sarah and Hannah. Ryouko noticed the middle school students as turned to them.

"Ah, you must be the new recruits. I'm Captain Ryouko Kusakabe. Your names?" Ryouko introduced before asking the big question.

"Claudia Yuusaki, Year 1 student at Raizen Middle School." Claudia introduced.

"Sarah Kazaguchi, the same as her." Sarah introduced.

"Hannah Mitabana, ditto." Hannah introduced.

"Alright, welcome to the team. We'll get you some wiring suits and then you can begin your basic training." Ryouko replied, soon seeing the three of them all giggling to her chagrin. She dealt with these kinds of people often since the AST was mostly teenagers. "Please tell me you don't think this is just for fun?"

The three stopped at that.

"Well it's not hard, everyone's says you killed one of DEM's Adeptus 2's. They can't be that hard to beat." Claudia replied, and Ryouko stared at that.

"I killed her by chance, which was due to thrusting an electric wire on her, and even then, it took her CR-Unit exploding. If you want proof to know it isn't gonna be easy... just look at this, she did all of it to me." Ryouko replied, soon lifting her shirt as the trio screamed at the sight they saw, begging for her to pull her shirt down.

"Not thinking it's so easy now are you? Learn that now, because you only get to blame yourselves if you die for failing to learn it."

The trio all fall onto their butts and sit down in shock, Ryouko walked off to get some wiring suits as Maria blinked and walked near the trio, getting their attention as they saw her staring at them.

"Oh, hey there. Are you a new recruit too?" Sarah asked.

"Uh... no, I'm not with the AST. I do work with Ratatoskr. My name's Maria Arusu, and I'm the organization's AI aid." Maria replied, making the three stare at her in surprise. "What? Did I say something weird?"

Suddenly they start laughing at that.

"Right, you're an AI. That's a good one. Seriously, so what school are you from?" Hannah asked.

"You really don't believe me, huh? Here's my proof." Maria replied, soon opening up part of her chest to show her android body's parts, making the trio scream in shock. "This is an android body I use when I need to do something outside the Ratatoskr's matrix. Believe me now?"

The three nodded.

"The reason I'm here right now is because I'm curious, I'd like to know what it means to be alive. I'm not completely sure."

The three looked at her as they said that, soon all getting smiles as they had an idea. Maria blinked at that, unsure if she should be excited or worried about the oddity of how they were choosing to
A few years had passed, and Maria was a little more versed in what it was like to be alive, but... she still felt she hadn't found the right person to help her give an answer. While she was checking up on the Lion, Falcon and Alligator CR-Units belonging to the AST trio she had become familiar with, she soon saw them come in with a new girl.

"Hmm?" Maria wondered, walking closer as she saw the nervous girl look around.

"T-This is... and you've been part of whatever goes on here for three years?" She asked, nearly biting her nails.

"That's right Katie, and we think you'll be great here." Claudia replied, slapping her back lightly to Katie's surprise. She and the rest of her trio soon noticed Maria. "Oh! Hey there Maria, we forgot you were tuning up our CR-Units. This is our classmate Katie, we'd like her to join the AST, why not show her around while we get Ryouko?"

Maria blinked and considering she was finished checking on with the trio's CR-Units, she shrugged in agreement.

"Alright, I guess I can do that. There's nothing else I need to do right now." Maria replied, making the three grin as they ran off. Leaving a nervous Katie with Maria. "Hey there, my name's Maria Arusu. I'm an AI that runs the organization's computer matrix."

"You're an AI? AN actual artificial intelligence?" Katie asked surprised, Maria nodding. "Whoa... that's kinda cool. Uh, my name's Katie Nakajima, and uh... I'm not really sure if I'm gonna be good here. All I really did according to Claudia was apparently save a Spirit from some bad DEM people?"

Maria stares in shock.

"What did you do?" Maria asked.

"Uh... stole one of their dropped rifles to shoot their flying realizers and make the Spirit get away?" Katie asked, making Maria's jaw drop. "Yeah, not really impressive, is it?"

"Not impressive!? Katie, you hit moving targets that tend to normally have a 30% hit rate!" Maria answered, making Katie show shock this time. "See, no wonder they want you to join. We don't have anyone with such amazing long-range potential and the accuracy for it."

Katie blushed a bit.

"Y-you really think so?" Katie asked, making Maria nod. "W-well... if you think so, then I will join. I've never been too good at much besides being accurate with throwing sports balls and such, so... if it helps people then I'll do it. Thank you."

Maria soon felt Katie hug her, making Maria blink as she felt something strange. Katie soon ran off after her three friends while Maria felt her chest. She blinked once more, and after a while...

"So strange, I don't have a heart and yet... my chest feels so warm? Is this what it means?" Maria asked herself. "Is this what it's like to live? To feel what you do, to experience this warmth?"

Maria opened her eyes at that moment, giving a focused look as she back flipped surprising the
Rinne copy who just got through her storm of leaves. She spun around, smacking the Rinne copy with her wires before impaling them in the ground again.

"The lives of some are short, the lives of others are long. The one thing that's always the same between them..." Maria replied, soon looking at the copy before raising her hand out to send a storm of vines. "...They want to feel the joy that comes from the time they have!"

Some of the vines wrap around the copy, and it tries to get out, but isn't fast enough as the vines pierce through it. Soon it falls to the ground and shatters, and from a distance, Choronzon screams in pain as a fourth crack forms on its pink eye gem.

"I may not get to truly experience that, as my dream is to one day be more than just an AI. Even if that dream never comes true..." Maria smiled, looking a leaf that fell into her hands before the wind blew it away. "...I'll enjoy the fact I'm here."

Maria soon hears the sound of someone gagging, turning to see Marina making them.

"What's you pacifists and you're we can all live garbage, dear god!" Marina shouted, shaking her head to clear the thoughts out of her mind. "You people are gonna realize why the strong and those bold enough to sacrifice others will always be on top! I'll prove that the die I kill you, you hear me!?"

Maria smiled at Marina, and her dark counterpart sweated a bit at that.

"Why are you smiling?"

"Maybe you might see us enemies, but... I get the feeling that maybe one day we'll see each other beyond that. Isn't that right sis?" Maria smiled, making Marina's eye twitch before she screamed at that.

"We are not siblings! You only happen to share a last name because you were trying to be all 'I wanna honor her' despite I tried murdering everyone you know! Dear god, stop being so naïve!" Marina growled, walking off before tripping over a trash can. Marina blinks at that. "That was tripping, not me being naïve!"

Maria sweat drops as Marina gets up, limping a bit before she follows.

Nia sees the Rinne copy after her zip and zoom at her with sonic speeds, she dodged each attack as she looked at the situation before her and began thinking. Based on how easily Mukuro dealt with her Rinne copy while the others she noticed had to struggle a bit...

"Ah, I get it. The sealed spirits' and Shido's memories have given you ways to fight and have a fighting style meant for countermeasures, with only the inability to have new powers due to being copies of Rinne limiting you. As is the fact you can't learn anything past Choronzon's birth." Nia smirked, causing her Rinne copy to flinch.

"Well unfortunately for you then... neither of them has seen every trick I can use, even the Kirigami were only one of many hidden tricks. Here's another." Nia continued, starting by forming more Kirigami soldiers to surround the copy... who suddenly noticed them not moving. "Now see my world of stories... THOTH!"

Nia slams Raziel open and begins writing in it throughout every page, causing the book to glow as suddenly a bunch of random beings and creatures, many being fictional came into view as they manifested out of Raziel's pages to the copy's horror.
"This is my living storybook, the works my mind taking physical form. Now... let me show you how an imagination can run wild." Nia smirked, writing {A loud sound makes every creature Thoth manifest go crazy} in Raziel's pages before she smirked playfully. "Enjoy."

Suddenly a loud explosion goes off and the creatures all go crazy, causing the Rinne copy to be swarmed in the stampede, slowly sinking before shattering apart inside of the massive swarm. Nia closes Raziel and makes them all disappear before turning to see Choronzon screaming as they silver gem eye breaks apart.

"For a so called ultimate Demon King, I think pulling this trick off and letting himself get weaker was really stupid." Nia stated, soon flying off to gather the others who had won their fights. As she did, Choronzon's pink gem eye gives an angry look at the battlefield, his spirit power flaring out in anger.

'I swear, you may think you have a chance, but you'll learn the hard way that you still have 0% even after all you've done!' Choronzon thought with rage, some of the roots holding him into the ground slowly starting to rip out without anyone seeing them. 'This is just the prelude to your destruction!'"

And that everyone is how Marina was able to get Westcott to recognize her, and became the cruel person she is in this fanfic. The dark ambition, insane belief if becoming almighty and sadism of Westcott with the incredible pride of Ellen mixed together. Yeah, she's their daughter alright, and Origami's one predecessor ended up being unlucky to get caught in a fight with her.

To anyone who asks what kind of injury that Ryouko was hiding under her shirt when she flashed it to the trio? It happens to be... a fake injury! She doesn't actually have a real injury there, but since the AST is mostly teens, she puts a fake injury on for when new recruits join so she can flash it and make them think twice about treating being an AST member like some game. Considering she nearly died when she fought Victoria, she has good reason to do this.

Well we've finally got the AI Spirits finishing their fights, and Nia finally reveals her Thoth trick to an unfortunate Rinne copy, we hope you rest in... pieces! *laughs heavily*

Unfortunately, it seems like Choronzon is still cocky about victory... or he knows their efforts haven't done anything to give them a chance at victory, it better be the former or the Spirits are in trouble 0_0

With that clear, check out Choronzon's data sheet below and I'll see you all in the next chapter. Until then, stay awesome everyone!

-Ultimate Demon King - Choronzon, aka [Inverse Shido]-

Demon King: Choronzon - Tree Form, the "Dark Yggdrasil of Endless Annihilation" - While the true form of Choronzon should be a twisted, dark and jagged version of Uriel... due to the uniqueness of the Inversion being born of multiple powers, Choronzon has instead manifested its consciousness as its own body and overtaken Shido by manifesting as a dark version of the tree that Rinne created when her powers were overloading via taking over the DEM's Main Branch building as its body.
Because the Demon King's consciousness has evolved beyond a mere Angel or Demon King, Choronzon is both the Demon King and the wielder simultaneously from the massive influx of power he carries. Not only does Choronzon contain all of Uriel's normal abilities, but by Shido's memories and those of the Spirits he's managed to seal, Choronzon has developed an arsenal of abilities to combat the other Spirits with the exception of Mukuro who Shido doesn't have any information of, and Nia who's managed to hide a few of her powers.

- Powers: Choronzon possesses all of Uriel's abilities in an amplified form, and managed to create many more powers all based on the memories of Shido and the Spirits he's managed to seal, only limited by what Shido and the other Spirits know, and what they knew at the moment he manifested from Shido's Inversion, being unable to properly combat or counter Nia's Kirigami for one example.

- Spirit Ability: Chaotic Divergence - The Inverse counterpart of Rinne's version of the Harmonic Convergence attack, there's nothing truly different about visually it other than the spirit power that uses it being the colors used by the dark spirit power and having even more destructive force. What's most terrifying about the attack is that Choronzon can use it again an hour after a prior use.

- Spirit Ability: Samsara Armada - Choronzon makes fully pink energy copies of Rinne, which are noted to have some memory of the opponent they're set to face in both being a mirror image, or maybe a past foe. Their main weakness however is if there's incomplete or no info on their enemy, they will be easily overpowered and each one beaten will weaken Choronzon. Also, if a Sephira Spirit beats one of the Rinne copies, it breaks the respective gem on Choronzon and weakens him even more than another Spirit's victory would.

- Spirit Ability: Inverse Incarnation - Choronzon draws a large among of the sealed power in Shido, manifesting it as the Inverse Forms of the Spirits he's managed to seal, forcing the originals to be unable to manifest their Astral Dress beyond a limited state. The incarnations of the Inverse Forms are as powerful as their originals, and lack the morality they would normally have if the originals were using them. Luckily, if they are destroyed they don't revive and the respective gem on Choronzon breaks to weaken him.

- Spirit Ability: Demon Queen Revival - Because Shido's Inversion happened due to seeing a hallucination of Tohka being killed right before his eyes, Choronzon has managed to use Shido's subconscious refusal to accept she's died in order to give the Inverse Tohka he's made using the Inverse Incarnation Ability the power to revive herself shortly after her destruction. The only way to stop this is for Choronzon to be destroyed, Shido to realize Tohka's alive, or... something else entirely.

- Spirit Ability: Tree of Death - Choronzon removes his roots from the ground, and once he removes them fully, the Demon King becomes the one thing that amplifies his already great threat to a truly terrifying level... mobile.

Risk Factors: X

Spacequake: SSS

Spirit's Astral Dress: X
Angel Rank: X

Strength: 30 0

Consistency: 260

Spiritual Power: 320

Agility: 270

Intelligence: Unknown

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 99% (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 95% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 90% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 92% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 87% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 84% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 78% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 78% (Weight Manipulation)
You've all been waiting, and after dealing with all the Rinne copies up until now, there's only one left for Miku to take out, and then finally... FINALLY! We get to see the Inverse Form fights! Also, to truly show how serious the Inversions are about fighting their respective counterparts, this is the first time (and maybe last, I don't know yet) in the fanfic you'll be seeing Kaguya and Yuzuru fight solo, because their Inversions have no intention of wasting the chance to use instability the two have when separated to their advantage.

And it seems like Choronzon starting to de-root, it's only a matter of time before he might start getting mobile and when that happens... well the Chaotic Divergence attack will only get all the more dangerous and threatening if that's the case, and while Mayuri's gotten a power up, the others still can't use their full Astral Dresses and worse, Marina's still got her own agenda despite she's aiding the group... perhaps Choronzon's defeat will leave something that can benefit Westcott somehow? Oh boy... we better hope that doesn't happen, or at the very least the Spirits destroy it before she can grab it.

Oh, here's something you might like, we'll be getting a bit more of seeing the past moments with the Spirits, including moments we didn't see before, and in the case of the Yamai twins and Yoshino we'll actually get to see the day they became Spirits since so far, they're the only Spirits among the sealed Spirits who I've never shown a flashback for (Yoshino at best for a brief glance in the Rinne Utopia movie), we won't see Nia's yet though, that's not until her arc finally comes around :3

Now before we begin the chapter, I think some of you remember how I once had a one-shot planned for showing how Tohka and Shido first met in the story listed on my profile, but later mentioned it would be fused into this season? Well if you didn't or never saw it, then that's alright because that's the lesser part of what I'm about to say, if you did... then know it's not that far away. The moment Tohka springs into action is when you'll finally see it, and it just happens to connect to why the arc's emotion is Hope.

Now with that done, Round 1 of Normal vs Inverse Spirit fights... *hits gong* BEGIN!

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Chapter 43, S2: Choronzon Havoc, Part 8

The final Rinne copy rushes through the sky as it flies after Miku, the Sound Spirit twirling around it as she danced across the sky. The copy's unseen face was seen throwing a tantrum as it couldn't hit her. The bad news for Choronzon was that while Shido had seen Miku's abilities, he didn't seem them in an offensive sense aside from the sonic scream, it had mostly just been her supportive powers and her voice controlling people.

"Aw, don't make such an angry posture, it ruins your cuteness." Miku said, forming behind the copy. Said Rinne copy looked before swinging, missing as Miku just teleported away and then back, a blush on her face. "Would you like me to sing for you?"

The copy thrust her sword forward, Miku flipping overhead as it stumbled into a building wall, wobbling out a bit dazed. The copy angrily rushes at her once it regained its bearings, holding its sword out.
"You could have just said no, but I think I'll still sing for my friends. So listen well." Miku giggled, soon a mana barrier formed around her and the copy suddenly screeched to a halt at the unfamiliar technique. It began to run off, only for Miku to move and follow it. "Aw, you don't wanna stay for the show? Alright, then here's the express exit."

Miku spun as Gabriel formed, slamming her fingers down on the keys as she unleashed her voice, it spread out from the barrier like an explosion of sound and hit the Rinne copy hard, flinging it towards Choronzon who's eyes widened as it did.

"Wait! No, don't you dare-" Choronzon shouted, only to shriek in pain as the Rinne copy hit the indigo eye gem on his body, causing it to break. The resulting smoke from the impact made Choronzon's eyes water a big. Soon he moved one of his branches to rub them. "I am so going to raise Hell when I can start moving!"

The roots underneath Choronzon slowly begin to uproot to the surface, meanwhile as that was happening, the sight of the Arbitel flying while using to hide from Choronzon's sight was seen. The most loyal of Westcott's forces having been able to get on in time, the rest... well, Westcott didn't care.

Speaking of Westcott himself, he was watching from a seat with the sight of bandages across his abdomen to seal up and heal the wound he received from Choronzon's awakening due to lacking any medical realizers at the moment, Ellen was standing by his side as they both witnessed the massive battle.

"As much as I hate to admit it, they're doing well against an opponent that's leagues beyond themselves. They better win too... I refuse to let anyone take down Tohka Yatogami before I do." Ellen stated, watching the battle closely.

"To think such an excellent inversion exists, but with a threat like this. Such a foolish being, this Choronzon, to want to destroy the world? How barbaric." Westcott claimed, sighing at the fact Choronzon only wanted to destroy indiscriminately. "Ruling the world with it is much more fun and rewarding."

Soon the two see a video screen showing Marina as found a secret spot to contact them.

"Ah, I take it you've gotten some of what we needed?" Westcott asked.

"Not yet, but I managed to hit each of the copy Inversions with those special darts Chinami whipped up. The others just need to clean the trash and soon I'll be holding more than just the power of [Siren] in my wires." Marina answered, soon smirking a bit. "Now I just hope that's soon because of that damn Maria annoying me!

The two cover their ears as Marina gets loud, making Ellen lower the communication channel's volume a bit.

"Although I'll admit, I am concerned how this may work in regards to [Sovereign]'s powers. It seems due to how we inverted that boy, Choronzon can keep resurrecting her endlessly. Either that may be the one failure to acquire or Choronzon needs to be destroyed."

"No matter, I'm used to waiting. Losing one won't be a big deal if our efforts allow us to gather her power later. Just make you can succeed on getting the power of this Inversion, this is our only chance." Westcott replied, making Marina nod before she notices Maria about to see her. "Focus on the fight for now, we'll take later."
Marina sighs as she prepares to close the channel.

"Right, just try to avoid dying again father, otherwise I'll find a way to make mother kick your ass." Marina answered, disconnecting as Ellen grit her teeth at the familiar comment.

'I hate it when she calls me that!' Ellen mentally screamed.

Marina quickly hid her communication panel as Maria poked her head in, making the black haired AI stare at her good counterpart annoyed before giving her a glare to the Ratatoskr AI's confusion.

"What!? What do you want from me!?!" Marina screams.

"Uh... I was just wondering why you came in here, you said we should go meet up with the others?" Maria asked, making the DEM AI grumble as she sweated a bit. "Whoa, just chill alright?"

Marina's head steamed red at that.

"I was checking something, we have a volatile Demon King present who can do knows what, managed to rip seven different elemental powers that have devastated an entire country, and can blast us with some world smashing attack in..." Marina answered, soon realizing she didn't know what time. "...One moment."

Marina opens a panel to confirm how much time they had left before the Chaotic Divergence attack could be fired off again.

~ETA until the second Chaotic Divergence charge is ready: 42 minutes

"Oh no, that's not good! We've already lost 20 minutes and the Inversions are all still running amok, how many Rinne copies are destroyed!?" Marina seethed, biting her lip as she closed her panel.

"Alright, we better find the others, and we better find them now!"

Marina rushes outside in moments, surprising Maria by her speed as she rushed after her. As she did, Rinne and Rio run by and get Maria's attention.

"Hey guys, you're here! So that means you won your fights?" Maria asked.

"That's right! I guess you did too, so just us three or we have anymore? I haven't seen Mayuri just yet." Rinne asked.

"Me and Marina, so adding that unknown Spirit Nia knows, that's fives copies so far." Maria replied, soon noticing Mayuri laying on the ground and stopping. "Wait, there's Mayuri! She's on the ground!"

The group runs over, and Marina notices them turning and backtracks to her annoyance. Soon Rio shakes Mayuri a bit, making Mayuri groan and shake a bit as she woke up, blinking a bit as she saw everyone.

"Oh no, did I fall asleep? I was only trying to wait till I could move my limbs again, guess I got too relaxed." Mayuri replied, but the moment she tried to get up she felt the bruises sear through her muscles. "Ow! OK, movement's back, but the pain hasn't left either!"

Rinne and Maria help her up, and Rinne notices the oddity of her Sephira Crystal was missing... and her eyes motioned somewhere that made her glad Mana was absent for the moment.
"Mayuri, your Sephira Crystal... it feels normal like mine and Rio's. What happened?" Rinne asked, making Mayuri chuckle as she scratched her head.

"Well, let's just say I remembered something my creator left me. Boy am I gonna have an awkward talk with Mildred when we get back home because I never mentioned the thing about me being Material B to her." Mayuri answered, making Rinne blink. "I'll explain later, but my Sephira Crystal is stable now." 

"Yay, Mayuri's more like Rio and the rest now!" Rio cheered, soon blinking after registering the rest. "Wait, Mildred created Mayuri? So, Mildred is Mayuri's... Mama? Sister? Family? Something else?"

Mildred was waiting for news in the Ratatoskr base when she suddenly sneezed out of nowhere.

"Huh?" Mildred blinked, wondering where that came from.

Mildred blinked before shrugging and resuming what she had been doing before the sneeze had distracted her, though now having an odd nagging feeling.

"Uh... let's go with creator Rio, I think artificial life forms are only related to the people who make them when they share genetics... I think." Rinne answered, a bit unsure herself. Rio tilted her head and blinked before shrugging. "So, you beat your copy too?"

"I did, though had I not evolved my powers when I did... I don't wanna think about it." Mayuri answered, soon noticing Nia flying overhead with Miku. She whistled to get their attention. "Hey guys, over here!"

Nia and Miku soon drop down.

"Looks like you all won, that means all the copies are gone." Nia smirks, but soon makes a serious face as everyone looked towards Choronzon. "Though that also means the only battles still left are..."

"Do you think they'll be alright? I still recall what my Inversion could do." Miku asked.

"Hmm... well the others know what their Inversions can do to a degree, and Yoshino used to have the power to freely Inverse when she had Yoshinon. The only one I'm worried about though is Kurumi, she hasn't inverted since the Cassiopeia detached from her so she knows nothing about hers right now." Rinne said, sweating a bit.

"Not to mention Tohka's will just keep coming back, so I don't know how the Sandalphon eye gem's gonna break, the fact it's still intact has to mean the first defeat didn't do anything, and most likely neither will any defeats after it." Nia grimaced, soon looking at the others. "We need to find them, if we can we try to help. Especially Tohka."

Everyone nods, and everyone takes flight with Mayuri riding on Maria's back while Marina finally caught up and groaned as she followed.

"Why am I the one in the back, is it cause I'm evil!?" marina complained.

Kaguya and Yuzuru stood back to back as their inversions flew around like sonic jets, a strong pair of hurricanes shrouding them from their sight. While trying to spot the two, Inverse Kaguya suddenly rushed by and crashed into Kaguya, knocking her away to Yuzuru's shock.
"Kaguya-" Yuzuru shouted, only for Inverse Yuzuru to strike her back the same way.

"Yuzuru!" Kaguya shouted, and soon Inverse Kaguya spun and created a fiery wind that knocked her back and into the ground. She soon got up, breathing heavily as she did, slightly panicked. "Oh no... no, no, no! I gotta get back to Yuzuru!"

Kaguya tried to fly off and reach her sister, but Inverse Kaguya walked towards her as she held out her Andramelech in one hand.

"How weak you are, simple separation is enough to drive you fully unstable. Something that I have no qualms in exploiting." Inverse Kaguya stated, soon swiping her hand with Andramelech out. "Sathariel."

The Demon King changed into its drill lance form, and pointed it at Kaguya to her horror. Inverse Kaguya had been right... because of all that time the two had spent knowing one would need to die for the other to live yet wanting to die with the other, the two couldn't bear being separated at all.

Inverse Kaguya rushed forward, and the real Kaguya gasped as she managed to dodge, starting to fly off as Inverse Kaguya followed close behind, her enhanced speed letting her catch up to Kaguya in nearly no time.

"RAPHAEL!" Kaguya shouted, firing off a few arrows that Inverse Kaguya simply used Sathariel to cut through.

Kaguya shook in horror and spin, creating a wind wall to disorient her Inverse counterpart as she tried to get away. Once she did, she panted heavily as she slumped onto the ground, sweating as her panic welled up into her chest.

"Yuzuru... Yuzuru! I need you, where are you? Please, help me!" Kaguya begged, unable to calm herself down. She suddenly began seeing the area she slumped against melt from heated winds, making her shriek quietly, she covered her mouth as she looked around and soon began running to try and escape.

"I can't do this, not on my own... We've always had each other, I can't do this without her!"

Kaguya soon rushed into the sight of a broken home. Once she did, she gasped as the sight of a child was present, a child staring at rubble with the light in his eyes gone. Kaguya soon gasped as she saw a hand sticking out of the rubble... someone from the young boy's family.

Right after, the sight of a man ran up to sim, the side of his arm bleeding slightly. Based on this sight, Kaguya realized that the arm from the rubble... must have belonged to the boy's mother. Her eyes shook as she realized just how awful Choronzon's manifestation was.

"Come on son, we've gotta get out of here!" The boy's father panicked, trying to get his son to react. Right at that moment, a spear stabbed through the house, sending some rubble at the father. Kaguya realizing who it was and that the son was OK was forced to make a drastic choice.

"...I'm so sorry!" Kaguya sobbed, grabbing the boy's arms, looking at the father who gave her a look asking her to make sure he stayed safe. Right at that moment, Inverse Kaguya broke through and saw the man, Sathariel burning from the hot air she was making.

"A human? Oh, and it seems you're whimpering on the ground in pain, well then... let's fix that issue." Inverse Kaguya stated, soon aiming her hand at him. Kaguya turned as she saw the house explode as an explosion of hot air explode from the former house. Inverse Kaguya soon walked out.
"Now, where are you?"

Kaguya kept running, the young boy being dragged by her hand yet not resisting her either, she pants as she tries to find someplace safe for him before she fled and drew Inverse Kaguya away from him. She looks back at him.

"Don't worry, it's gonna be OK! I swear! While I wasn't able to save your father, I can at least save you!" Kaguya said in a panicked manner, soon feeling the boy's arm grip a bit tighter and making her look at him.

"...Why are you helping?" The boy asked, his eyes still as lifeless looking. Kaguya looked at him oddly as he said this. "Everyone already left... they knew my parents were weak... no one helped... just ran."

Kaguya gasped at that, the fact there weren't any other people at that area now suddenly made more sense. Everyone had left and abandoned them, either they weren't able to help or didn't, or worse... the boy didn't see what had really made them disappear. Soon a heated shot of air narrowly missed the two, and Kaguya's braid came undone as she turned to see Inverse Kaguya had spotted them.

"So, you have a human child with you? Then I'll just take out both of you." Inverse Kaguya declared, rushing at them. As her dark half rushed at her, Kaguya soon stared... and then a memory came to her mind.

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Kaguya yawned a bit as she came outside, looking at the area before them to see what today brought, she soon turned to see how the small shack they were in was holding up and stretched a bit. She whistled a bit afterwards.

"Yuzuru, wake up! Gotta get today's work done!" Kaguya shouted, making her twin sister rub her eyes as she walked outside. Soon handing her a plow before she sighed at the work they'd have to do. Couldn't be helped considering they were on their own trying to survive in an area turned barren by a past Spacequake.

"I don't see the point of this, we're just cutting through thick dry soil that's worth nothing."

Yuzuru walked by Kaguya, making her blink before she felt Yuzuru flick her forehead.

"OW! Yuzuru, that hurt!" Kaguya complained, rubbing her forehead.

"OW! Yuzuru, that hurt!" Kaguya complained, rubbing her forehead.

"We have to keep working, maybe it looks like it's futile now, but we might get something if we don't give up." Yuzuru replied, but Kaguya didn't look any better after hearing it. "Kaguya-"

"Excuse me if I actually feel it is futile! Look at this, it's basically a rocky desert here, we're barely getting any food and its gonna run out any day now!" Kaguya screamed, making Yuzuru look at her sadly.

"Face the facts Yuzuru, first our parents leave us before we ever know them and when the Spacequake ravaged this area anyone could have come to help but they didn't! They left us here to die, just like the people they left behind who actually did!"

Kaguya began trying to plow the ground and make something fertile enough to grow food from. Yuzuru looked at her sister and sighed. As much as she wanted to think otherwise, Kaguya was right, they were on a road leading to them starving to death.
The following day, Kaguya sighed as she came outside, for once it was Yuzuru who got up first. Right as she prepared to go and find some water... she noticed Yuzuru talking with someone invisible. Rubbing her eyes to confirm she wasn't seeing things, her eyes noticed an orange crystal being offered to her sister.

"What the... wait, what's that person doing!?!" Kaguya panicked, and then gasped as Yuzuru tried to grab it. She soon rushed forward in an attempt to stop her sister from taking the crystal being held out to her. "Yuzuru, don't touch it!"

Without Phantom even noticing, Kaguya crashed right into Yuzuru as she tried to push her away, causing the Invisible Spirit to be knocked over. The Raphael Crystal soon flew up before falling back right on top of both twins' hands, it soon somehow divided into two and bonded with each of them.

Once Phantom could get back up, she shook her head and then... noticed not one Spirit, but two of them as the Yamai twins saw themselves in their Astral Dresses, with Kaguya showing a more erratic reaction due to not having heard Phantom's words.

"(Two!?)" Phantom exclaimed in surprise, having expected only one. "(This is... I've never seen the Raphael create this result.)"

As Kaguya kept running with the boy, she makes a determined face.

'No, I can... I can do this! Yuzuru kept telling me to believe. I might be on my own, but she's standing beside me in Spirit right now!' Yuzuru thought, nudging the boy to get his attention as he looked at her. "Listen up. You'll be fine, keep following this path!"

The boy didn't react, but Kaguya kept smiling at him.

"Run, move forward as far as you can! I promise someone's there to help you on that path! You won't find necessarily find them right away, but..." Kaguya continued, recalling how she met everyone on that fateful moment, and Shido when he sealed her and Yuzuru, saving them both.

"...you will find them! So, don't stop moving forward until you do! Now go!"

Kaguya turns and releases him, causing a slightly surprised reaction from the boy as she soon turns and fires an arrow from Raphael after leaping forward a bit, surprising Inverse Kaguya as it strikes her in the left leg.

"Run, and don't stop!" Kaguya shouted, preparing another arrow shot.

The boy's light returns to his eyes as he begins running away, with Kaguya shouting as she fired off her arrow. While limping now, Inverse Kaguya knocked the arrow away with Sathariel, making Kaguya sweat.

'My arrows aren't working, if I stay like this she's going to get me without ever trying! Yet if I move, or try to divert her attention... that boy could be killed!' Kaguya thought, her eyes briefly looking behind her. Soon she shakes, but then...

"It looks like it's futile now, but we might get something if we don't give up. " Yuzuru's voice echoed.

Kaguya gasped as she felt like Yuzuru put her hand on her shoulder, and soon Kaguya realized what she had to do. She gripped Raphael tightly.

"Raphael... as long as you trust your skills, there's no bad strategy, right?" Kaguya asked.
Kaguya smiled at that, soon she screamed as she rushed directly at Inverse Kaguya, the Inverse counterpart frowning as if she had been mocked.

"So, you've just decided to die? That's no fun, but that's what I have to do... so be it." Inverse Kaguya stated, soon readying Sathariel to thrust a heated air shot. As she did, Kaguya prepared an arrow and fired it at her. "You sure like to use futile strategies... fine then."

Inverse Kaguya swipes her Demon King to knock it aside again, but this time...

"EL RE'EM!" Kaguya screamed.

Kaguya thrust Raphael forward as it turned into its red lance form, Inverse Kaguya's eyes widen as Kaguya was up close and rammed it right through her, the dark spirit barrier formed to try and negate it... but Kaguya kept screaming before pushing through. Inverse Kaguya was flung back, and looked as the glowing orange mark on her chest that marked her demise.

"That's... not possible, you used your reckless as a weapon? Damn it... I was the one who walked into their death." Inverse Kaguya coughed, soon falling over as her body shattered apart into orange spirit power that vanished into the air. Kaguya panted and stared, smiling as she won.

"I... I did it Yuzuru, I won! I destroyed Inverse me by myself!" Kaguya smiled, she turned around and soon saw a few people who noticed the boy and took them with him. He looked at her, waving goodbye as Kaguya waved back. "Take care kid, take care..."

Kaguya soon flew off to the boy's surprise, the Storm Spirit intending to find his sister.

Yuzuru slide across the ground, panting as she saw Inverse Yuzuru crack her neck as she walked towards holding her Andramelech out. Yuzuru began to sweat, showing the same instability and paranoia as her sister was from their separation.


Yuzuru stares as her Inverse Form forms the spiked chain and soon whips it, Yuzuru spins to form a whirlwind and starts flying away, Inverse Yuzuru blows out a cold gust of wind before jumping up to follow her.

"Kaguya... Kaguya... Kaguya!" Yuzuru called out, hoping for her sister to hear her. She sees Ghagiel swing past her and cut her cheek, undoing her braid as it did. Yuzuru turns and fires three arrows at her Inverse counterpart, but Ghagiel whips without Inverse Yuzuru moving it and makes the original gasp in fear.

'Oh no, I forgot... Ghagiel can be moved by manipulating it mentally. She just needs to use her mind to guide it.' Yuzuru thought, soon looking down and dropping before she spun. Inverse Yuzuru coughed as a dust storm blinded her and Yuzuru flew away before her dark half could spot her.

"This won't work, I need to find Kaguya, or... at least think of a plan. I hate to say it but the former seems like the more likely result." Yuzuru panted, soon stopping by a section of the city. As she breathed, she walked out and saw a bunch of scared people. "There's still people trapped here?"

Soon a few children notice her.
"Papa, look! Someone else got away!" One of the children mentioned, making Yuzuru sweat at the situation.

"Hey, get over here. We'll be finding a way out soon!" A man said, Yuzuru shook her head and tried to backtrack. "Hey wait, what are you-"

Suddenly an icy gale blew by, and Yuzuru gasps in horror as Inverse Yuzuru appears and swings her chain at the area. Yuzuru was knocked to the ground as everyone began to panic at the sight of the girl before them.

"Group. Nuisance... slaughter." Inverse Yuzuru replied, soon readying Ghagiel to cut them all apart. Everyone began to shake in fear. Yuzuru looks at them and then her Inversion, and realizing what could happen... she grabs Raphael and fires an arrow at her before she could whip the group. "Pain! Agony! Hurt!"

Everyone looks at her in shock, and Yuzuru turns to them.

Yuzuru was seen sleeping inside the shack she and Kaguya lived in, her breathing sounding a bit noticeable as she curled a bit. As she rested... a sudden loud whistle rang out, making her whimper a bit as it rung through her ears.

"Yuzuru, wake up! Gotta get today's work done!" Kaguya shouted, Yuzuru soon got up and rubbed her eyes before meeting her twin sister outside. Kaguya handing her a plow before she sighed at the work they'd have to do. "I don't see the point of this, we're just cutting through thick dry soil that's worth nothing."

Yuzuru walked by Kaguya, making her sister blink before Yuzuru moved her arm to flick her on the middle of her forehead.

"OW! Yuzuru, that hurt!" Kaguya complained, rubbing her forehead.

"We have to keep working, maybe it looks like it's futile now, but we might get something if we don't give up." Yuzuru replied, but Kaguya didn't look any better after hearing it. "Kaguya-"

"Excuse me if I actually feel it is futile! Look at this, it's basically a rocky desert here, we're barely getting any food and it's gonna run out any day now!" Kaguya screamed, making Yuzuru look at her sadly.

"Face the facts Yuzuru, first our parents leave us before we ever know them and when the Spacequake ravaged this area anyone could have come to help but they didn't! They left us here to die, just like the people they left behind who actually did!"

Kaguya began trying to plow the ground and make something fertile enough to grow food from. Yuzuru looked at her sister and sighed. As much as she wanted to think otherwise, Kaguya was right, they were on a road leading to them starving to death.

'I wish there was a way for me and Kaguya to get a chance, get a better life. For the both of us... to get to live.' Yuzuru thought, soon plowing the ground alongside her.

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The following day, Yuzuru found herself to be the one who woke up first and soon went outside, right as she did... she saw something that defied normal logic before her. To her shock, right before her eyes she was looking at an invisible person.
“What the... are you?” Yuzuru asked, soon getting the attention of Phantom as she looked towards her.

“(Oh, I'm sorry. I was just passing thought. Didn't realize someone lived here.)” Phantom replied, soon noticing the entire landscape again before looking at Yuzuru. “(So... why do you live here exactly? No offense but this place looks awful.)”

Yuzuru sighed at that, and Phantom's hidden face blinked a bit in confusion.

“We don’t have a choice, no parents and when a Spacequake ravaged the area... everyone abandoned us. We're barely surviving and we'll likely die of starvation soon. There's nothing we can do according to my sister.” Yuzuru answered, making Phantom gasp.

"(...Maybe there is, but it's up to you to decide that.)” Phantom replied, making Yuzuru look at her in surprise. Phantom soon took out the Sephira Crystals she had and soon noticed the orange one glowing. "(Ah, good luck. The Raphael Crystal chose you.)"

"Raphael... Crystal?” Yuzuru asked.

"(This gem is called a Sephira Crystal, with its power you can make your dream become a reality.)” Phantom answered, making Yuzuru's eyes widened. Phantom soon sighed a bit before she resumed.

"(There is one issue though, if you do accept it... you'll be hunted by the DEM who wants this power. You'll probably be without your sister eventually because she'll age while you won't. Knowing that will you accept it or not? Either choice I'll accept.)"

Yuzuru stared at the crystal, and after a bit... she soon raised out her hand. The crystal slowly entering her reach as she prepared to touch it.

‘Kaguya, I... I want to give us a future. So please forgive me for this. I can’t bear seeing you suffer anymore, to see you lose hope.’ Yuzuru thought, and right as she was about to grab the crystal in her hands...

"Yuzuru, don’t touch it!” Kaguya screamed, making Yuzuru's eyes widen a bit.

Without Phantom even noticing, Kaguya crashed right into Yuzuru as she tried to push her away, causing the Invisible Spirit to be knocked over. The Raphael Crystal soon flew up before falling back right on top of both twins' hands, it soon somehow divided into two and bonded with each of them.

Once Phantom could get back up, she shook her head and then... noticed not one Spirit, but two of them as the Yamai twins saw themselves in their Astral Dresses, with Kaguya showing a more erratic reaction due to not having heard Phantom's words.

"(Two!?)” Phantom exclaimed in surprise, having expected only one. "(This is... I've never seen the Raphael create this result.)"

Yuzuru looked at Kaguya in surprise, Phantom had said only she could take the crystal, but somehow Kaguya's act made it work on the both of them. Could it be possible because they were twins and the Sephira Crystal failed to recognize the different?

"(Well, this is different but... it might be what keeps you safe from the DEM. Well goodbye, until we hopefully meet again. Watch over your sister.)” Phantom said as she waved goodbye, disappearing before Yuzuru could say Kaguya was her sister.

“Yuzuru, what just happened!?” Kaguya panicked, and in her sudden turning... she blew a strong
gust of wind out. "Was... was that me?"

"Kaguya, what we have right now... she said it could grant my wish. No... grant our wish." Yuzuru replied, hugging Kaguya close. "We have a chance now, we can't waste it. A chance to finally change this life of ours. So come on, let's re-invent ourselves."

Kaguya stared in shock.

"Yuzuru..." Kaguya gasped, tearing up a bit. "...OK!"

'I can't believe I'd think of that now of all times, but I guess it makes sense. I encouraged Kaguya... now it's time I do that for these people.' Yuzuru thought, breathing before smiling and looking a bit and firing an arrow through the chaotic elements and form a bit.

"Listen up everyone, it's not my role to run! Just go through that path and get to safety. I know you might not understand now, and maybe it seems kind of hopeless right now, but if you just stay positive you'll make it! It's my role to fight, to save us all! So..."

Yuzuru panted from replying in a tone she rarely used compared to Kaguya, holding Inverse Yuzuru back before kicking her away and charging another arrow.

"DON'T GIVE UP HOPE!"

The people soon used that moment and began running, the children looking behind her as Yuzuru fired the arrow, managing to hit Ghagiel's tip and knock it at her dark half, causing it to slash back at her, cutting her cheek. They look forward and keep running.

"Futile. Annihilation. Defeat." Inverse Yuzuru stated, her strange speech implying something about how their running wouldn't matter and she'd kill them after beating Yuzuru. Her original breathed as she readied Raphael again.

'Kaguya... I don't know where you are, but... lend me strength! Please!' Yuzuru mentally begged, and soon she felt something on her shoulder.

"Yuzuru!" Kaguya's voice echoed.

[Master... hold nothing back, are you ready?]

Yuzuru did, and soon Inverse Yuzuru spun Ghagiel around rapidly.

"Ammut." Inverse Yuzuru stated, changing the chain into a chakram. She begins spinning it before tossing it forward and creating a cold whirlwind. Remember how sharp it was, Yuzuru soon hold out her Raphael.

"EL NA'ASH!"

Soon Raphael turns into a chain, and the chain manages to wrap around Ammut while Yuzuru ducks over the chakram blades. She spun around, bringing the chains as she lassoed it over, Inverse Yuzuru smirked at the foolishness until...

"RAPHAEL!" Yuzuru shouted, soon reforming the bow... only now Ammut was locked onto the frame and its cold air unable to freeze anything while in contact with the Angel as it created a small gale around it. Inverse Yuzuru gasped in shock.
"Useless. Stupidity. Checkmate." Inverse Yuzuru soon smirked, holding a hand out to draw Ammut back to her. Yuzuru however didn't resist, going faster than the Inverse counterpart could react, and realizing all too late what was going on. "Mistake. Fear... Disbelief!"

Yuzuru shouts as she charges an arrow, soon shifting forward as the arrow fires off, point blank before her dark half's chest. Inverse Yuzuru's eyes go blank in shock as she saw the orange glowing spot where her dark spirit power began to destabilize. She soon fell over as her body shattered apart into orange spirit power that vanished into the air, Yuzuru smiled before her feet slid to the ground. "I... I did it, I won." Yuzuru smiled, panting as she finally caught her breath.

Back with the group who fought the Rinne copies, they began searching for the others... and stopped as Choronzon began to scream in pain again. Everyone looked as that could only mean someone won their fight. After watching, they say the orange eye gem explode not just once, but twice.

"What!? They destroyed two of the Inverse Incarnations? No, impossible!" Choronzon shouted angrily.

"Two orange explosions... that was the Yamai sisters, they've managed to beat their Inverse Forms!" Rinne smiled, making her Ratatoskr allies smile while Nia and Miku gave a similar happy reaction. While no one noticed, Marina looked and smirked as dark orange spirit power attached to one of the wires.

'Now I have Pandemonium's powers, only a few more left to go.' Marina smirked darkly, soon hiding the power back in the wires. 'Now the question is will Sovereign and Choronzon's powers be obtainable today?'

Marina soon turned back as they others stopped their cheering.

"Hey Nia, think you can figure out where the others were? I forgot you can ask Raziel nearly anything." Rinne asked, but Nia shook her head.

"I think Choronzon's jamming Raziel's information network, I can still read it but the words are in a jumbled order. That's why I tried finding you all on foot. If it was the Yamai twins though, just look for signs of wind." Nia replied, and everyone nodded. "Come on, let's hurry and find them!"

Nia flew ahead and the others followed her, and as they did a surprise came.

"Look, it's that pink haired woman and her child!"

"Huh?" Rinne blinked, looking to see the people she helped protect as they were riding some horses they had managed to get their hands. They waved to her and she flew down, causing the others to follow her. As soon as they landed, the sight of the boy Kaguya helped was seen with them. "Oh thank goodness, you're all still OK."

One man in particular chuckled at that.

"Says the girl with super powers, think you can explain what's going on here?" The man asked.

"Well... yeah, we kinda can. A lot, it's all my fault indirectly, but a fault born of those people in DEM." Rinne answered, Nia slapping her mouth over Marina's hand before she could interject. "We're looking for friends of ours, two orange haired twins. Help us find them and I'll tell you on the way."
"...I saw her." The one boy answered, getting Rinne's attention. "...We're going to help, follow us."

Rinne nods at that.

"Come on guys, best we stick with these civilians so they can get out OK, more eyes will help too!" Rinne replied, and everyone soon followed as they got on the horses as they galloped towards where Kaguya and Yuzuru would be.

As Yuzuru slowly managed to regain the strength to get on her feet, the sound of something running entered her ears. Her eyes widened as she turned to look for it. After having no luck seeing her for a few moments...

"Yuzuru!"

Yuzuru turned and saw Kaguya rush at her, Yuzuru gasped before rushing at her. Kaguya soon hugged her tightly as if she would never let go again.

"Oh thank god Yuzuru, I was so worried! Let's never get separated again! I barely kept calm without you!" Kaguya cried.

"I concur, I couldn't stay calm. I was so scared." Yuzuru replied, hugging back.

As they hugged, a galloping sound soon reached their ears, and soon they heard a whistle as they saw Rio and Mayuri waving at them. The horses all stopped as the Yamai twins noticed the people they saved with the others. Rinne got off and walked to them.

"Glad to see you two are OK, we saw Choronzon's orange gem break. Great job winning you two." Rinne smiled, fixing both of their hair and healing the cut on Yuzuru's cheek. "Be proud of yourselves, the kind of enemy you fought was hard to beat."

"Yeah, have you found the others yet?" Kaguya asked.

"Not yet, but we're gonna look. We figured while we do we try finding anymore survivors and protect those who survived. Not to mention... with this situation, I don't think the Spirits and Westcott's acts can be hidden from the world anymore." Rinne replied, soon getting back on the horse she was riding. "Get on you two."

The Yamai twins soon both got on one of the horses as they rode off.

'This is far from over, and no matter what happens... the fight between the DEM and Ratatoskr will never be the same.' Rinne thought, staring at the direction of Choronzon as the ultimate Demon King stood there.

~ETA until the second Chaotic Divergence charge is ready: 38 minutes~

'Everyone... please hurry!' Rinne thought.

And the Inverse Yamai twins had their storms blown over! Nice job Kaguya, Yuzuru, that was a tough fight considering you both not only had Limited Astral Dresses and your Spirit Bond levels haven't breached the 80s mark, but being separated had you both panicked and unable to stay completely focused and calm during your battles. Fighting when frightened or jumpy is a difficult challenge.
Oh, and just to bring it up now, if anyone's curious about how much being in the Limited Astral Dress weakens the Spirits, in this story it halves their power, though Rinne's is cut to 10% due to the nature of her nerf. Combining that with how the Spirit Bonds show how much of the Spirits' full power can be used, the Yamai twins were by all means fighting at 37% of the full power against beings stronger than them at 100%. Whoa... that's impressive 0_0

It looks like the survivors are starting to notice this whole event isn't some natural occurrence either, at best this really shreds the DEM's reputation and at worst... Ratatoskr's getting new members to support them, so I guess it's a win-win for the heroes regardless? *shrugs* Well now there's two Inversions down, and ignoring Inverse Tohka who can keep reviving that leaves five more left to defeat.

Now the big question is this... can they do it before the timer to Choronzon's next use of the Chaotic Divergence expires and he fires it off again? Guess we'll get our answers soon enough, so until next time everyone... stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 99% (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 95% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 90% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 92% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 87% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 84% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 78% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 78% (Weight Manipulation)
Alright everyone, we've already had the Yamai twins have their battle, so it's time for the next two Inverse Form fights! I had a bit of trouble deciding the order of who should start fighting next, so I ended up righting everyone's names down and having my parents each chose two of them. As a result, the decided pair who'll be fighting their Inversions in this chapter are... Kotori and Natsumi!

Out of these two, the former has a struggle to face in her battle. Inverse Kotori's level of regeneration is enough that as long she has mana left and part of her body's intact, she won't die. If Kotori wants to beat her, she has only two options, the first is for Inverse Kotori to run out of mana, but that won't work in this scenario. So, the only thing she can do? Well... she has to somehow entirely disintegrate Inverse Kotori in one shot 0_0

And since you already know all these fights need to finish before we end up going onto the next stage of the arc, the fights that'll be in the next up are Kurumi and Origami's, and after that we'll have Yoshino have her fight as we finally see things hit their next level as Tohka takes the stage against her Inversion and something big will show up... plus, that will be the point where you'll all see the flashback of her and Shido first meeting! ^^

I wish I was already at the big scene with Tohka for the arc, I've so been waiting all season to reach it and now that it's so close yet still far away... its driving me crazy! Wow, I guess what they say about scenes you've been working towards getting you all hyped up to right them really is true. Worse is I can't talk about it because even the slightest mention is going to spoil it. *shakes a bit* I've almost made it, just a bit longer now, I can do this!

Oh, and here's a bit of friendly advice I'd like to share based on something I noticed when I was making the Maria scene a few chapters ago. Often when you make a story, there's something that's going to be unavoidable even if just at a slightly minor level. You may notice some contradictions, bits of info that have an irregular match up, or occasionally something that might feel out of place compared to early and currently in the story.

Don't be afraid if you feel like these show up, or if you worry that you might have goofed even slightly, sometimes that worry will cause what you fear to happen. Just relax yourself and consider your readers, if they don't point it out, while partially they may not notice it themselves, they may also consider it too small of something to worry about.

What I believe is that as long as your readers understand where the story is now, and understand it as they're reading it, you're fine. Humans aren't perfect, we have flaws, even if we strive for perfection it's because we want to overcome those flaws that we try. Not to mention when it comes to story, you can also try writing the same one again when you finish if you'd like, but it's not necessary either. So if anyone has a worry like this, take it from me, it isn't as bad as you might feel it is.

I hope this advice helps, and I'm glad for anyone who sees it and gets the encouragement or ease to their worries that they needed.
Now before I start the chapter officially, I had a guest review that I feel I need to give a proper and somewhat long (my apologies ^^;) answer to, and one I feel has words of wisdom for anyone else who'd like to read it. This is something I did say before in Chapter 10's start notes, but I'll answer it again anyways since more readers view this story now. Seeker213, I'd like you to know in advance that when I say this, I say it with no ill feelings.

I understand what you were trying to tell me about those spelling mistakes, and why you think a Beta Reader might be a good idea, but I already stated once before that I did consider one and ultimately the person I had considered told me to honestly ask what I wanted to be as a writer. Due to his advice, I realized how my story flow works and realized a Beta Reader was not for me, because I'm not writing for popularity, but for fun and because I enjoy it.

Truth be told, the one time I gave that user a chapter to Beta, he found one mistake in it, but when I used spell check program to check it, I found even more he didn't notice himself. That helped me in my decision because I saw a way I could spot more mistakes by myself, in fact what I said above was the biggest reason I considered this. The mistakes I usually make that you brought up? Most people make those. I even found one in the start note where I typed "change", but meant to say "chance."

Using a character name twice, the wrong name when you have two similarly named characters, or wrong word that isn't a misspelling? Those are the kind of mistakes we can all make so easily and never notice, even if we look over the rough draft through multiple double checks. I'm even aware of most of those mistakes, and on occasion I've looked back to try and find them, the reason I've yet to correct them is because I only have so much free time.

Not just that though, the one time I tried fixing my errors and replacing the fixed chapter in a rush? I nearly lost a different chapter because I replaced the wrong one, that was scary and I was lucky to have had a backup of that chapter. So I'm not going to try making those fixes until I at least get the story finished, I hope you and everyone else understand my reasoning, not to mention every author needs to find and follow what works for them in both making and managing a story.

Still though, thanks at least for telling me about those errors, I decided to at least fix those mistakes because it was the most recent chapter. I just hope you at least understand my reasons now, maybe you won't accept them, but I hope you at least understand my choices now. Also having someone to help try and find the mistakes? That idea might work, I'll think about it. I hope the advice I gave above, and what I said here helps calm some nerves to any fellow writers feeling nervous over similar reasons/issues.

With all of that cleared up now, let's continue on now. *grabs the gong* Get ready everyone, Round 2 of Normal vs Inverse Spirit fights... *hits gong* BEGIN!

Chapter 44, S2: Choronzon Havoc, Part 9

The civilians all listened as Rinne explained the story of 30 years ago and the Spirits, culminating to what was happening now and the DEM's efforts gave birth to Choronzon and the destruction that was currently present before them right now. The civilians all showing shock.

"Damn it! So you're saying that Deus-Ex-Machina industries was responsible for everything!??" A
woman asked angrily.

"Every bit of it, my sister-in-law only wanted to bring everyone home, and that Westcott used her... used my husband, used me even." Rinne answered, a look of regret as she remembered the day of disaster. "I can't apologize enough, even if we're all partially to blame I had the biggest role in the chaos. Even if indirectly."

"Hey, don't blame yourself. You didn't ask to blow up most of the Earth with energy explosions. That bastard Westcott started everything. Blame him and him alone, a catalyst is always the one responsible!" A man exclaimed, making a few nod with him. Marina growled a bit. "Yeah, we said it! Face it, he's a bad man, and that's all we'll say!"

Marina scoffed at that, ready to aim a wire and spew poison at him, only for Rio to form a barrier in front of her.

"Fine, sympathize with the weak! Even if not today they'll meet their demise eventually!" Marina growled, making a bunch of people grow angrily at her. Maria barely able to prevent them for reacting. 'Father will make sure of that soon enough, we'll see you fear him instead of hate him then.'

"So how are you gonna kill that monster?" A man asked, looking at Rinne. Rinne sighed at that to his surprise. "What, what's the matter? Don't tell me that it isn't possible and we're all really gonna die!"

Rinne turned to him and scratched her head, figuring out a way to answer.

"No, it isn't that... it's more like we just can't kill it, at least not until we do something else first. That evil tree you all see? My son is trapped inside of it." Rinne replied, making a lot of gasps ring out. "Westcott pushed him to despair in some manner, and it became that tree. I already lost my husband... I'm not losing him too!"

"...Don't blame you, lost my parents. Lady couldn't save him and me." The one boy said, making Kaguya hang her head down in guilt. Even if it was only for the sake of guaranteeing she and the boy would survive... she hated she couldn't save him too. "...He's waiting for you, you'll save him."

Rinne smiled at that, the encouragement being a refreshing reminder in all the chaos before them.

"Yeah, right now most of our friends are fighting parts of Choronzon's power, and each victory breaks one of those gems. We just gotta hurry before Choronzon can fire his ultimate attack again." Rinne replied, soon looking at Marina. "How long now?"

"One second, just gotta read the dark spirit power and..." Marina replied, soon getting a time. "Got it, we currently have-"

~ETA until the second Chaotic Divergence charge is ready: 36 minutes~

Rinne sweated at that.

"36 minutes, counting the time we took to beat those copies of me, and then how long Kaguya and Yuzuru took against their Inversions... I just hope it's enough." Rinne breathed, looking at the sky as the sight of a red streak flies overhead.

Kotori dodged a bolt of lightning as Inverse Kotori fired at her, she turned and blasted a fireball from her left hand... but her dark half simply swiped it away before laughing madly and swinging Asmodeus forward. Kotori screamed as she was flung through some buildings.
"Seriously, is that all you have? I hope it isn't, because I'm not done with you, there's so much carnage left for me to bring!" Inverse Kotori cackled, soon licking her lips like she was about to have a feast.

"MEGIDDO!"

Suddenly a beam of fire shoots out and strikes her head.

"You sure, because I don't think you'll do much without-" Kotori replied, climbing out of the wall. However, her words were cut off shortly when she saw Inverse Kotori's body not break apart and her supposedly burned off head began burning back as it regenerated. "Oh no, I can't believe I forgot!"

Inverse Kotori laughs as her head fully grows back, she cracks it a bit before smirking darkly.

"To actually take off my head? While I may be able to regenerate and survive that, it is simply... wonderful! How splendid! This is just wonderful, let me taste more carnage from you! Fight me, fight me and try to destroy me as I try to kill you!" Inverse Kotori cackled, rushing at Kotori before swinging Asmodeus as it clashed with Camael.

"That's right, burn! Destroy! Annihilate! Show me the destructive power of your fire, show me the power of the devastation that exists within your abilities! That way I can destroy you with everything you use being rendered useless!"

Kotori grunts as she held her dark half back before pushing her away.

"A chill pill, have you ever heard of such a thing? Please take one!" Kotori shouted, looking incredibly nervous at the sight. Fear burning into her heart as she recalled what she did in this form when Saya had been controlling her body. 'This is why I prefer being easily frightened and timid, this kind of personality frightens me!'

"Chill? As it don't be hot as a fire, how should I answer that?" Inverse Kotori asked, soon cackling as her eyes glow with a more snake like shape. Her fire burning starting to burn even hotter as she melted the nearby buildings. "No way in hell, I'll just heat up even more! VAJRA!"

Asmodeus transformed into a hammer, and Inverse Kotori cackles like crazy as she swung it down, the immediate area bursts apart as fire blasts out and heats most of the stone into flying boulders of magma. Kotori gasped in horror and rushes out of the way.

'Come Kotori, try to remember. What are her powers and weaknesses? You can't win if you don't figure it out!' Kotori sweated, soon trying to think. She breathed and soon gasped as she remembered. 'That's right, aside from the hammer and Megiddo's inverse counterpart, it can be a scythe that hits weakly but quickly.'

Kotori thinks more, trying to think on her weaknesses and soon her eyes widened.

'And her regeneration isn't perfect, just like how Saya told me losing my head would be too fatal to heal from, there's a limit. Blunt attacks don't work, and even with mana it fails if... her body has nothing to regenerate! I need to destroy her entirely in a single shot! But how? Megiddo worked, but while in my Limited Astral Dress state, I can only hit half her body at once! She'll just regenerate afterwards!'

Kotori's thoughts ended as a suddenly scythe slash of fire appeared, Inverse Kotori giggling with a crazed smile as she held Asmodeus in its Labyrs form, lightly tapping the blade in her other hand in a
threatening manner.

"Come on normal me, come out and play some more!" Inverse Kotori begged in a creepy tone, making Kotori sweat.

'Could I possibly just waste all her mana somehow? No, this is my Inverse Form, she has more and I'd run out before she did! I'd just make myself a sitting duck!' Kotori mentally panicked, she couldn't figure out what to do. If Inverse Kotori had an armor chink she could strike at her... she didn't see it.

"Come on, pick up your weapon and fight me! This fight's not over, and neither is the war! Come one!" Inverse Kotori cackled, staring at Kotori who looked at her in fear. "Come on! This is the battle I wanted, this is the war I wanted! Give me the destruction I love so much! GUNGNIR!"

Kotori shook in fear, her mind racing as Asmodeus' form shifted into a cannon and the inverse counterpart of Megiddo pointed right at her.

"Seriously, you've given up!? Fine then! If you can't face the muzzle of this gun, then it's time you die! It's all over you weakling!" Inverse Kotori shouted with a smile, giggling slightly as her teeth showed from her grin.

'I might be called Efreet, but I think the real fire demon's the one I'm staring at!' Kotori thought, her mind like a maelstrom. As she stared at Inverse Kotori, she felt like seeing a demon of fire gazing at her before it killed her like a predator tormenting its prey.

'What can I do? Can I run, can I defend, can I dodge, can... can I... can I do anything? Come on Kotori, think, you gotta do something if you don't you... if you don't you'll-

"Calm down Kotori, stressing out won't help." Tohka's voice echoed.

Kotori gasped as the thought of Tohka's voice rushed through her head, making her remember something.

\[\text{Kotori was seen sweating heavily as she looked at the last bit of what she had to study for the test to skip her remaining Middle School years and get herself transferred into Raizen High. The questions before her all looked incredibly brutal, and her mind was racing.}\]

"Damn it, what do I do? I don't understand half of this stuff... what is this all supposed to be!?" Kotori asked herself.

"Uh, Kotori. I don't think it's-" Mana tried to say, only to see Kotori as she shook her head around like a wildfire. "K-Kotori! Please calm down, you're making it worse!"

Kotori screamed as she began to create some flame, making Mana quickly grab the fire extinguisher to put out anything she set ablaze.

"Where do I start? Do I tackle the hard part with math, or maybe English? That's easiest for me, isn't it? Science has a lot to write so that should be done first... but what about history!?" Kotori panicked, making more fire as Mana sweated and tried putting it all out. "What do I do, should I just cram or maybe I-

"Hey Kotori."

\[\text{Kotori and Mana turn to see Tohka look at her.}\]
“This is what you should do, think fast!” Tohka replied, throwing her fist forward and freaking out Kotori as Tohka stopped only a moment before hitting it.

"Tohka, and you freaking crazy!? You just tried to punch me!” Kotori shouted, still a bit frightened. "What made you think that-"

"Isn't your mind more focused now?" Tohka asked.

Kotori suddenly blinked, with Mana even seeing no more fires were starting. Kotori gasped as she realized she wasn't thinking about the studying now.

"Hey... you're right, I'm not overwhelmed. How did you know it would help?" Kotori wondered.

"Remember the other day while the wind was blowing and I got hit in the face by that flying soda can?" Tohka asked, making the two nod as they sweat dropped. "Well I was thinking of a lot, but the moment I felt the pain I stopped and focused on it. Kotori, if you ever feel overwhelmed, just give yourself a single focus."

"Single focus..." Kotori repeated.

Kotori soon took a moment and punched herself in the left cheek, surprising her Inverse counterpart.

"Why'd she just deck herself?" Inverse Kotori wondered.

'Ow! OK, my mind's calm. Just think Kotori. Nothing's invincible, Rinne's full power was proof enough of that fact. My Megiddo can work, so that means my fire does to. The problem I'm facing is that I can't burn her entire body at once.' Kotori thought, trying to think of something. 'So, how can I?'

As Kotori thought, a certain memory made her gasp as she got an idea from it.

Kotori was seen at school with most of her classmates, she was shivering at the chills brought by the heavy snowstorm that had suddenly blown in, freezing all the heat within the school making everyone try to stay close for warmth.

"Big bro, sis... I'm scared." Kotori shivered, crying slightly.

The snow had gotten incredibly awful once it had begun to blow in, due to the weather forecast being wrong and the storm happening during school hours, the roads had gotten blocked off and no one was able to get home because either their bus couldn't arrive or no one could drive to pick up their kids until the roads got cleared.

What was worse for Kotori's case though? Mana had been at home sick, so her honorary sister/best friend wasn't there to help her feel calm. Right now, she was a complete mess, crying as she wished she was hope.

"I'm scared, please... someone help me." Kotori cried, rubbing her arms as she felt it getting colder. Suddenly at that moment, the school heard the door open as someone came in, Kotori looked up to see who it was. Her eyes widen as she saw Shido, all frozen and shivering himself. "Big bro!?"

"I'm here Kotori, let's get your home." Shido replied, soon walking over and helping the shivering Kotori onto his back as she held her stuff and his arm tightly.
"H-How did you get here? The roads are still blocked aren't they, you didn't just walk through here on your feet, right?" Kotori asked, Shido turned at her and gave a frosty looking smile as he chuckled nervously. "No way... you actually did? Why?"

Shido scratched his head a bit, chuckling once more.

"Because... I didn't want my sister to be scared and alone with her family there." Shido replied, making Kotori gasp as she heard it. A slight blush formed on her cheeks without her even realizing it.

Soon she felt Shido go back outside, trudging through the snow as the two slowly but surely traveled through the heavy snow to get back home. After a long trek through the snowy landscape, Shido manages to get them back to the house and inside.

"Alright, let's get you a blanket and a warm meal. Make sure you didn't get sick. Then help you get some rest, you'll be OK." Shido stated, pulling a blank over her as she laid on the couch. Shido soon went to the kitchen and began cooking. As he did...

'This feeling, big bro cam all that way... for me.' Kotori thought, soon blushing again. This time she managed to notice since she wasn't as frozen in the face anymore. 'Wait a second... could it be? Am I... no way, I'm falling in love with my brother?'

Kotori hugged the blanket closer as she blushed more.

'But... we're not related, and he's not adopted by mom and dad. Then... it would be alright, it's... this is real! I think I'm really in love with Shido!'

After about 10 minutes, Shido walked in with a warm bowl of soup and carried it over to her. He sat next to her, making her blush as he felt his warmth against her body.

"Here, let's get some food in you." Shido said, holding the spoon by her mouth. Kotori soon swallowed it and rested against Shido's shoulder. Blushing a bit as she smiled, Shido kept feeding her the soup.

'It's so warm, like a fire enveloping my body.' Kotori thought, smiling warmly.

Kotori's eyes shake as she realized that last part, a fire enveloping her body... of course! If her fire could still burn Inverse Kotori, she didn't need to fire it off through the Megiddo, she just needed to burn Inverse Kotori!

"I've found the path for victory!" Kotori smirked, making Inverse Kotori look at her oddly. Soon Kotori jumped overhead of her, and Inverse Kotori tried to move, but she was still charging and couldn't move, and Kotori smirked as she held Camael up.

"You can't regenerate if there's nothing left of you, fire still burns you if there's spirit power in it, and you can't move right now. I think you're wide opened to be burned into cinders. So, thanks for becoming immobile and defenseless!"

Inverse Kotori suddenly had her eyes widen in fear, and Kotori raised Camael into the air before she swung the axe down. A burst of fire formed underneath Inverse Kotori, and soon she screams violently as the fire consumed her. Gungnir shattered before Inverse Kotori reached out in vain, soon turned into nothing by ashes.

"Can't take the heat? Then don't play with fire." Kotori smiled, panting as she collapsed on one knee,
her healing flames starting to quick in. Meanwhile she turned as she heard Choronzon scream in the distance, the red eye gem on his body shattering apart. "Alright, that's another one down."

Soon she heard galloping, and turned to see a flock of horses being ridden, Mayuri soon noticed her and pulled her horse's reins to stop the others. At that moment, everyone noticed Kotori as she smiled at them.

"Hey Kotori, over here! Get on!" Mayuri shouted, and Kotori weakly trudged over before Mayuri helped her onto a horse. "You just won your fight, didn't you?"

"I did, now let me nap for a little while. OK?" Kotori asked, soon slumping on her horse and sleeping. Rinne rubbed her head as the horses resumed their galloping across the area and Choronzon's roots continued to pull out. The area before them starting to show a few coming out of the ground.

Tohka panted a bit, managing to send Inverse Tohka into a building as she tried to regain her breath. She turned right as Choronzon's screams announced his red eye gem breaking, leaving only the purple, green, white, blue, black and pink gems left.

"There you go Kotori, you did it!" Tohka panted, soon getting hit by a wave of energy blasts and screaming. She crashed into a large building, causing it to break apart and slowly fall over. Inverse Tohka flew from the debris she crashed in unscathed.

"You talk too much." Inverse Tohka replied, holding Nahemah out as she charged a dark purple beam at the tip of the blade.

[Then let us silence her.]

Tohka noticed the attack and stomped the ground as she broke through the floor and dodged the blast, spinning with Sandalphon held out as she continued falling until she reached the building’s bottom and ran outside.

'Dang it, I haven't fully recovered from our last fight. If only I had my full Astral Dress.' Tohka thought, using Sandalphon to support herself before she saw Inverse Tohka crash down before her, making her hold Sandalphon out defensively.

"Pathetic. You're so weak right now, it's as if you've chosen to fight me while wearing heels." Inverse Tohka declared, making Tohka have a vein form on her head.

"You and I both know my Astral Dress doesn't have heels!" Tohka shouted, rushing at her inverse counterpart and swinging Sandalphon down. The two blades colliding while Tohka gives an emotional face to Inverse Tohka's stoic one.

Natsumi rides Haniel through the skies as Inverse Natsumi chases after her, Baal shooting out the crystal on its broom brush end, with Natsumi narrowly dodging the attacks and the incredible speed of her Angel's dark counterpart.

"Dang it, how do I fight an enemy like this? A copycat against another copycat... that doesn't make any sense!" Natsumi shouted.

Natsumi soon gasped as Inverse Natsumi turned into an Eastern Dragon and growled at her, making the original pale as she witnessed Inverse Natsumi spew out her transformation light as a beam.
Natsumi quickly turned and managed to dodge it, with the nearest structure that it hit being turned a storm of mini-bombs that detonated and exploded everywhere once they hit the ground.

"Holy... shit!" Natsumi paled, looking at the Dragon transformed Inverse Natsumi again. "Yeah, I think I might be f-Ah!"

Natsumi flew away as Inverse Natsumi flew by, soon evaporating the Dragon form into smoke before turning around and aiming Baal towards her blinded original. Soon it glowed brightly.

"Shinigami!" Inverse Natsumi shouted, soon transforming Baal into a staff-like magic blaster. Inverse Natsumi gave a dark smirk. "You used to care so much about how people say you, how about you care about people being unable to see you period!?"

Natsumi gasped, remembering just what the Shinigami's power was. The Shinigami fired off, causing everything that was trapped within the blast to suddenly vanish like it didn't exist, trapped in the illusion Inverse Natsumi had created.

"Gotcha!" Inverse Natsumi smirked, soon cackling as she vanished from view. Nearby the area, Rinne and the others all stopped as they neared it. Rio looked at her mother worried, holding her arm tightly.

"Is Natsumi... gone?" Rio asked.

"No, worse... she's trapped in some kind of illusion, and this illusion is a deadly one. Right now, sight and contact with her is impossible, she's in trouble...and we can't reach her to aid her!" Rinne answered, sweating a bit. "One of them isn't going to leave this illusion zone alive, and if it isn't Natsumi... I fear her dark half may replace her."

The sound of beeping was heard as Mana suddenly gasped, regaining consciousness. She tried to get up only to scream in pain as a Ratatoskr allied doctor forced her back onto the bed, she looked and him and breathed heavily.

"What happened? Why am I here?" Mana asked, she soon turned after hearing many more pained groans and saw the entire AST was in the hospital room as well. It took a while for the memory to fully sink into her as she remembered their fight with the DEM wizards. "We... all of us were beaten?"

"I'm afraid so, even Artemisia and Karen were overwhelmed. Also... I'm sorry to tell you this, but shortly after you knocked unconscious, the DEM managed to kidnap Shido. None of us were able to stop it, Spirit, AST or other." The Doctor answered, hanging his head as Mana gasped. "Oh, you may wanna see this."

The doctor showed a news report that was showcasing the sighting of Choronzon in England, making Mana stare as she remembered seeing the tree manifested by her mother's power. The fact it was black meant only one thing...

"Are you saying my mother's in her Inverse Form? No way, she said that she can't Inverse!" Mana shouted.

"...Did I say she was?" The doctor replied, making Mana blink. "Mana, that true isn't holding your mother. In fact, she's there fighting against it, but someone else holds your mother's power. Unfortunately, the worse has happened, Shido has Inverted."

Mana and the entire AST gasp at that.
"What?" Mana shook, soon trying to get up again. She screamed in more pain as the doctor forced her back down. "L-Let me go, I need to help big brother! Let me go help Shido! I can't just stay here, let me-

The doctor slapped her, making Mana hold her cheek as she looked at him.

"I know how you feel, but you're in no condition. Just moving hurts you. Do you want to try heading over, and then your mother, sister and brother learn you never came back from trying to help you? Or worse, dying!?" The doctor asked, and Mana closed her eyes and teared up.

"I know how you feel, we're all guilty. The DEM used Tenguu Square are the perfect attacking ground. The Spirits couldn't go full out due to civilians, Miku's powers worked to their advantage, especially after she Inverted herself. Worst of all, Ellen didn't fight with Jessica or Chinami just to capture Shido. Even Tohka couldn't fend her off."

Mana soon sighed and looked to the side.

"I'm sorry Mana, we weren't strong enough. Worse is we let ourselves get too cocky. Nia's warning to Shido, we realized it too late... we succeeded to much we didn't change our strategies, and the DEM used it against us." Artemisia replied, and Mana looked at her.

"Don't apologize, after this... we're going to get stronger. So we can keep this from ever happen again!" Mana stated, squeezing her fists. "I swear it... I won't let Westcott achieve victory. My father gave up his life to give us hope, I won't let it die out."

Natsumi feels herself cough as she regained her senses, and soon looked up to see herself in some strange realm that was all washed out and gray-white in color. She got up and looked around, seeing everything that was hit but non-living took the shape, including the buildings.

"I... I knew what it could do, but not how ghastly it would look." Natsumi gulped, looking around. "Haniel, are you still OK?"

[Yeah, I'm alright master. So, this is the space the Shinigami attack created?]

"I think so... kinda spooky though. I'll admit it, I'm so terrified I might have already thrown up and not realized it. Uh, sorry for sharing that." Natsumi stated, sweat dropping as her angel shivered. "Though now here's the big question, where is Inverse Natsumi?"

"Behind you." Inverse Natsumi whispered, making Natsumi gasp as she turned around. She smirked darkly as she held out Baal. "Izanagi - Nahemah!"

Inverse Natsumi held out Baal as it transformed into the dark sword, her right hand twitched with excitement as she stared at Natsumi with a vile smile, and Natsumi gulped as she saw the Demon King copy. However, she gained a focus face and held out Haniel.

"Kaleidoscope - Sandalphon!"

Natsumi swings Haniel as it takes the form of Sandalphon, making Natsumi stare at her Inverse counterpart who gave a smug and cocky grin towards her. Natsumi rushes forward, swinging Sandalphon down on Inverse Natsumi. However, her dark half simply parries her attacks easily and then slashes a dark energy wave at her, knocking her back.

"You're too weak!" Inverse Natsumi declared, laughing as she swung a few more slash waves and knocked Natsumi against the bleached buildings of the Shinigami's illusionary world. She laughs
more as Natsumi falls to the ground weakened.

"See this? This is an example of what you really are, why you can only mimic things! You are nothing, so you have to act like anything else just to feel like you're something, but that doesn't change the fact of what you really are! A zero, an imitation, and a useless blank space!"

Natsumi got up, but soon fell back to the ground.

"No, that's not... it's not..." Natsumi tried to counter, but either from exhaustion or uncertainty she couldn't.

"You're better than you think you are Natsumi." Shido's voice echoed.

Natsumi's eyes widen as she heard that.

"Well, I guess that makes haremette number six." Kotori giggled, while Tohka scratched her head in confusion at the whole situation.

"Hey Shido?" Natsumi sang, making him look at her... only to see a handcuff attached to his hands as Natsumi suddenly assumed a sexy police outfit with her powers. "You're coming with me downtown, for a personal date! No one else allowed."

The others all went wide eyed as Natsumi ran out of the house with a panicked Shido, all staring and blinked.

"She... she just stole Shido!" Tohka finally screamed after a delayed reaction, her ribbon flapping like crazy.

"After five sweet Spirits, we have one who's a bit bolder and possessive apparently." Rinne stated, chuckling a bit. The other Spirits all pouted at that. "3, 2, 1..."

"AFTER THEM!"

The other Spirits all rushed out to chase Natsumi, the Mimicry spirit giggling from far away. She soon slips into a small crack in the walls by transforming her and Shido into slips of garbage wrappers on the ground, making all the others run by without even realizing they missed. She transforms them back after.

"And we gave them the slip, nice!" Natsumi giggled, shifting her police outfit for a dress outfit that was quite... revealing of her cleavage based on what Shido saw. She turned to him and bent to show it, likely intentionally, making Shido nearly have a nosebleed. "Come on Shido, time for our date."

"Where are we going exact-Ah!" Shido exclaimed, soon being pulled by Natsumi somewhere.

Shido panted exhaustively, Natsumi giggling as she held a triple flavor stack of ice cream in her hands, licking all the flavors at once. They had just gone through a bunch of girls' clothing stores... including the lingerie store that Shido had been to with Kurumi once, and Shido had to deal with everyone looking at him as Natsumi tried things on.

"Now that was fun, I think we had a fun date." Natsumi smiled, and Shido groaned with a somewhat forced smile at the reply. Though Natsumi stopped licking her ice cream briefly, making Shido look at her. "It's weird... when I had everyone see me before and show praise for my looks, it felt so empty. Now it doesn't, why?"
Shido blinked at that.

"I had been in this form for so long thinking it was the fake, and now I know it's not. I don't get it... nothing's different, and I just got back my true age and form. It shouldn't sink in, so why am I... aware of it? Why does it feel genuine?"

She feels Shido take her hand and hold it, making her blush a bit.

"Natsumi, you may have powers that work by turning into someone else, copying something else, and all that time you may have never felt happy with what you thought you were... but there's a reason why that makes you so special." Shido answered, making Natsumi blink confused.

"You've gotten to see so much, do so much, experience so much and experience the views of so many people that finally find your own. Finding your place here, that's special because it's something you knew was your decision alone. That's everything you are, and someone to be proud of, and the fact people can see that makes it worth something, because it's the real you. Not just physically, but in your heart and soul."

Natsumi gasped, blushing a bit before smiling and hugging Shido. He blushed a bit as he felt her breasts squeeze against his arm.

"No wonder me and the other Spirits keep falling for you, you're so sweet and know just what to say to a girl." Natsumi smiled, kissing Shido on the cheek to his surprise before cuddling his arm more.

Inverse Natsumi prepared to swing down her copy of Nahemah as she grinned evilly.

"Time to die you little piece of nothing! Inverse Natsumi laughed, soon swinging down Nahemah... only for Natsumi to hold Sandalphon out, the crystalline edge of the blade glowing brightly as it did to the dark half's surprise. "What!?!"

"I am not nothing... I am Natsumi Itsuwari! The Spirit who wields the Haniel crystal, a member of Shido's harem, and most of all... I know who I am, and proud of it!" Natsumi screamed loudly, causing her spirit power to surge off, and soon to Inverse Natsumi's surprise, the Shinigami real broke into pieces.

"You're the one who's nothing, because everything I am is what you aren't! That's the different I've learned from living, and I won't let you end that! Not today, and not any day for as long as I live!"

Natsumi swings her copy of Sandalphon down, and Inverse Natsumi couldn't react as it cut a green slash against her body. Rinne and the others all smile as Inverse Natsumi slowly stepped back, and soon fell on her knees. Meanwhile, Marina smirked as she saw the power of [Phoenix] and [Sorceress] enter her wires.

"What... what did I not have?" Inverse Natsumi asked, reaching a hand out before her body shattered into green spirit power. Natsumi smiled as she turned to the others, giving a thumb's up as the Yamai sister ran and brought her into a hug. Choronzon screamed as the green eye gem broke.

"That's another one, we're almost there!" Rinne smiled, soon motioning to Natsumi to get on a horse. "Come on, the others are still out there. Let's find them and hopefully lend them some aid in time!"

Natsumi nodded and got on, and soon the group continued on as the horses galloped again, and as they did... Choronzon's roots began to uproot in an entire area, the first area to have his roots ripped out of the ground.
"This victory... means... nothing!" Choronzon declared, raising the roots slowly. His remaining eye gems glow brighter. "You've only delayed the inevitable..."

~ETA until the second Chaotic Divergence charge is ready: 27 minutes

Choronzon's body glowed with a dark aura.

"ONLY DELAYED IT!" Choronzon screamed, the aura growing by the second.

And that's another two down! Go Natsumi and Kotori, you both did it! I was initially worried with writing Natsumi's, but luckily once I got far enough into making it. Now aside from Tohka and Inverse Tohka's current battle, only three more left to destroy. How will our remaining Spirits handle their Inversion though? Origami's got some memories it may remind her off, and Yoshino knows hers well due to Yoshinon, but Kurumi? She's not using her Cassiopeia corrupted powers, so... what can her Inverse Form do currently?

Just to clear this now before anyone asks or mentions about Tohka claiming she her Astral Dress not having heels, I am aware that the shoes on Tohka's Astral Dress do have heels normally, but back when I described her Astral Dress in Chapter 2, I described her as wearing armored boots, not armored heels. I do tend to make Tohka a bit more tomboyish in this fanfic, not to mention I don't like heels, and most of all... I just think Inverse Tohka's non-heel shoes are awesome! So... yeah, just consider her normal Astral Dress' shoots to be similar to Inverse Tohka's with her usual colors.

Also answer a question from a guest reviewer who replied while I was making the chapter, I'm glad people are liking how I had Tohka and Origami be friends in this fanfic, I think had this had been Origami's personality from the beginning of canon, she and Tohka would have actually become friends even if not at first. As for your question about Rio and Rinne? No, they can't merge, while the games show they can, that's due to different circumstances regarding Rio being born of part of Rinne's power. In this story, Rio was born in a way closer to asexual reproduction.

Now for the actual end notes talk, as you can see... Choronzon's getting close to being freed and the Chaotic Divergence only has another half hour before it can be fired. Yikes! 0_0 *gulps and breathes* Not to mention Marina's still getting benefits, and Tohka's really in the worst situation she could be right now, hope she finds a way out of this soon for her sake.

Now, it's time the last few rounds against Choronzon and his forces and then... the ultimate reveal I've been waiting to pull out! So until then everyone, stay awesome!

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 99% (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 95% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 90% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 92% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds)
caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 87% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 84% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 78% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 78% (Weight Manipulation)
Alright everyone, time for the night round of battles for the Inverse Form fights, and this time its Kurumi and Origami who're stepping up into the battle ring! On Kurumi's side, she faces the fact she's never entered her natural Inversion, so unlike the others she can't let what she recalls seeing during her prior Inversion to help her, because all the abilities it had were powered by the Cassiopeia and non-existent here. Though there is one good side at least, when Westcott was controlling her Inversion, it got boosted up a rank more than it should, so her Inversion isn't as strong as she remembers either.

Then we have Origami, the problem she'll be facing is the fact her Inverse Form is directly tied to her accidentally murder of her parents, and she was by all means stuck in it for over 5 years. That isn't going to leave her with the most pleasant of memories, and I'll admit it, she's terrified of her Inversion after all that happened while she was in it. She's not just facing her dark half, because without even realizing it, Choronzon manifested her greatest fear into physical form. So we have having no knowledge on one side, and greatest fear on the other... we better wish them some damn good luck. *gulps* 0_0

Choronzon's also finally starting to get free from the ground, and while I'm not sure how many focused sections of a tree's roots are in real life, for Choronzon at least I'll say he's about... maybe a 1/3 of the way done? I can't believe we're starting to get near the end of this arc too, I'd say including this chapter, we'll have about 3 chapters left at the least, and 4 chapters at the most. Depends how things go around next chapter and the one after it. I will say how this arc ends, none of you will see it coming because I've done nothing to foreshadow it :3

Whoops! Nearly forgot, I had intended to say this in the previous chapter, but I forgot to do so, best I do that now before I end up forgetting again. You recall how I mentioned in the previous chapter about unavoidable mistakes like contradictions, mismatched bits of info, or things that feel out of place? Well, there's no guarantee I'll do this, but... when I finally finish with the story, I might make another version of it.

Since by then the whole story will have been finished, I'll essentially have an entire script done to make a remastered version, one that'll use to clear up any details that were off. Like I said, there's no guarantee this is happening, to be honest I'd say the chances of it actually happening are very slim due to me wanting to eventually resume my Date Another Origin series.

If I do end up doing it, it'll be named Date A Re:Live II after the second series and it won't make the old story obsolete. For now, don't think too much on this, this is mostly just a reminder to myself on the idea's possibility and to let you know that it exists and may happen. If I decide it won't happen, or if it will happen, I'll bring it up again when that's the case. For now, there's just this story.

Be prepared everyone, because Round 3 of Normal vs Inverse Spirit fights... *hits gong* BEGIN!

Oh, and here's a data sheet for Inverse Kurumi in her non-corrupted state, just because
Kurumi doesn't know what her Inversion can do doesn't mean you all of can't know ^^

-Inverse Kurumi (Purified State), Code Name: [Paradox]-

Demon King: Lucifuge - Zafkiel's Demon King counterpart, and one of the most dangerous Demon Kings. In its purified form, Lucifuge takes an appearance similar to a compressed version of Kurumi's Carnwennan technique, and become a pair of rapid fire guns that allow multiple targets to be struck at once. The most dangerous ability of Lucifuge is that if Kurumi normally needed to fire at herself in order to activate a bullet, her calibers will automatically activate without the need to shoot. Kurumi still needs to shoot others if she needs them to affect her enemies instead. Lucifuge's shadows also don't need to extend from Kurumi's to attack anymore either.

- Alternate Form: Alpha - The Inverse counterpart of Andromeda. By activating the clocks on both Lucifuge guns, Kurumi can manipulate the 4th dimension and bend time. Unlike her normal form where she can only accelerate, slow, stop and rewind time, recreate a fallen clone and link her mind to it, get a vision of the future, and see past memories to a limited degree with an hourly limitation at best, Inverse Kurumi can do this up to three hours. These abilities are assigned to all the numbers on Lucifuge’s clock gems except III, VI, IX and XII in the mentioned order.

- Alternate Form: Beta - The Inverse counterpart of Bahamut. By combining both guns together, Kurumi transforms Lucifuge into a sniper rifle that takes the form of a M134 Minigun merged with a PGM Hecate II which she can use to fire what she claims are fragmentation of her shadow as silhouettes to attack a specific area. These fragments of her shadows aren't her clones, being better classified as organic attack drones that explode upon making collision with anything, moving and attacking until their power finally runs out and they evaporate away.

- Alternate Form: Gamma - The Inverse counterpart of Carnwennan. Lucifuge's body shifts out and orange energy comes out, taking a spiked form of sorts before extending into the form of a split energy blade. As a result, Lucifuge transforms into a pair of what could best be defined as long gun-blades for close combat situations, though being much more effective than the short range of its normal form. Kurumi states this is her least used form of Lucifuge, due to her powers' nature preferring to avoid such kind of combat.

- Alternate Form: Delta - The Inverse counterpart of Nibellcole. Inverse Kurumi can summon a large group of clones, but where Kurumi's normal form creates four with their own personality and wills, the Delta technique does not and acts no different to the corrupted Kurumi's cloning abilities, only the clones have no will and at best just copy their original's expression. Unlike the corrupted Kurumi however, the clones don't require a bullet to be formed and are much weaker having no defense for the cost of being as powerful as the original.

- Alternate Form: Omega - The Inverse counterpart of Astra. Kurumi's shadow takes the form of a spiky black sun, and soon a jagged orange colored arrow forms inside, beginning a countdown like a clock until it "reaches midnight" for a supercharged gunshot. Unlike in her normal form, Kurumi isn't as vulnerable while using this attack because she can actually move
and attack back using one of Lucifuge gun's, and only one, to fire and keep the charge without resetting it. Should Kurumi be attacked while using it however, she will still have to redo the entire countdown from the start, luckily the countdown is half as long as the Andromeda's.

- **Powers:** Kurumi's Inverse Form while in its purified state has her shadows' power extend beyond the reach of her own, with the time abilities her corrupted state still nowhere near the same or as powerful, but much closer to their strength while in her corrupted state. Her City of Silenced Shadow has evolved into another dimension outright and destroys all traces of light from breaching inside of it, empowering her and weakening her enemies. With an army of sacrificial clones, a boost on her alternate forms and her short-range combat ability increased, the purified Inverse Kurumi may not possess the same threat level that her corrupted form had, but she is still one of the most dangerous Inverse Spirits.

**Risk Factors:** SSS

**Spacequake:** B

**Spirit's Astral Dress:** A

**Demon King Rank:** S

**Strength:** 229

**Consistency:** 202

**Spiritual Power:** 235

**Agility:** 217

**Intelligence:** 200

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*Chapter 45, S2: Choronzon Havoc, Part 10*

The group of civilians and the victories Spirits were still riding through the broken city and land before them as they tried to find Tohka, Origami, Kurumi, and/or Yoshino throughout the mess before them. Kotori trying to spot their spirit power's colors streaking through the air to no avail.

"No good, I still don't see any of them, where are they?" Kotori wondered, biting her lip a bit.

"Maybe they finally kicked the bucket against their Inversions? We did nearly see that with [Witch] after-" Marina began, only to have Natsumi slap her in the face. "OW! What the hell lady!"

"Marina, you may be fighting with us right now but that doesn't change the fact you're with the DEM and hate us, as does the fact not a single one of us here trusts you. Good reason Natsumi has to slap you silly!" Rinne said, glaring a bit at her. Making the AI grumble.

"Well, I trust her." Maria answered.

Everyone gives Maria and odd stare while Marina silently screams as she slammed her head down on the saddle of her horse, Maria blinking at them as they all looked at her as they currently did.
"Maria, I think we might need to have a talk with you when this is all over." Mayuri sighed, causing the AI to make a surprised face. Marina groaned in annoyance at her good counterpart.

"Say out of curiosity, what was that girl your friend was facing? Looked just like her but cruel and malicious." A woman asked.

"That's because it was her if she was cruel and malicious. The being you saw was her Inverse form, they're usually not separate beings, but Choronzon's changed that." Rinne replied, soon breathing a bit as everyone focused on her.

"Part of what Westcott's ambitions did when I fought him 30 years ago caused his evil, his dark nature, everything negative and dark about him to taint the objects that have turned most of the girls here into Spirits, the Sephira Crystals. These taints are the souls of the rest of my kind who were trapped within them. Whenever a Spirit face the peak of negative emotion, and falls to despair... they undergo Inversion because they're being forced to hold those feelings."

Everyone gasped at that.

"Their souls blame all of Humanity because they had known nothing but good people in the Spirit Dimension, my husband included. Westcott used that to make the betrayal even worse. When these girls Inverse, their Humanity prevents them from fully being taken over, they just get unstable. What happened with my son and forming Choronzon is something else. Westcott's goal, claim that power as his own, hence why this happened."

"That bastard!" A man growled, slamming on his knee. "So, there's one for each of you out there right now?"

Rinne shakes her head.

"No, not all of us have it. Me, Rio, Mayuri, Maria and Marina can't Inverse under any circumstances. Also, the only ones who have their Inversions present are the Spirits my son Shido has sealed away." Rinne replied, making everyone look confused.

"It's kinda how we keep the DEM from claiming the Spirits power, my husband left my son with the power after managing to create it with materials he was exposed to when saving him from the DEM after a prior kidnapping. Three of the Spirits aren't sealed, so there's only 7, by now we only have four left, but one keeps reviving."

Rinne looks forward, and Marina checks the timer again.

"And hopefully Tohka can find a way to destroy it. We have to... if we want to save the world from total destruction. Seigo, please... lend me strength. Lend us strength!"

~ETA until the second Chaotic Divergence charge is ready: 25 minutes

Marina closes her panel and looks up as the horse's keep galloping.

'And hopefully, give me the remaining Inverse Spirit power traces I need.' Marina thought, hiding her smirk within her mind. While that was happening, Nia was looking at Raziel to see if she could get an answer to how to stop Choronzon for good... but the words were still all jumbled out of order.

'Still nothing, the Inversions are still destabilizing Raziel's information network.' Nia thought, sighing a bit. 'Come on guys, you can find a way. I know you can... please don't give up. Most of you have already managed to defeat the stronger dark sides of yourselves while weakened. This is not the end of Earth, we won't let it be!'
Kurumi flew back as a shadow blast knocked her back, she panted heavily as she saw her Inverse Form giggle and stare somewhat insanely at her. Kurumi grimaced and sweated at that look... remembering how she used to make it when the Cassiopeia was attached to her.

"Aw, how sad. It hurts me you seem so averse to my party of violence." Inverse Kurumi stated, as the original Kurumi stares at the smoking craters from Lucifuge's gunshots. The Inverse Form looked at her serious right after as Kurumi fired at her, and soon jumped off the edge into the air.

"Nibellcole!"

Zafkiel's clock gems spun to hit the III, VI, IX and XII spots as Kurumi's shadow split, summoning Shincho, Kinshu, Masayoshi and Yuuki from her shadow to swarm out. Kurumi landed on a wall and jumped back up with them.

"Let's see how you handle all of us!" Kurumi shouted.

[5 heads are better than 1 after all!]

Inverse Kurumi giggles as she activates her time power to fast forward out of the way of their gunshots, soon she raised her hand after diving off towards the ground.

"City of Silent Shadows."

Suddenly the entire section of the city that they were in suddenly gets covered in shadow, and where normally things just got red and dark with Kurumi's... it was as if all light had been swallowed, nearly like her shadow realm, but if she could suck a whole city inside of it.

"Now, let me show you my own little posse of girls, now come to me... DELTA!"

Suddenly Kurumi and all of the Nibellcole girls see copies of Inverse Kurumi form from walls on the shadowed buildings, all with laughing insane faces that seemed stuck and in an entire army's worth.

"A whole army, it's just like how your corrupted powers worked!" Shincho sweated, looking at the forces surrounding them. She and the Nibellcole clones all began firing, but they Kurumi clones simply danced all around them and fired Lucifuge at them, hitting them with no effort." Agh! Damn it, how are they so powerful!?

All the clones look at them, laughing with the same insane look. Soon they all rush at them, and Kurumi takes the lead.

"Carnwennan!"

Suddenly the clones that tried to rush them were all sliced into ribbons and burst into black spirit power instantly. Blue energy blades having grown off Zafkiel's body as Kurumi pants. She looks at Inverse Kurumi as she stares and laughs at her.

"You've only faced my Hors d'oeuvres. Since you've had a taste, here's the main course." Inverse Kurumi smirked, snapping her right hand as even more clones appear and surround the five.

"Damn it, based on my last attack, these things may have no defense... but there's too many of them!" Kurumi sweated, she and her clones were soon back to back.

"Well there's a bright side, they don't seem to be able to use Lucifuge's time powers, or any more than normal gun shots." Kinshu replied, soon firing at a few of them. "So, what do we do? We're
outnumbered, out powered and worse is your Inverse Form looks like she's an insane Sadomasochist!"

The other clones and Kurumi sweat dropped at that.

"Oh... sorry, too much?" Kinshu asked, they all nod. "My apologies. Though the first two points I think we do need to pay attention to, how can we handle this?"

Kurumi and the Nibellcole clones all sweat as they fire against the clones before them.

Back on the Fraxinus, which was still hovering over Tenguu Square, the sight of those who had been freed from Miku's mind control looking around confused as her Inversion's dark spirit power finally faded from their minds.

Meanwhile inside the ship, the crew and Reine were doing everything they could to get power back, and it seemed like no results were working so far. After a bit though, Reine noticed something and after typing on some keys incredibly fast... the lights flickered back as the simplest of the ship system's regained power.

"Yes!" Reine cheered, soon making everyone sigh in relief. Reine soon tried to open a communication channel to one of the headsets... but nothing. "Dang it, communications still aren't working. Shiizaki, can you give me any readings on the ship's status?"

"Already have Commander. It seems we can only move at the slowest speed, and our territories can only work with the Ashcroft Delta devices activated. We can't use communications and our weapons are down. Right now, the ship can only function." Shiizaki replied, Reine sweated as no one realized the ship had become visible.

"Commander, what should we do?"

Reine tried to think, and Minowa noticed something.

"Commander, some of Rinne's spirit power is still lingering around the ship. Maybe we can get a communication channel to her headset by linking to her own Spirit power?" Minowa suggested.

"Try it Minowa, we need to know what's going-" Reine began, only for an alarm to go off as it finally reached them. "What the?"

Suddenly Shiizaki sees her screen register the deadly [Category F] warning despite it had already been present for almost half an hour by this point. Shiizaki turned to Reine as she saw this with a concerned look on her face.

"Commander, I don't recognize this... what's a Category F?" Shiizaki asked, confusing Reine who didn't know about it.

"Category F? That's the first I've heard of such a thing, but... if I had to make a guess, it's something worse than an Inversion. Minowa, try getting contact with Rinne ASAP!" Reine shouted, making Minowa nod as she did. She tried tapping into a broadcast when she heard Rinne's headset connect. "Yes! Rinne, do you read me!?"

Rinne suddenly heard her headset blink and gasped as she whistles to make all the Horses stop, she taps her ear and she listens as she hears Reine's voice reach her, making her gasp as she realized communications got through.
"I repeat! Rinne, do you read me!?" Reine stated.

"Yeah, I hear you Reine! So that means the Fraxinus is finally back in action?" Rinne asked.

"Well... sorta of, power's back on and we're heading over to your location, but we've still got most of our systems on the fritz. Your spirit power lingering here is the only reason we managed to contact you. Never mind that... do you know what a Category F is?" Reine asked, hearing Rinne gasp. "Oh god, you gasped... how bad is it?"

Rinne sighed.

"One second." Rinne replied, looking at the others. "If you ask, I'm being contacted by my sister-in-law. She's part of a group that goes against the DEM to protect this world and she's asking me some questions since she's been unable to for a while."

Rinne taps her headset again.

"Category F... is a category only me and Elliot knew of because we hoped it would never sound off. Shido's entered his Inverse Form!" Reine answered, making Reine gasp as she heard it. "Right now, Shido's body is trapped inside a Demon King called Choronzon. We're trying to stop it right and save him."

"Dear god... are you saying that Westcott pushed Shido into an Inversion? Wait, I don't get it, why was it so bad you hoped it would never happen?" Reine asked, and Rinne grimaced.

"Because... if we fail to stop it, it's signaled the end of the world." Reine admitted, and Reine goes silent as her face freezes.

"The whole AST is down and the base can't be accessed, aside from us no one can stop it. Without any weapons you can't help, but you can help us with the refugees. We're with the survivors and told them the truth, give them all shelter the moment you arrive!"

Reine was still shaking after she froze from Rinne's revelation.

"The whole AST is down and the base can't be accessed, aside from us no one can stop it. Without any weapons you can't help, but you can help us with the refugees. We're with the survivors and told them the truth, give them all shelter the moment you arrive!" Rinne exclaimed, and Reine soon nodded.

"OK, I understand... we're on our way." Reine replied, soon cutting the connection as the others all stared at her. "Everyone, according to Rinne... Category F is a world ending scenario, Westcott somehow caused Shido to enter an inversion and its threatens to rip the world apart."

Everyone gasped at that.

"We're heading over to help give shelter to the refugees, it's the best we can do. The enemy before us is one we have no method to fight. It doesn't sound like Rinne's group is having the best luck themselves. Do I make myself clear?" Reine stated.

"Yes Commander!" The whole crew replied.

The Fraxinus begins flying towards England, Reine sweating as they did.

~ETA until the second Chaotic Divergence charge is ready: 21 minutes~
"Everyone, please be careful... please make it back alive!" Reine whispered to herself, looking forward as she starts seeing the broadcast showing Choronzon's monstrous form and the devastation he wrought upon appearing. She grabbed the ring on her necklace tightly. 'Isamu, if you have any strength you could lend me... please do so now!'

Tohka was flying away as she took another moment to regain some strength from fighting her Inversion, she coughed a bit as she had trouble breathing as she noticed the City of Silent Shadows that had been made by Inverse Kurumi.

"That's... no, that's not Kurumi's the Spirit power doesn't feel like hers." Tohka gasped, and soon hears Inverse Tohka step into view and turns. "Aw man, you're like a rash that doesn't leave!"

"And you're a mouse that keeps scampering. Enough jokes weakling." Inverse Tohka replied, readying Nahemah. Tohka suddenly gets an idea as she looks behind her, smirking a bit. "Why are you smiling?"

Tohka soon breathes and pulls an eyelid down, sticking her tongue out at her. Inverse Tohka suddenly had a vein form on her head.

"If you can only face me with mockery, then I'll end this..." Inverse Tohka began, soon charging Nahemah's power as the red glow of Nahemah's crystalline blade edge glows brighter. "Right now! Now Nahemah!"

Inverse Tohka soon began to swing down, and Tohka formed a sandstorm to blind her as she swung the large slash wave down. Tohka soon flew out and the blue glow of Sandalphon's crystalline blade edge began shining brighter.

"Kurumi, I'm sending some help your way!" Tohka exclaimed, swinging down as Inverse Tohka finally regained her vision and realized what had happened.

"No, I've been tricked!" Inverse Tohka gasped, watching the two slash waves collide against the barrier of shadows.

"BETA!"

A large blast fires from a sniper rifle that takes the form of a M134 Minigun merged with a PGM Hecate II, sending Kurumi and all of her Nibellcole clones flying as they crash through some buildings and land in a pile.

"Dang it, we can't... fall here." Kurumi pant, Yuuki helping her up. As she looks at Inverse Kurumi's cackling she came to a realization. "Everyone, watch my back. I'm using the Astra."

"What!?" Masayoshi gasped. "Are you crazy, you know how risky that is and in this situation, there's too much to deal with! You'll be leaving yourself wide open!"

"Not to mention this City of Silent Shadows seems to be weakening us and empowering your dark half!" Yuuki added, trying to talk Kurumi out of it. "You know that right now there's-"

Kurumi looks at them, making them stop.

"Please, trust me... just like he asked me to trust him!" Kurumi begged, and her clones realized why she was so settled on this. Looking at each other they soon nod at each other and then at Kurumi. "Thank you, here we go... ASTRA!"
Kurumi twirls and holds one of Zafkiel's guns up, and soon her shadow takes the form of a spiky black sun, with a light blue arrow forming within it like the shape of a clock. The sound of a bell telling began as it began a countdown like a real clock.

"Protect Kurumi at all costs, don't let a single attack or clone get near her!" Kinshu declared, making all of the Nibellcole clones fly out and attack every clone they could, forcing to scramble or avoid nearing Kurumi so they wouldn't be shot. As they did, Kurumi's clock reached the 3 O'clock spot.

"What are you trying, your efforts won't matter. You should let me eat you, I bet you still suffer from the memories of what you did. Even if it wasn't you, that man was able to kill tens of thousands through you!" Inverse Kurumi cackled, however stopped when Kurumi said nothing. "Hello, I'm talking to you!"

Kurumi breathed.

'I'm not perfect, I've made mistakes. Most of all I did let the DEM use me without realizing for years... but that doesn't matter! Shido said it to me himself, why I shouldn't blame myself and made me realize I can just keep moving forward!' Kurumi thought, soon remembering those special words.

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Kurumi felt herself within the realm of her mind, videos of her memories play through her head. A certain group of them back from where Shido promised he'd save her no matter what rushed by.

"Don't say it doesn't matter if you die because of course it does! If you need a reason to live, I'll be that reason! No matter what, your life matters to me Kurumi!" Shido's voice echoed.

"If it makes you happy there's nothing I won't do." Shido's voice echoed.

"I know you're a good person! Saya, she told us everything! With what Westcott did to you, none of how you acted when you weren't nice was real, the kindness you showed us was however!" Shido's voice echoed.

"Tell me what will make you happy, and I swear that's what I'll do for you! Even if that means just loving you!" Shido's voice echoed.

Kurumi put a hand to her heart as they continued.

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'Every memory... every moment... every emotion... every part of my past, my present and my future... it mixes together to become who I am. It isn't because of my essence alone, everyone in it played a part.' Kurumi thought, the clock reaching six as her spirit power's aura intensified.

'Mom, Dad, Saya, the AST, everyone in Ratatoskr, Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori, Mana, Natsumi, Kaguya, Yuzuru, Nia, Miku, and most of all Shido... all the power in this attack of mine is the result of the journey you've taken with me!'

Kurumi moved her guns forward as the clock hits nine, and Inverse Kurumi growls as she rushes at Kurumi and passes all the clones.

"GAMMA!"

Inverse Kotor's gun-blades form and swings forward, firing off blasts near Kurumi who shows no fear as the shots miss, Inverse Kurumi growling as she did as she readied to slashed the blades down
and cut Kurumi in half.

"I'll take you down myself, now die you pathetic-" Inverse Kurumi began, only to hear something hit the barrier behind her. She turns as she sees Tohka and Inverse Tohka's attacks hit it. "Wait, what!? No... no! Don't break the barrier! Please, please hold!"

Unfortunately, her voice failed to be heard... and the City of Shadowed Time shattered. She turned as the countdown of Kurumi's Astra finally expired as it completed the rotation cycle, making her dark half gasped.

"Inverse Kurumi, with this attack... I hope you find peace." Kurumi smiled, soon discharging the whole blast and knocking all her clones away as Inverse Kurumi was sent flying. As the beam encompassed her, Kurumi flew towards her with Carnwennan held out. Soon stabbing them through her.

"To answer your question? Yeah, I do suffer, but... I don't let it define me. I use it to move forward." Kurumi answered, making Inverse Kurumi stare at her in surprise as Kurumi's sweet smile at the situation didn't make any sense to her. "Because while I may have power over time, I'm the one who accepts my past and decides my future."

Inverse Kurumi stared at her original before she shattered apart into black spirit power.

- (*insert song end*) -

Kurumi soon fell to the ground, and the Nibellcole clones all catch her, seeing her smiling sleeping form as Choronzon screamed from afar, his black eye gem bursting apart at the defeat of Inverse Kurumi. The Nibellcole clones all look at each other and smile.

"No matter how dark your power is, we all know how much you really shine. Good job Kurumi." Yuuki smiled, soon turning as Rinne and the others ride by the area. She waves at them. "Hey Rinne, Kurumi's over here! She won her battle!"

Rinne stops as she hears that, making everyone turn to see the Nibellcole clones holding a sleeping Kurumi.

'She had one of the toughest battles to face, and she won! Nice job Kurumi, be proud of yourself.' Rinne thought, soon getting off her horse to help the Nibellcole clones get Kurumi on one.

Origami shook, her face sweating as she saw the cold blank gaze of Inverse Origami staring at her, breathing heavily as she began having a small panic attack as certain memories of 5 years ago race into her head along with her conflicts with Tohka while both were in their Inversions.

The others may have been more willing to fight their Inverse Forms, and while some like Kaguya and Yuzuru only got a bit shaken when it came to a situational response to their fight such as the two being separated, Origami was completely terrified.

She was seeing the demon that result from killing her parents, she was seeing... the sin she committed, the feeling that even now left a lingering feeling of wanting to die that she only pushed aside due to Shido. Now it was before her, the manifestation of all the bad she done. Inverse Origami teleported before her original and then...

"...Do you wanna kill someone, like you killed the both of them?" Inverse Origami asked monotonously, almost as if she was an organic robot following orders with how she replied. Origami's eyes widened and she screamed and fired Metatron at them. Inverse Origami's auto-
teleportation made her dodge each blast successfully.

"Stay away from me! Stay away! I'm not you, I'm not!" Origami screamed, blasting out beams of light without trying to focus as she held her head and closed her eyes. Trying to deny the situation before her with every fiber of her being. "Please, just go away!

Inverse Origami continued teleporting around, and soon appeared by Origami and grabbed her, making her gasp as her dark half's unchanging stare gazed at her like a savage predator glaring all courage and resistance out of its prey to destroy any chances of its escape or losing to it.

"Don't deny it, you know. It was just the first stage of what you'll do to the rest of the human race. Don't fight it. If you try, I'll just inherit the role from you. Oh wait, I am you, so you'll still be doing it." Inverse Origami stated monotonously, forming Satan's pillars behind Origami as she panicked and tried to get free.

"Stop fighting it, you can't when you can't beat yourself. Even in this scenario you can't win because there's no way to fight yourself and destroy this. You know the truth, you know the real reason you try to die... because you relished your first kills."

Origami tries to kick her Inverse counterpart off her to no avail.

"You're wrong! You're wrong, I'm not like you! I'm not, I'll never be!" Origami screamed loudly, screaming more as she tried to bite Inverse Origami's arm to make her let go of her body, but soon Satan fired its dark beams of light and Origami was hit hard.

She went flying and landed on a building, her back singed from the searing intensity of the light's blast. Origami turned as Inverse Origami stared at her, the residue of the light's blast in the night sky manifested as a cold and terrifying stare all from the lack of emotion, her eyes glowing blue in a menacing hue and tone.

"Shut up! Go away, leave me alone!" Origami screamed, Metatron's pillars soon rushed into position. "Kadour - Sword of Light!"

Each pillar rushed forward and fired an independent beam, Inverse Origami dodged the first blast due to her auto-teleportation, and when Origami expected the next blast would hit at the area she calculated she'd teleport to... she auto-teleported again, managing to escape before flying after it ran out of chained use.

"No..." Origami breathed, soon a dark beam of light at her and she teleported... only for Inverse Origami to appear right where she had to her horror. "NO!"

"Yes." Inverse Origami stated monotonously, grabbing her throat and beginning to choke her. Origami coughed as she felt herself blacking out, her vision blurring away as her life began to slip away before her eyes. Origami struggled to not go limp. "Stop running and accept the truth, I know what you are. Admit it to yourself... do it."

Origami's left arm slipped, and she felt her right arm about to give in.

'This is my punishment, this is... why Chinami refuses to accept me, isn't it? Mom... Dad... I'm sorry.' Origami thought, and soon enough Metatron's crown glowed.

[This isn't the end master... no, this isn't the end Origami! FIIIIIIIIIIIGHT!]

Origami found herself in her mind, laying on the ground. She got up and looked at where she was
and got on her feet. Nothing but endless blackness as she stared at the sight before her.

"Where am I? Am... am I dead, has my suffering finally ended?" Origami wondered, walking around despite there was nothing to be present in this black realm. Soon before her formed a copy of herself, looking just like Chinami but with her colors. "W-who are you!?"

"You've killed, so why have you run?" 'Origami' spoke, making Origami back up, but no matter how much she did the short haired version of herself before her didn't get further. In fact, she swore she was getting closer without taking even a single step. "Stop denying the path, once is enough. Don't turn away from it!"

Origami fell over and screamed as her short haired copy tried to grab herself. Right as she was about to take hold...

"Get away from our daughter!"

Suddenly the short haired copy shook, and she suddenly dissolved away. Origami gasped and turned around, and soon gasped as she saw them, she saw... her mother and father looking at them smiling.

Her father had short dark brown hair and a tall stature, wearing black sweater with a white shirt underneath it and brown cargo pants. Her mother had brown hair tied in a side plait, wearing a yellow long sleeved shirt that stopped a bit past her elbows and black pants with an apron on. These were the outfits they were wearing before their last moments.

"Mom... dad..." Origami breathed, her eyes soon shaking as she cried and ran over to them. Hugging them tightly as they did the same and rubbed her back. "B-But how, I thought you were... how is this possible?"

"It might have to do with the fact we're in your mind... I think." Origami's father answered, making Origami’s face go blank for a moment as she scrunched her mouth a bit. Then she realized she was being choked before she was in here and blushed a bit.

"Look at you, you've become such a wonderful young lady in the last few years." Origami's mother replied, making Origami blush as she rubbed her cheek before taking some of her daughter's hair in her hand. "You even grew out your hair like I suggested, it really does suit you."

Origami sniffs a bit.

"I... I grew out in honor of you telling me that, I wanted keep something to remember you by."

Origami answered, sniffing more before crying and hugging them tightly.

"I'm so sorry! I never wanted this to happen, I... I just wanted to protect you, but what I gained to do that took you away right before me! I'm barely any different from a murderer, I just wanted to die and see you again!"

Origami's mother wiped her tears from her face.

"Don't blame yourself sweetie, you have nothing to apologize for. Dry your tears." Origami's mother said as she comforted her.

"But... but I... I-" Origami stated, only to her sobbing as she saw Metatron's crown behind her. Normally Metatron couldn't shed tears, so perhaps her mind was letting the Angel manifest what it wanted to truly convey. "Metatron? W-why are you crying?"
Metatron kept sobbing as she neared Origami.

[Because... your mother's right, I should have told you this long ago... but I never thought you'd believe me. Origami, your powers didn't lose control, think about it... why did only one pillar fire?]

Origami blinked at that, and then realized... Metatron was right, their position at the time wasn't Kadour, and that was the only time one could move outside a formation. Even then she had never seen only one move alone except that one time.

[You've realized it, there's a reason for that. It's because... when you saw your parents, it wasn't that the surprise made you subconsciously fire at them due to that shock associating them as a threat... I fired at them!]

“What!?” Origami gasped, it was her own Angel's consciousness that fired? That single pillar... was Metatron's shot and not hers?

[Your... your last possessor was killed by Marina, brutally no less. Marina bound her with her wires and I was in a spot I couldn't fire without risking her. I watched as Marina gassed her with poison and acid that melted her to death!]

Origami turned a bit green and held her mouth upon hearing that.

[When you became my new host, when you found your parents, the fire kept me from seeing them properly. I thought I saw Marina, and not wanting to be unable to save you... I forced my will into a pillar and fired, but it wasn't until you cried that I realized who I really shot. It was never you Origami, I'm the real killer of your parents!]

"Metatron..." Origami breathed, soon reaching out a hand to rub the crown representing her Angel as more tears shed from it. "All this time, you bore this burden because you didn't think I'd believe you. When you kept telling me not to die, this was why... you blamed yourself."

Origami's lip trembled before she pulled Metatron close and hugged the Angel. Metatron shifted to look at her as it did.

"I forgive you."

[W-what? But Origami, I-]

"Metatron, all this time I was suffering because I thought I killed my parents. Yes, it still hurts that they're gone, that they'll never come back... but now I know these hands of mine didn't truly kill. My Inverse Form, she represents the sin of our mistake... it's the true horror." Origami explained, sobbing more.

"What Rinne told us... the Inverse Forms' origin, if anything's to blame for that day then it's that dark power. Never again, we won't let it do more damage ever again! That's a promise, right... partner!?”

Metatron paused, and soon remembered Marina's look... and then a brief moment the pillar it fired was flashing black. Soon tears shed from Metatron again.

[Y-yeah... that's a promise Origami! We're partners!]

Origami sniffles and smiles, soon turning to her parents with a sad look and she hiccups and cries more.
"This is... this is goodbye, I have to leave now." Origami cried, wiping her tears. Her father soon cups her face and looks at her in the eyes.

"No it isn't, that little pink haired friend of yours? Because of her, our souls are always with you. Even if not physically... we'll always be with you." Origami's father smiled, and Origami gasped as she finally understood what Rio did with her parents' ashes... she put their souls into her.

Origami cried more as she smiled, she felt them hug her one last time before the black realm turned white and she returned to reality. She opened her eyes with a determined face on her now.

"I may be shy, I may stutter... but from now on I won't let the past defy me. I know the truth now and I will fight! I will protect my family, I will protect Shido and everyone else!" Origami declared, and remembered Tohka smiling at her the day they became friends. "You were right Tohka, we both had a second chance. Now I'm actually gonna use it!"

Origami's eyes suddenly focused and she threw her limp left arm in Inverse Origami's face, hitting the Inverse counterpart hard enough for her to release her and suddenly gasp at Origami's suddenly strength.

- (*Attack on Titan - Call your name*) -

Origami looked at her, no longer afraid of her.

"What's with that face, have you finally accepted the truth?" Inverse Origami asked, Origami sighed before staring at her with serious eyes.

[No, she didn't accept it. Because your truth was a lie... the one who committed death was me... no, it was Marina's death of my previous host allowing the Inverse power to manifest briefly and kill her parents. You are the killer, and used me to do the deed!]

Inverse Origami suddenly shifted her eyes a bit at the claim, and soon widened them at the sight of Origami's eyes glowing like hers, but for her it wasn't a fearful glow... it was a radiant one that made those watching feel like they saw an Angel coming to save them.

"I... will never let myself feel the need to die, Shido and Rio... and Tohka! All of them made me live long enough to see the truth! For that reason... I'm going to fight, so I can protect them and save Shido!" Origami declared, soon having Metatron fire at Inverse Origami.

Her dark half auto-teleported again, and at this point Rinne's group arrived to see her fight. Mayuri soon prepared to get off her horse.

"Come on, let's go help-" Mayuri began, only for Rinne to stop her. Mayuri looked at Rinne in surprise. "Rinne?"

"I see it in her eyes, Origami's about to overcome her greatest demon. Let's not interfere." Rinne replied, and Mayuri blinked before nodded and making her watch alongside everyone else. Origami flew at Inverse Origami and knocked her back.

Origami flew up into the air and aimed Metatron at her.

"Kadour - Sword of Light!" Origami declared, and the pillars fire their beams. Inverse Origami dodges them via her auto-teleportation and soon began dodging as the pillars dove down like swords. She was about to dodge the last one only for Origami to constrict her.
"No, this... you can't!" Inverse Origami shouted, and Origami gave her a look that made her suddenly freeze as Origami threw her up and made the sword collide to her shock. "No... this isn't... it isn't possible!"

Origami pants as she aims a Metatron pillar that fell near her hands.

"FIRE!" Origami screamed loudly, and the pillar fired its beam of light. Inverse Origami was consumed by it as her eyes went blank and shattered apart as white spirit power. Origami pants as she stared at the result, as did everyone else. Origami fell to her knees and soon teared up.

"Mom... dad... are you watching? As of today, your deaths... have been avenged, and my demons... have been purged!"

Origami cried, but with happy tears as she smiled, Rinne smiled as she walked over and helped her up. She hugged her close and rubbed her back, letting Origami let it all out as she finally found her pace and Choronzon's screams rang out, the white eye gem breaking.

"You did good Origami, you did good." Rinne smiled, looking towards Choronzon. "Now all that's left is Inverse Yoshino and Inverse Tohka. Victory is closing in on us, don't give up you two!"

- (*insert song end*) -

Meanwhile with the ultimate Demon King himself, he growled as soon enough, the second section of roots tore out of the ground. Soon enough, the sight of Choronzon's roots flapping like wings entered the sight of many as its final section of roots began to pull out faster.

"Yes, almost! I'm also there! Soon enough I'll be coming for you, then we'll see your bravado!"
Choronzon cackled, making Rinne and the others look in horror. That's when Marina realized what was about to happen, seeing the dark spirit power of [Paradox] and [Devil] in her wires.

"He's not just trying to become mobile... he's trying to fly!" Marina gasped, suddenly sweating profusely. "How much time left?"

~ETA until the second Chaotic Divergence charge is ready: 15 minutes

Marina paled, they only had a quarter of their remaining time left, and one of the last two Inversions was currently unbeatable by what everyone saw.

"Oh man... this just became all the more real." Rinne replied, a drop of sweat trickling down her cheek. Choronzon gave a might shriek as the sight of the last set of roots continued to start ripping free. All the while, Shido's unconscious form was still unresponsive within Choronzon.

Tohka turned at the sight, and stared as she sweated.

"SHIIIIIIIIIIIIIDOOOOOOOOOOOOO!" Tohka screamed, her voice's echo almost as a signal to the battle nearing its end.

Alright, nice one Kurumi! What a twist with Origami too. Who would have thought, it wasn’t her, but Metatron who did the fatal deed... and apparently the first sign of Inversions manifested somehow, and apparently it might have been Marina's fault for poisoning Origami's predecessor to death. I had planned to drop this bomb since Origami's arc, kind of a way to give her closure due to how different her arc was from canon.
Oh, and I had two guest reviews ask about this, also giving me a reason to show that brief moment of Shido's current status. They both asked me about feeling Shido was fighting Choronzon from the inside. Well he isn't directly doing it, but subconsciously has in a way no one's realized, and since I may not bring it up I should say what it is now. Have any of you noticed how most of the Spirits are getting second winds at the last moment?

He's unconsciously, and without Choronzon noticing, giving them the strength they need at a dire moment. His whole denial of seeing that hallucination of Tohka's death? While the darker spirit power Choronzon's channeling has used it to make Inverse Tohka have the power to respawn (oh, I should mention Tohka's already re-destroyed her a few times, more on that next chapter), Shido's bonds with them still hold and are helping them stay strong to find a way through at the last moment.

The Fraxinus is finally back up and running, but not completely, so they can at best pick up the survivors and move them to safety... because the moment Choronzon uproots from the ground and takes flight, they might not be able to survive much longer. They better hope 15 minutes is enough time to make it over before Choronzon's Chaotic Divergence is ready to fire off again.

See you all next time where Yoshino takes on her Inverse Form and finally... the moment I've been waiting all season to make will happen with Tohka! Until then everyone, stay awesome ^^

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-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 99% (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 95% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 90% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 92% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 87% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 84% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 78% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 78% (Weight Manipulation)
Wow! Everyone, you've given me so many reviews in the last few days that I'm honestly surprised, so I wanted to thank everyone for that. It was really nice to hear, I also wanna give a shout out to the author of "Alive A Live" who read this story and found it great, Jack555RIPper! His story is great, and if you like a character that terrifies you, the reader, this story is for you. So I'd check it out, and for some added trivia? Based on what I've read, his story has the honor of being the first to show Mukuro in any form in a DAL fanfic, so congrats to him ^^

To answer a review from Seeker213: "Normally you'd be right, but that's not what I've planned. For one, the Arbitel can't get any footage, it's only meant for battle. Plus, I think you've missed a few details on why any footage Westcott could get wouldn't do him any good. The DEM main branch's upper half was destroyed half while Choronzon's rooted in the lower half, which would imply to people that they caused Choronzon to appear."

"Also, Marina's fight? She didn't even try to hide her true nature, ripping your opponent in half and then grinding your foot over where a fragment of their body fell does not look heroic at all. As for the Inversions, they've only been fighting their respective counterparts, meaning he'd be showing the real Spirits trying to stop them so... basically, the only footage he can get would aid his enemies' heroism, and makes the DEM look like the villains ^^;"

"The biggest reason why this isn't happening though? Well, that's a spoiler, so you'll need to read the chapter, let's just say even if Westcott planned to do it... he would have been too slow. Oh! Thanks for that insert song suggestion, you were right, it totally fit the mood I had for Yoshino and Inverse Yoshino's fight. As a result, I've decided to add it in there."

Now before we begin the author talk of the start notes, I think you all remember me saying how I'd explain more on how Tohka had already destroyed Inverse Tohka a few times during the multiple fights we've had so far? Well, since Tohka already had her main fight with her, I've made every fight with her dark counterpart, and by extension every time she destroys Inverse Tohka again, all off-screen moments. I figured you didn't wanna see her win multiple times in a row in what would be the same or a very similar manner each time.

To give you an idea of when she destroys her again, any scene where Inverse Tohka's suddenly missing for a moment, Tohka needed a quick break to catch to recuperate, or Inverse Tohka appeared unscathed is when Tohka had just recently destroyed her before Choronzon revived her, so it's already been a good number of times. She is starting to run out of steam though, as while Tohka may be able to turn her willpower into strength to fight with, that doesn't do anything for her stamina or sore muscles. This is the chapter where her fumes will finally run out.

OK, now to officially begin the start notes! This time we'll have Yoshino be taking the stage against her Inversion, and this one's gonna be the most interesting since originally, Inverse Yoshino was none other than Yoshinon before she 'died' and went back into Yoshino. Is that still the case here? Well, a unique way of answering that is while the Inverse Form's body might be the one Yoshinon used only aged up, this Inverse Yoshinon isn't her. She sounds like
her and looks like her, but Yoshinon is truly gone even through her Inversion. Hopefully Yoshino can accept that.

As for Tohka herself, how will things go in her case? Her Inverse Form just keeps coming back, she can't seem to destroy it, and because of that... Choronzon's purple eye gem isn't breaking. Makes you wonder, what am I gonna pull out of my bag of tricks for this chapter's big reveal? Well, you might be surprised when it happens. I'll just say now, in this chapter... you're about to see something BIG!

So now with that cleared up, only one thing left to say. Here we go everyone, the Final Round of Inverse Spirit fights... *hits the gong* BEGIN!

Chapter 46, S2: Choronzon Havoc, Part 11

The sight of Tohka and Inverse Tohka clashing their Halvanhelev and Paverschlev at each other filled the sky, Tohka shouted as she swung while Inverse Tohka barely showed any reaction... and yet her mouth and eyes began to show slightly irritation. Soon their swords broke and shifted back to normal as each of them slide across a rooftop.

"I don't care... how many times I have to destroy you, because... I'm going to save Shido no matter what!" Tohka exclaimed, holding Sandalphon out. Upon hearing this, Inverse Tohka suddenly showed a more emotional response. Almost as if she wasn't a separate being at the moment.

"What is it with you? What is it... that irritates me so much!?!" Inverse Tohka demanded, anger on her face as she held out Nahemah the same way.

[I am not happy with this either, this fight is clearly a mockery to us. How dare you insult our power.]

[Us insult you? Oh please, you're copying my partner's form and face, we're the insulted ones! Now we're gonna end this and make you see the power of a real Spirit! Let's go Tohka, time to take her down!]

Tohka nods, jumping ahead as Inverse Tohka did the same.

'I don't care how tired I am, I'm going to win this no matter what! This is the path I've chosen for myself... and I'm gonna keep walking it! I'll never give up... not today, not ever!' Tohka thought, soon clashing blades with her dark half.

Rinne and the others kept moving on their horses, looking around for Yoshino and Tohka to no avail. Rinne sweated as the current remaining time that was left made her nervous and looked behind her to look at Marina.

"Let me guess, countdown check?" Marina sighed.

"Yeah, countdown check. You mind?" Rinne asked, making Marina sigh again as she opened her one panel and checked before Marina paled. "...It's in the single digits now, isn't it? It has to be."

Marina didn't reply and showed it.

~ETA until the second Chaotic Divergence charge is ready: 8 minutes
"8 minutes!? It'll fire any minute now, what are we're gonna do? Yoshino's still gotta win her fight and I don't think Tohka's found any solutions against purging Inverse Tohka in a permanent manner." Rinne sweated, soon hearing a familiar sound as she turned. "Wait, that's... she made it!"

The ship had its territory up because it couldn't properly use its Invisible Realizer right now, but the Fraxinus EX-Celsior flew overhead as it arrived closer, Rinne waved at it as it hovered near the ground and soon opened up. Reine poked her head out.  

"Sorry for the delay, as a precaution we're having the rest of Ratatoskr's available ships evacuating the rest of Europe. We're ready to hold all the survivors. Though we can't get those horses on with us. I hate to say it, but you'll need to send them off for them to survive this." Reine replied, and soon one man got off his horse and rubs its cheek.  

"This is where we part ways old Strong Heart, take the herd and get somewhere safe. Don't worry about us, hopefully we meet again one day." The man said, the horse neighs in response. Once everyone got off, the whole herd equines gallop off out of the city towards the safety of the wild.  

"Alright, every on board!"

All the survivors get on board, and soon Reine looks to see Choronzon flapping its roots, intending to take flight as it tried ripping the last section of its roots out. The Commander of Ratatoskr's Tenguu branch gulped at the sight of the ultimate Demon King.  

"So... Shido's inside that thing? Are you serious?" Reine asked, biting her nails slightly.

"Yeah, it is." Rinne confirmed, grimacing slightly. She turned to her and put a hand on her shoulder while smiling. "Don't worry, I'm saving my son and this world. Just keep these people safe for now. Believe in us, because we believe in you."

Reine nods and takes her hand in a brief shake before the Fraxinus EX took back into the sky and flew away from the chaos and hopefully the present gaze of Choronzon's remaining three eyes. The Spirits all turn towards Choronzon right after.

"Alright guys, let's get back in there and find our friends." Mayuri stated, everyone nodded. Though at that moment they saw Marina flying off. "Where are you going!? The fight's over that-"

"It's your fight now, I did my part. All I'll tell you is that the moment you see Choronzon's body break out of the ground and take flight... the rest of the time until another Chaotic Divergence charge will be complete." Marina replied, soon zooming back towards the Arbitel.

"...Rio doesn't like Marina, she makes Rio angry." Rio replied, pouting slightly as everyone but Maria nodded with her. Rinne soon picks her daughter up.

"Come on, even without Marina, we can still do this!" Rinne declared, soon taking flight and leaving a rainbow trail of spirit power that faded into pink shortly after. The other Spirits soon following close behind.

Marina zipped through the air before vanishing from view and reappearing within the Arbitel, everyone looking towards her as she landed inside. Westcott turned to her as she cracked her neck back into place.

"Marina, how well have your efforts been?" Westcott asked.

"How about we let the evidence speak for itself?" Marina smirked, soon having her wires reveal everyone but Tohka and Yoshino's dark spirit power and the possible dark spirit power of
Choronzon in her possession. "Only the power of [Sovereign] and [Marionette] are left, and then when we get the chance... Choronzon's power will be ours."

Westcott gave a smug look before laughing a bit.

"Everything's going according to plan, while we may have had a few hiccups today, we'll still be singing our victory song in the end." Westcott smirked, making Marina smirk with him.

"Sir Westcott, if I may ask... how do we deal with the fallout? We have nothing to prevent the world from turning against the whole DEM from this incident. No footage to use in our favor, and even if we did we don't have any footage to actually use." Chinami wondered, and Wescott simply chuckled. "Uh... Sir Westcott?"

Westcott looked forward at the screen showing the outside, the still struggling Choronzon nearly almost free of the ground as its final roots began to shake, the ground ripping slightly.

"Who cares how the world sees us now? What matters to me is what the world will end up seeing me as, that's all my dream needs. It's only a matter of time before everything in this world is reshaped into my own image." Westcott replied, soon cackling heavily. "Only a matter of time."

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Zadkiel was seen chasing after its Demon King counterpart, Yoshino making her Angel rush ahead as fast as it could, trying to catch it.

[Master, why are you so determined to catch her? Better yet, why is she running from us? It's the exact opposite of what the other Inverse Forms have been doing so far!]

"Because... I think it's her, it has to be!" Yoshino replied, making her Angel's eyes widen.

[Wait, you're not saying what I think you are, right? Are you seriously thinking that your Inverse Form is Yoshinon?]

Yoshino nods.

[That's crazy, she's already gone! There's no way that it can be her!]

"I don't believe that, Yoshino... whenever we Inverted back when I could do so freely, she was always the one in control. She was part of me. The part of me that represented my Inversion, it has to be her! I know it!" Yoshino stated, trying to be hopeful.

Zadkiel went silent, and it had good reason to... it was more aware of possible reality. Yoshinon had merged with her so often, and Yoshinon had always spoken through its voice, it knew the deceased puppet well because it made her, but couldn't bear to break Yoshino's heart.

After a moment, Inverse Yoshino and Astaroth stopped by a large area that acted like a large arena of sorts, Zadkiel and Yoshino slid to a stop as Yoshino looked at her Inverse counterpart. A familiar eye patch over her eye, the same one from her old Inverse Form.

"Yoshinon, it's me! I know I look different, but I swear it's me!" Yoshino called out, Inverse Yoshino looked at her. Soon she started laughing to Yoshino's surprised. "...Yoshinon?"

"Oh yeah, I'm Yoshinon! I have the same nearly white, pale blue hair. The same glowing red eye, the same voice and personality, and even the eye patch. I'm totally your old friend Yoshinon, aren't I? Oh... wait a second..." Inverse Yoshino stated, soon turning at her as she smirked. The eyepatch evaporated into an illusion.
"No, I'm not! I just share her form, she's been dead as she was since back then! So sorry for your utter disappointment! Face the facts, your friend isn't ever come back. Worst of all... your Angel knew, but you didn't listen."

Yoshino stared and backed up a bit on Zadkiel, the Angel lowered its head as Yoshino teared up and began crying. Finally... the dam broke and Yoshino screamed loudly as she cried, looking at her dark counterpart as Inverse Yoshino cackled at her.

'Yoshinon...' Yoshino thought, shedding more tears as a group of memories entered her head.

A young Yoshino walked through the streets of a town, one that had been ravaged by the Spacequakes back during the time shelters had yet to be created. Yoshino's expression was all shaken and distant, all before her was the sight of many dead bodies. She was one of the few survivors.

"Mother... Father... Big Brother... everyone? Where are you?" Yoshino begged, walking aimlessly as she tried to find them. Her shock was so great she hadn't even realized she had just passed their lifeless bodies. "Where are you? Come on, stop hiding or we won't be able to go home. I have to take my bath, and then eat dinner."

Yoshino soon began walking out of town as it rained, she still hadn't reacted to anything, and then her foot suddenly slid across some mud and she fell down a hill, tumbling down it until she tumbled onto a river and drifted with it as her unconscious body managed to land on a log that carried her above the water.

After a while of drifting across the water, the log eventually hit something and Yoshino was thrown off, but luckily by a shore line. Yoshino slowly woke up and looked at the puddle flowing before her, she saw her distant face... and soon her eyes blinked as she regained her senses, realizing the awful truth.

"They're gone. I'm... I'm all alone!" Yoshino sniffled, tears forming in her eyes before she looked up to the sky and cried heavily. The rain itself got heavier as if it was crying alongside her.

A now teenager age Yoshino was seen walking through a light drizzle inside a forest, after having spent years at an orphanage and having no one adopt her, she finally decided to grab everything she owned and left in the middle of the night.

"Goodbye everyone..." Yoshino waved, soon continuing through the rainy skies of the black night.

As Yoshino walked through the vast forest before her, she eventually found a few bunnies and smiled at them as she watched them scurry. They cuddled together before hiding from the rain and she sighed.

"You all still have each other, be happy." Yoshino smiled somberly. Soon enough, she heard rustling and looked around worriedly, panic filled her heart went... she saw nothing come out from the bushes.

No, not nothing, but rather there was nothing seen, yet clearly there. Some mosaic that hid what was present. Yoshino could however faintly make out that she was seeing what looked to be the silhouette of a small child. It was Rio in her Phantom disguise.

"(Oh! My apologies, I didn't scare you, did I? I wasn't sure someone else would be here.)" Phantom replied, making Yoshino look closer at her before trying to touch her. She felt Phantom's body
despite its invisible nature. "(Y-yes, what you see is true! I'm invisible, now... please it! It tickles!)

"Sorry!" Yoshino apologized, quickly moving her hand away.

Phantom soon noticed the sad look in Yoshino's eyes, and moved in closer to her.

"(What's wrong, why do you look so sad?)" Phantom asked, making Yoshino blink and look at her.

"I'm... I'm all alone." Yoshino replied, and making Phantom blink as Yoshino began to cry. "I lost my family to a Spacequake long ago. Got lost from my home, and now... I just left the orphanage because it was too painful to stay there. I don't want to be alone anymore."

Phantom stared at her, and soon thought a bit before digging through her Sephira Crystals and seeing one of them start to glow.

"(Do you want to make your wish a reality?)" Phantom asked, showing her the Zadkiel Crystal. "(This is a Sephira Crystal. It you touch it, you'll be transformed into a Spirit and gain the power to do that. Know this, there's a group who'll hunt you down to steal it. If you want to turn back, say so now.)"

Yoshino stared at the crystal, she reached out for it only to pull it back... but then reached out again and touched it as Zadkiel bonded to her, forming her Astral Dress around her. She stared at herself as on that very day, her life changed forever.

Yoshino was looking at the horizon alone, sighing heavily at what she saw.

"I wish... I had a friend with me, I don't want to wait... or be by myself." Yoshino replied, and soon the Zadkiel Crystal responded to her.

Without her even realizing it, her outfit changed into a bunny themed rain coat and her teenage form was replaced by an 8 year old's body, something blue formed around her left hand and began to take a shape when...

"Hey there, did you call for me!?" Yoshino looked as a white rabbit puppet suddenly appeared on her hand, making her look shock. She still hadn't realized her age had been reduced, almost like she honestly believed she was as old as she looked. "Allow me to introduce myself! My name is... Yoshinon! We're gonna be best friends, aren't we?"

"Yoshinon..." Yoshino repeated, soon smiling. "Yoshino, I have... a friend!"

Yoshino gasped loudly as she saw Yoshinon starting to turn into blue spirit mana and flickering away.

"No... Yoshinon, Yoshinon!" Yoshino cried, it was finally time for her disappear. Everyone all gave a sad look. Rinne kneeled by Yoshino and put a hand on her shoulder, and looked at her.

"Yoshino, don't hide how you feel. Let Yoshinon know your sad. That way, she can at least go in peace knowing you cared and will always remember her." Rinne stated, and Yoshino sniffles before nodding a bit. She stepped back.

Yoshinon soon weakly moved her head, and after a long silence since she kept getting worse and worse...
“Yoshino... I'm sorry, but... it seems like it's time for me to go. I was... never met to be here, it's time... I gave back... what's yours." Yoshinon cried, her one eye shedding some tears. "You have others here for you now, you won't be alone... without me.”

“Yoshinon... please, don't leave me. Everything I have now is because I had you. It's not fair... why can't you be here too!? Why do you have to disappear, I care for you so much, you're... you're like my sister." Yoshino cried, hiccupping a bit. Everyone tearing up as they watched.

Yoshinon weakly rubbed Yoshino's cheek.

"Leave? Yoshino, you silly... I am you... I won't be leaving because I'll... always be inside of you. I just won't exist as... my own being. So stay... strong, no matter what... you have to be what I was for you... on your own." Yoshinon continued, soon hugging her. "I love you... Yoshino. Goodbye."

At that moment, Yoshino hugged Yoshinon back before she dispersed into blue particles fully, all of which float into Yoshino. At that moment, Yoshino cried loudly and everyone else begin to shed tears as well.

Yoshino soon gripped Zadkiel tightly, making her Angel looked at her.

- (*Persona 4 - I'll Face Myself®) -

[Yoshino?]

"Zadkiel... tell me, is it wrong for me to get mad at someone like her? Is it wrong that I want to hurt her?" Yoshino asked, shaking heavily.

[...For someone as cruel as this? No, no it isn't.]

Yoshino looks at Inverse Yoshino angrily, and screamed louder as for the first time in nearly forever... Yoshino's powers emitted steam, surprising Inverse Yoshino as it burst out of the Angel who gave a similar roar to her scream.

"OK... maybe I ended up saying a bit too much." Inverse Yoshino mumbled, Astaroth looking a bit worried itself. Zadkiel roared before firing off the steam, causing the dark half to quickly move out of the way before the steam began melting through the whole area with its heat. "Holy shit!"

Inverse Yoshino soon turned to see Zadkiel and Yoshino appear right before them, blasting them with the steam again. Inverse Yoshino screams in pain as her Inverse Astral Dress barely causes her to survive the attack. Astaroth was shaking a bit as well, and the two looked at their originals with glares.

"Alright, if that's how you wanna play it then here we go! HRAESVELGR!" Inverse Yoshino screamed, causing Astaroth's armor to break off and form the rabbit like Mini-Hraesvelgr, they all swarmed around the area before Yoshino and Yoshino sit in place, the Angel soon roaring as a cyclone of ice formed across the area.

"What the? Just what the heck is this thing exactly!?"

Inverse Yoshino was surprised how much Yoshino was able to do compared to usual, was it all because of her anger for mocking Yoshinon? She heard something break and saw the broken automatons that were still slightly producing a territory begin to shatter as ice encompassed them, making her move back slightly.
"Alright then... **TRISHULA!**

"**SIRYON!**"

The two had their Angel and Demon King respectively combine with their bodies like armor, with Yoshino's being more like ice and Inverse Yoshino's like icy flames. They both held their arms out and fires off their respective tornadoes of ice. As Inverse Yoshino's was about to overpower hers...

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Yoshinon's single eye sheds tears as a crying whimper begins to escape her mouth, the puppet with Yoshino inside it stares for a moment, but then suddenly the V shaped mouth opens along with the eyes to become blue dots.

"...Then let me be your hero this time." **Yoshino said.**

"**Huh?**" **Yoshino suddenly gasped, looking at Yoshino in surprise. "What?"**

"You remember don't you, why you were born. Why you became more than just a part of me."

**Yoshinon asked, moving closer and cupping Yoshinon's face.**

"You were who I wanted to be, someone so brave, so strong, someone not so pathetic. The greatest person that I wanted to become... but I knew it was who I'd never be. I'm just a shy, scared and timid girl who's too afraid to hurt others and just runs away rather than even trying to fight back."

**Yoshinon just kept staring.**

"I realized it so easily... that I don't like pain, or being scared, I'm a big scaredy cat. I thought anything that feels had to despise them, even when they attacked me I was sure everyone did so was as scared as I was. Maybe I was wrong, I still don't know if I really was or not. When I got afraid, I'd freeze up, I couldn't move, think or speak and that left me doing nothing but standing there hoping I'd be saved. Then you came, you saved me, gave me the strength I didn't have on my own."

"**Yoshino...**" **Yoshinon breathed.**

"You were by courage, my strength, and most of all... you were my friend. Now, I want to be there for you. You've given so much to me, it wouldn't be fair if at least once I didn't pay you back for everything you've done for me." **Yoshino finally finished, holding onto Yoshinon's hand. Yoshinon's visible eye shined at that.**

"You'd still trust me? Even if I end up making another mistake like this one?" **Yoshinon asked, and Yoshinon nods at her. Yoshinon's single eye closes before tears come out of it and underneath the eye patch.**

"You're... so kind Yoshino, I don't know what I did to deserve you."

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**Yoshinon suddenly felt herself being pet, making her blush in response.**

"W-what are you petting me for!?!" **Yoshinon asked loudly, still blushing from the sudden contact. "You really are a lucky lecher aren't-"**

"It's OK."

**Yoshinon blinked in surprise at that.**
"I think I get it, you were only trying to protect your friend, not hurting us just because you had the
power to." Shido said, smiling at Yoshinon and making the Inverse Water Spirit stare in awe. This
man was so forgiving, even after all she had done... she smiled and bopped Yoshino against her
forehead.

"Huh?" Shido wondered, then noticed Yoshinon and Yoshino switch places.

"You really don't hesitate to speak your mind, even if you sound like a dork doing it!" Yoshinon said
before laughing a bit, making Shido blush slightly. "But still... you're a good person. Right
Yoshino?"

Yoshino nods.

"He is." Yoshino replied, soon looking at Shido. "You're someone we can trust, the first people other
than Yoshinon... that I can call a friend."

All of the girls suddenly squeal from Yoshino's cuteness, while Shido smiles.

Yoshino's tears flood out before she focused and started to overpower the cyclone with her own,
making Inverse Yoshino become the one that needed to hold her attack back, soon shaking in fear
and terror.

"Yoshinon, I get it now... you're not coming back. I can beg, scream and cry but it won't happen in
any form. So now... with the power that represents you..." Yoshino cried, soon with an intense stare.
"I WILL FIGHT!"

Yoshino screams as her cyclone blasts out, the sight of her spirit power manifesting a blue rabbit
within the cyclone to the surprise of Inverse Yoshino before it smashes into her along with the entire
attack. Inverse Yoshino's eyes widen as it shoots through, and shatters Astaroth apart.

Yoshino soon pants and walks towards Inverse Yoshino as she saw the entirety of her body freeze
up, and soon after that... Inverse Yoshino looks at her before sighing as her head was encased in
ice... and then her body shattered as blue spirit power. In the distance, Choronzon screamed as the
blue eye gem shattered, leaving only the pink and purple to remain.

"Yoshinon... I'll never forget, I promise." Yoshino sniffled, looking at the sky as her silhouette forms
briefly.

- (*insert song end*) -

Yoshino soon hears the others all fly into view and see her, she wiped her tears as she did. Rinne
looks at her and walks up to her in concern.

"Yoshino... are you OK?" Rinne asked, and Yoshino nods.

"I'm fine, I'm just... putting an old doubt to rest." Yoshino replied, sniffling as she wiped another tear
she just shed. She looked at Rinne before breathing. "How many of us left before we've finished all
our fights?"

Rinne soon turned to see a purple streak and a dark purple streak flying across the sky.

"Only one more, it's Tohka. The problem this is Inverse Tohka's revival ability... just how many
times has she actually beaten her without anything happening to the purple eye gem?" Rinne
wondered, looking at Maria. "Think you can trace their spirit mana to find out?"
"I can try, based on possible disruptions of dark spirit power, my estimate is that..." Maria began, soon sensing the ripples in Inverse Tohka's power before gasping. "I can't give a clear number, but I think she's beaten her at least half a dozen to a dozen times!"

Everyone gasped at that, while Rinne began to sweat in worry.

"That many!? Damn it, and we're running out of time before Choronzon's able to start move-" Rinne began, only for the ground to start shaking and tossing everyone around a bit as the sight of Choronzon's final group of roots ripping from the ground. Everyone stared in horror at that.

"No..." Rinne breathed.

~ETA until the second Chaotic Divergence charge is ready: ...EXPIRED~

Choronzon began laughing madly before the form of his body shifted as his roots flapped, and soon... it changed into something like a mutant giant bird with a stub as a head, its two eye gems vertical on sad stub to represent its face. It kinda looked like a zombie version of the Pokemon Yveltal if it had a bump for a head and no feet.

"At last, I am free from this building and this land's shackles!" Choronzon laughed victoriously, soon he flew high into the air and after getting far enough, looked at what remained of the continent of Europe after the devastation of 30 years ago.

"Most of this continent was destroyed 30 years ago, now... time to mark the message of my destruction by taking out the rest before I annihilate the entire world! Chaotic...

Everyone saw the familiar attack begin to charge, even Tohka saw it from where she was and gasped in horror before quickly rushing to the ground. Inverse Tohka simply didn't move, knowing Choronzon would just revive her again if the attack took her out.

"CHRYSAOR!"

Tohka's throne forms before she kicked it and shifted it into its vehicle form and flew off on it, while with the other Spirits...

"Everyone get away right now, he's gonna fire! Move! MOVE!" Rinne screamed, and they all quickly took off into the sky. The people in all the Ratatoskr ships looked in horror, as did some nearby areas in Asia and Africa that noticed the light of that attack.

"...DIVERGENCE!"

The beam of dark spirit fired off in a vertical manner towards the ground, and struck in the crust of England's land, consuming Inverse Tohka before it began ripping through the entirety of England's ground and spread throughout the rest of the continent.

Due to loss of land that connected Europe to other continents from the original Spacequake, the blast didn't spread beyond Europe, though that mattered very little. In just a few seconds... everyone in the vicinity saw the entire continent shatter into nothingness, a debris of rocks falling into the ocean.

The other Spirits, watching from the skies near the edge of Asia, with Tohka watching from somewhere she had managed to land the Chrysaor all looked in horror. Even Mukuro saw it from space, and while she wasn't showing a reaction, she knew the severity of the act.

"All of Europe... it's gone, he destroyed it!" Miku gasped, everyone else was just too silent to speak.
"Reine, status update... how many people did you manage to evacuate? How many survived?"
Rinne begged, she needed to know how high the number of survival was. "Don't lie to me either, if I
don't tell me the truth I won't forgive you!"

Rinne heard a shaky breathing sound come from Reine before she answered.

"Based on what I can predict... evacuation was around 75-90%, there's still ships I can't account for
and the sudden severity of the attack that may have led to those ships having crash landings. Either
way... a whole continent is gone, and even if it was just fauna and flora, there were casualties."
Reine admitted, and Rinne's whole body shook.

"Dear god..." Rinne breathed.

Soon enough, the Fraxinus' systems begin to flicker as something begins to manifest, and it wasn't
just there either... all across the world and even the Arbitel came a forced broadcast no one could turn
off showing Choronzon's body staring at them. Inverse Tohka reformed on his head, sitting on it like
a perch.

"Hello people of Earth, before you scream in terror at my visage, I think you should listen
carefully! After all... I'm trying to tell you about your entire world's Armageddon!" Choronzon
cackled, and everyone watching stayed to listen from pure terror.

"I don't know if most of you have noticed, especially if you live on the opposite hemisphere or on
Australia, but I just blew up and destroyed the entirety of your smallest continent. I believe Europe
was its name?"

People suddenly started to gasp, and Choronzon smirked as they began to realize the threat he
presented.

"In only a short bit of time, I plan to do the same to the entire world, and nothing you can do will
stop me! Though before I meet my demise... I thought you should all know a truth about your
world from 30 years ago. Because it relates to how I was born today!"

"Born?"

"What is that thing talking about?"

"It's the incarnation of the Spacequakes, they're finally going to kill us all!"

"Someone help us!"

People all began flying into a panic, and Choronzon continued as they did.

"Beyond three decades ago, many people visited an area of the world and those who fell in were
said to be lost forever... but that was false, they didn't die. They fell into another world similar to
this made of energy, with a race of beings that were powerful yet pacifistic human-like creatures
also born of energy known as the Spirits. They took care of the Humans, until 30 years ago a
project was made to bring them back."

"That project succeeded and all the Humans returned to Earth, and all of them intended to
welcome the Spirits to their world from the gate that had formed between them. However... one
man had been the reason those people ended up there, and it was part of a plan to create that
gate. Once he did, he destroyed the Spirit Dimension just because he was a sick bastard! Oh, and
the best part? He's the reason you're always getting hit by Spacequakes!"

People suddenly went wide eyed and murmured, while Westcott just watched bored at the whole
thing.

"How interesting, I personally enjoy someone who's vain attempts to struggle against me become so
grand. Murdoch was a prime example." Westcott commented, while Chinami just stared at his odd
choice of reply. Then again, the others always pointed out her own oddities so she had no room to
talk about his.

"Only a single Spirit survived the massacre, and yet she still had faith in all of you, faith in
Humanity... but the souls who died knew the truth. That man was your method of destroying us,
you used our own pacifistic nature to make us defenseless! You're all power hungry, and now...
I'll be casting judgment by bringing you and your world to extinction! All of you have this man,
and this man alone, to blame for all this. His name is..."

Soon the screens show an image of Westcott's face, surprising most of the world as the man who ran
DEM Industries and invented the Realizers to help the world recover from the Spacequakes'
devastation was being labeled as the one who caused it to even happen.

"That's right, Sir Isaac Ray Pelham Westcott is the culprit! Think about it... who else could have
known how to use magic to make that so-called Realizer tech of yours over than the one who
destroyed the world that it came from!?" Choronzon roared, and everyone murmured while still
panicking.

"Choronzon actually exposed Westcott? Dear god, after everything's over... what's gonna happen to
the world? What will Westcott do, what will... my goodness, I don't even know what to say or think
anymore." Reine breathed, the shock overloading her.

The sight of the Spirits fighting against Choronzon and her Inverse copies he had created along with
the Rinne clones were soon scene.

"These beings are humans who've been blessed with the power of Spirits and become Spirits
themselves, trying to fight back and be your ridiculous hope before my power swallows them!
Enjoy the time you have left, because there is nothing that can stop me now!" Choronzon finished,
soon cackling madly.

Tohka stared at Choronzon angrily, and soon she screamed as she formed Halvanhelev before she
rushed forward to attack him. She held her blade up high as she prepared to swing down on
Choronzon and her Inverse counterpart.

"I won't let you! I won't, give me... back... SHIDO!" Tohka screamed, swinging down on the blade.
Only for Inverse Tohka to stop it with her bare hand. Tohka gasped as she suddenly coughed out
blood and gasped as she saw she reached her limit. 'No, I... I can't, not yet. Please body, just a bit
more strength!'

[I'm sorry Tohka, but... I don't have any more power to force out either. The last of our steam's
fumes, we're all out!]

Tohka stared in horror before Choronzon's lower roots, which were acting like a tail, constricted her
tightly and nearly choked her. Choronzon laughed as she showed her to everyone watching.
"Tohka! You bastard, let her go now!" Rinne declared, causing her and the other Spirits aside from Mukuro to all rush at Choronzon.

The ultimate Demon King turned at them before widening his pink eye, creating a strong was so fast no one had time to react, and soon it felt like a heavy hammer hit them all and sent them to the ground. Choronzon laughed again as he shifted to show their downed forms while Rinne looked weakly.

"No... Tohka, Shido... this can't be it."

"Do you see that Humanity? The only ones fighting for you, the only ones who could fight for you, they have all fallen! As of now... your world is finally doomed, all of you shall fall into the shadows of despair! Though if you still don't believe me..." Choronzon stated, moving his eyes like a smirk.

"While I may have separated the dark power that was created by Westcott and infected her source of power, using it to make the identical woman you see standing before me... I can do so much more than that, so I shall turn your hope into despair itself!"

Tohka and everyone all gasped as Choronzon's pink eye gem glowed, and Inverse Tohka soon moved to Tohka before putting her hand on her and began pouring out dark spirit power like a wildfire. Tohka screamed in pain, and soon everyone noticed her body start to flash, slowly being forced into an Inversion!

"TOHKA!" All of her friends screamed, while the rest of the world all screamed as Choronzon's cackling gets louder and louder. Assured that he would have a complete and flawless victory as he destroyed the world.

'No... Shido, I'm sorry... I couldn't protect you. I broke our promise.' Tohka said, feeling her consciousness fade away.

Within Tohka's mind, Tohka's consciousness manifested as her mental age, representing its form as what she looked like when she was only 7. She was crying and sniffing as she walked through a dull and dim realm of snow, trying to find Shido with no success.

"Shido, where are you... tell me, please! I'm scared! I need you, please!" Tohka sniffles, and as she did, the sight of an equally young Inverse Tohka suddenly grabbed her and held her into the air.

"Shut up, I'm tired of your whining. I told you before... you will be the messenger of our rage!" Inverse Tohka stated, tightening her grip. "Now, it's time you accept that role and stop-"

Tohka kicked Inverse Tohka in the face, surprising her.

"And just why do I have to act on your stupid hate and vendettas!? You think it's any more right to do this, to use and force someone as... as your tool? I don't want this, I'm a living being... and yet you treat me like an object! Is that what the true Spirits did!?" Tohka cried, making her Inverse counterpart stare at her.

"Rinne said... you're the souls of every Spirit who lived in the realm that my powers came from. I get it, your world was destroyed, but you can't just have a single individual define an entire species. If that's the case, then we could say all Spirits are evil because you caused 6 billion Humans to die with the Spacequakes!"
Inverse Tohka's eyes sharpen and she slammed Tohka onto the ground.

"Shut up, don't justify yourselves! That's just karma, getting what you deserve, and you attacked us first so turnabout is only fair play! Now time for you to-" Inverse Tohka shouted, preparing to knock out Tohka and fully complete the takeover... only for a hand to grab her.

"No, don't involve her. She's not to blame. In fact, no one is but me for being too blind to see I was being used. Humanity doesn't deserve to be a target because I chose to fall in love with Rinne, and neither do your souls for the anger that's been lashing out at Humanity."

Inverse Tohka and Tohka both turn at the sound of the vice, and show shock as they see... Seigo Takamiya standing before them!

"It's you, you're the one who corrupted the mind of our kind's only survivor! The one who made her a Human sympathizer!" Inverse Tohka growled, looking at him in anger and trying to attack him. However, he grabbed her other rest and held her down as she looked at Tohka.

"Tohka, it's been so long hasn't it? I've seen your physical form... you've grown into such a beautiful young lady. My son's lucky to have a girl like you who loves him, and wants nothing more to protect him." Seigo smiled, and Tohka's eyes shook before she cried. "Hey, don't cry Tohka."

Tohka sniffles and looks at Seigo.

"How am I not supposed to? Shido is still trapped in Choronzon, I have no power left, and I'm begin forced into my Inverse Form and likely I'm going to lose myself to it. I'll be gone... I wasn't strong enough to protect him. I broke our promise!" Tohka sobbed, and soon she felt Seigo rest her head on hers.

"Seigo?"

Seigo looks at her, and gives an apologetic look.

"You've had a terrible burden, and I won't say I understand it. I don't know how that burden feels... and I may never know. After all, I'm technically dead by all means, my memory is all that lives on now. However, let me ask you this Tohka, you know why Shido inverted, right?" Seigo asked, and Tohka lightly nodded.

"That's right, don't you get it? You are his hope. The light that stops his suffering, it's not just you either, but your light shines the brightest. That's because it's also true the other way, and the reason for that is... you know in your heart he's the one thing you want to protect and treasure more than anything else."

Tohka gasps lightly, and soon Seigo smiled at her.

"If you don't have any more strength, then wish for Shido to let you share his with you. Look at how much you've grown recently. Natsumi, Kaguya and Yuzuru, Miku... you were the one that let their hearts open to Shido's. You're not alone, and you will not give in. Shido is your hope, as long as he's alive... you won't fall to despair!"

Tohka's heart suddenly began to glow, and her Sephira Crystal shined brighter, surprising Inverse Tohka as Tohka put her hands on it. Seigo looked at her before he nodded, and Tohka's eyes teared up as a certain pair of memories began to shine in her mind.

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*Tohka held onto the leg of her mother as she and her father where present in a building, today was*
the day they would attempt to bring Seigo and the rest of the Humans stuck in the Spirit Dimension back home. Unlike her current day self, her hair was black because the original Spacequake had yet to change her in any manner.

"Mama, I'm scared... I just wanna go home." Tohka whimpered, hugging her mother's leg tighter. Tohka's mom, a beautiful and curvaceous lady with long black hair and a gifted bust that showed where Tohka got hers from, wearing a black shirt and a white lab coat with a purple skirt. She looked at her daughter before soon rubbing her head.

"Don't worry sweetie, it'll be OK. This will be real quick." Tohka's mom replied, making Tohka nuzzle into her leg to calm herself.

Soon, the attempt to open the gate began, and after a while... Seigo soon fell through it with his children in tow, and before the three of them knew it... they were standing in front of Reine who gasped.

"Big brother... you're finally home!" Reine cried, hugging Seigo close. Seigo blinked and looked around before smiling as everyone cheered. They had finally gotten Seigo back to Earth and connected both words. Tohka stared in shock at the sight before her.

"Papa, who are these people?" Tohka asked, surprised and confused. Her father was a tall and handsome man with shoulder length black hair, styled in a messy yet attractive manner, wearing a white lab coat with a purple shirt and khaki pants.

"These are some of a few people we were trying to bring back home, and we succeeded." Tohka's father smiled, and soon Tohka looked at them... and her eyes met with Shido's. The two looked at each other, both blushing a bit as they did. "Come on, go say hi."

Tohka was briefly pushed away by her father, and soon she stopped by Shido, both of them still blushing.

"H-Hi, my name is... Tohka Yatogami." Tohka introduced, blushing with a nervous face.

"Hi, I'm Shido Takamiya. You're pretty." Shido greeted, making Tohka blush a bit more... but oddly made her smile a bit. "Nice to meet you."

Days soon went by, and Shido and Mana were currently living with Tohka and her parents for safety reasons due to Westcott's actions.

However today was special because it was April 10th, meaning it was Tohka's 7th birthday. Tohka's mom brought in the cake and placed it down, making the now purple haired Tohka smile at it.

"Alright, make a wish Tohka." Tohka's mom smiled, making her daughter nod before she breathed in and blew all seven out. Everyone cheered before Tohka smiled and blushed a bit, Shido looked at Tohka's parents.

"Mr. and Mrs. Yatogami, can I take Tohka outside to give her my present first? I wanna do it with just us." Shido asked, making Tohka's mom gasped silently before giggled. "What is it? Why are you laughing."

Tohka's mom began giggling a bit more before looking at the confused Shido.

"Oh nothing, I just think its adorable. Go ahead Shido, just don't take too long, OK?" Tohka's mom replied, and Shido nodded as he grabbed Tohka's hand and took her outside. Tohka's mom rested
her head against her husband's shoulder. "Ah, young love. Reminds me how early we married and had our precious Tohka."

"Careful how you say that sweetie, or we'll feel old way too early." Tohka's father chuckled, making them both laugh in response. "Oh, wait a second, we can't for the same reasons as Reine! Boy, I sure walked into that mist of laughing gas."

Once outside, Shido took a small gift box from his pocket, holding the present he brought for Tohka as he held it out to her.

"Come on and open it." Shido said, smiling as he held it.

"OK!" Tohka smiled, fully of energy as she takes the box and opens it, when she did she gasped as what she saw. It was a butterfly themed ribbon she saw a few days ago inside a store window, but her parents already did so much for her that she didn't have the heart to tell them she wanted it.

"You actually bought it for me? I love it Shido! Thank you so much, you're the best!" Tohka shouted cheerfully, hugging Shido close to her. Shido smiled as he pet her head, making her blush happily.

"Hey, Shido?"

"What is it?" Shido asked, curious what Tohka wanted to ask him.

"What I want most in life is to protect you, so I can always hold you close like right now." Tohka smiled sweetly, making Shido blush a bit.

"Your welcome, it only felt right. Consider it a promise from me too, cause I'm gonna make sure to protect you too! We'll always be together, and when we get older, then we'll get married." Shido said, holding out his pinkie to her. "Promise?"

"Yeah!" The girl smiled as she nodded, wrapping her pinkie around his. "I'm happy, very happy Shido. I love you... let's always be together."

"Of course, we'll always be together." Shido said, and the two hugged each other close.

Tohka's eyes widen and she gripped that area of her heart tightly, looking at Seigo.

"Now go, half a year ago, Shido saved you when you fell into despair... now it's time you do the same. I know you can, so take that monster out and do just that!" Seigo smiled, soon vanishing and leaving her young Inverse Form to fall on the ground.

"Shido..." Tohka breathed.

She saw their first meeting, the day their feelings first formed.

"Shido..."

She saw the day he gave her the signature ribbon she's treasured ever since.

"Shido..."

Then finally, she saw the memory of their first kiss and reunion.

"SHIIIIIIIDOOOOO!"

Tohka's body flashed, encompassing her entire mind. Her dark counterpart stared before screaming
as the light blinded her

Choronzon kept cackling, seeing Tohka about to fully complete her Inversion, when...

- (* Magi, Adventure of Sinbad - Guidance *) -

...He suddenly saw Tohka grab Inverse Tohka's hand and force her off, suddenly releasing a surge of spirit power as she manifested her Astral Dress fully. Everyone who saw it was shocked at this result, especially Choronzon and her Inverse counterpart.

"Never! I won't fall here, I refuse to fall here! Do you hear me Shido? I'm coming to save you!" Tohka shouted, suddenly creating more spirit power than Inverse Tohka's as it poured out of her like a refracting prism.

"Whoa! What... what's happening!?" Maria gasped, unsure of what she was seeing. Suddenly she looks at the other Sephira Spirits who begin emitting rings of light as their Limited Astral Dresses begin glowing. "Everyone?

Each of their elements wrapped around them before shifting into the form of their Astral Dresses, causing them to finally manifest fully. Everyone stared as this happened, unsure of what was causing it.

"Wait, everyone! Look at Tohka's Spirit power!" Rinne gasped, and as everyone in the world saw via the broadcast, even shocking those who were in the Arbitel. Tohka's spirit power wasn't just dispersing Inverse Tohka's... it was getting brighter, becoming the opposite of the dark spirit power!

"I've... I've never seen this, what is she doing? Just what kind of power is Tohka drawing on? Please, if there's an answer out there I need to know it!"

Inverse Tohka showed fear as she tried to flood more dark spirit into Tohka and overcome her original's power, but her original refused to falter.

"No, don't fall to it! Don't fall into despair! Shido is your hope, so don't you dare let him go!" Seigo's voice echoed out via Tohka's spirit power, making Rinne's eyes widen as she heard it. She looked to see an illusion of Seigo by Tohka's side.

"Seigo..." Rinne breathed, shedding tears at the sight. Then she gasped. "No way, could it really be possible? This miracle is..."

Tohka soon felt her mind in a realm similar to the one she felt herself in when she went through her Inversion, a white realm swallowed by her dark spirit power before it grabbed her like a hand's tight grip as she floated away holding a distant look.

This time, the realm was black, but was being illuminated a spirit power so bright, it was almost white instead of purple. (A/N: Think her Full Form's spirit power when she makes her final attack in the movie) This time it swirled and enveloped her as she floated closer with an unyielding look.

"SHIDO!" Tohka shouted loudly, her eyes becoming two shining pools of light.

At that moment, the new and unknown spirit power exploded out like a radiant star shining across through the darkest night. Inverse Tohka screamed as the light burned through her, blinding everyone who had to cover their eyes... and making Choronzon gasp as he saw the purple eye gem finally be broken!
"WHAT!?!" Choronzon screamed in horror as he saw the purple gem break, and soon looked at Tohka's form enveloped within the mass of her new spirit power.

Soon the cocoon of Spirit power dispersed and blasted outwards, knocking Choronzon to the ground and dispersing the dark energy covering the area. When everyone regained their visage of Tohka... what they saw ended up shocking them all, even Rinne!

Tohka's butterfly ribbon had become slightly longer and the sharper aspects of its Inverse Form variation were present, but more curved to give it a graceful shape like a rare and exotic butterfly.

It had become a very bright and vivid purple as well, its black stripes all white, while the gold parts of it had become a crystal-platinum color with an iridescent sheen. A color scheme that has transferred to the rest of her new Astral Dress, which had become a fusion of both her normal and Inverse variations.

Her shoulder guards, gauntlets and their finger gloves were those of her normal form, but now the petal like cuffs had a second layer within, hiding between the gaps the original cuffs made, while the actual gloves themselves were no longer black but a bright white.

The middle area of her outfit was where the biggest fusion between the forms was seen, as it was mostly Inverse Tohka's midriff revealing outfit, but with the sections actually connecting and having some cloth of light form in between, only stopping at the area below her breasts. The part by her waist was also stretched out to look more like gym shorts than barely covering her unmentionables.

Tohka's ballgown like skirt had the side guards of her Inverse Form on the front and her normal form's side guards were just behind them. Both had their petal like extensions, with her normal form's extensions on top, the skirt's top half hiding her waistline the top half of her legs' skin. The inverse form's extension were directly underneath them, and the lower half of the skirt was translucent to show her stockings and her boots which were that of her Inverse Form's, only slightly larger and sleeker.

In her hands, the sight of what looked like a version of Nahemah in Sandalphon's colors, only less evil and deadly, and more noble and legendary was seen. Though presumably it wasn't Sandalphon if she was in a form like this. Tohka's purple hair waved in the wind, now having a dark purple-to-bright purple gradient colored hair in it, and soon she opened her eyes where were the purest purple anyone had ever seen.

Tohka soon gave a hopeful smile, while Choronzon shook in horror at the sight, unable to comprehend what he was seeing.

- (*insert song end*) -

"What... what is this!?!" Choronzon screamed in horror, unable to believe the sight before him. Tohka hadn't entered her Inverse Form... and yet this wasn't her normal form either. Just what was this power she had now? "What have you done!"

"I refused to fall into despair Choronzon, so get ready! It's time you faced..." Tohka answered, soon holding her evolved Angel out towards Choronzon.

"...THE STRENGTH OF MY HOPE!"

TA-DAH! Everyone, I'd like to introduce you to the very concept I've wanted to bring up this entire season! Where this is shadow, there must be a light to case it, and where there is
despair, there must be hope that creates it when its lost. As a result, I created a counterpart to the Inverse Form born of extreme hope that's based on the Ain, Ain Soph, and Ain Soph Aur of the Sephirot. Say hello to... the Ethereal Form!

And yes, this is the very thing that's needed before a Spirit can max out their bond with Shido, they literally have no way to reach 100% until they can do this, it's pretty much putting complete trust in Shido and the hope he's given them. I will say this, Tohka may have accessed it, but that doesn't mean she's necessarily learned how to transform at will just yet... oops! Gotta stop there, that's all I can say without spoiling something.

I can say next chapter will reveal how this form came to be, because just like the Inverse Form, it originally didn't exist and therefore only the ten Sephira Spirits have the power to use it. Ultimately, I am so glad I finally got to type this chapter and introduce it! I mean it! This is one of those times you write a story and want to have a certain scene typed so bad it nearly drives you insane!

Well, there you go, this is why Westcott can't turn the situation in his favor... Choronzon beat him to it and yet Westcott doesn't care. I actually consider this in character for Westcott because he doesn't really hide this from his company, I mean... Murdoch tried to assassinate him with satellites and no one considered it overkill! In Vol 15, Westcott was actually pleased that Elliot actually gave him a hard time, so... yeah. I will say the next chapter will show why the world finding out doesn't limit him or his allies at all.

Well everyone, get ready... because next chapter is the Season 2 finale, and then after that you can expect the Ars Install and Rio Reincarnation movie arcs before we finally get to Season 3! I'm glad you've enjoyed my story so far, and now... let's finally bring this chapter of it to a close. The battle against Choronzon and Ethereal Tohka is about to begin! Now go for it Tohka, take him out for all the damage he's done and for destroying all of Europe, end this nightmare with every bit of power you have!

So that's everything for now everyone, see you next chapter. Until... stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 95% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 90% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 92% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 87% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 84% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 78% (Flight)
Yuzuru - 78% (Weight Manipulation)
Chapter 47

HYPE LEVEL HAS BEEN CRANKED UP TO 12! Woo! *chuckles* Excuse my hyper nature, I just had some glazed donuts and they tend make me a little crazy if I eat too many, they might even be why I sometimes can update more than once a day instead of just daily. *giggles* Either way, I'm really excited not just because this is the Season 2 finale, but because I finally got to reveal the Ethereal Form last chapter ^^

Before we get to today's start notes, let me explain a bit more on what I meant about the Ain, Ain Soph and Ain Soph Aur correlation. You know how we have a Sephira for Da'at? Well, that's actually God when he's been filtered for our comprehension, he resides in the three forms of Ain, mainly Ain Soph which tends to be the one most often referred to when mentioning them in the Kaballic Sephirot.

In canon, this could reference the First Spirit's power which in Vol 16 is stated to be too toxic to humans, hence filtering and refining them through multiple hosts to make them into Sephira Crystals. Either that, or considering Phantom/Reine has silver hair which is often associated with Da'at, Phantom represents Da'at and the First Spirit represents Ain Soph. *shrugs* Hard to say, hopefully Vol 17 answers that more.

For this story, I'm using it like this. When the Spirits are using their Limited Astral Dress, they're associated with Ain which represents Nothingness. When they use their Astral Dress in their full states, then they're associated with Ain Soph which represents Limitless. The Ethereal Form is what associates with Ain Soph Aur, the Limitless Light. As the Ethereal Form represents light and hope... yeah, that's kinda self-explanatory there ^^;

It will probably be a while before you see the Ethereal Forms show up commonly, for one I still need to find out what to name their Archangels as for Tohka's, I just used the name of her Full Form's Angel: Shekhinah, and reaching a pinnacle of hope is a lot harder than reaching one of despair. In fact, Tohka can't freely use this form yet, Seigo kinda gave her a one-use bypass. Secondly, they are MUCH more powerful than the Inverse Forms.

I can't say more about it just yet, Season 3's gonna answer that question. What I can say is that like the Inverse Forms, the Ethereal Forms all have unique code names too. I'll share what the they are at the end of the chapter, except Tohka's which will be on the data sheet I'm about to put below, I didn't do it last chapter for the sake of suspense ^^ *giggles*

With all of that cleared, time to end this season with a bang, and then we'll finally get to the first of Season 2's movie arcs, Ars Install. Now let's... begin!

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-Ethereal Tohka, Code Name: [Monarch]-

Archangel: Shekhinah, the "Emperor of Annihilation" - Sandalphon's Archangel counterpart, it shares a similar shape to Nahemah with some details of Sandalphon and the crystalline edge glowing purple instead of blue or red, but unlike Nahemah is vastly different from its original. Shekhinah has the power to unleash Tohka's energy blast through it and even move, form a barrier around itself, and/or attack independently if Tohka needs her
hands free. The throne of Shekhinah is a crystal/platinum color, and its energy slashes can also be manifested as energy saws, energy spears, and etc. The most powerful ability of Shekhinah is that when Tohka swings it like a normal sword, it can still cut an enemy within a ten-foot distance of the slash.

- Alternate Form: Lahathelev, the "Sword of Reclamation" - The Ethereal counterpart of Sandalphon's Halvanhelev technique, and Shekhinah's most powerful ability overall, and similar to its normal form, has additional powers compared to it where Paverschlev didn't. Unlike Halvanhelev, the throne doesn't need to be destroyed to activate it as the throne will combine with it automatically of her own will, and after forming, Tohka can actually have it extend to double its length. What makes the Lahathelev most powerful however? Where Halvanhelev and Paverschlev just sent their power flying out, Tohka has full control on where the power of Lahathelev goes, and can concentrate it all to release to even an incredibly small area.

- Alternate Form: Excalibur - The Ethereal counterpart of Chrysaor, Tohka can drive it using her willpower, but can also allow it to move of its own free will if it wishes. Along with being able to use the slash wave, energy blasts and piercing abilities of Chrysaor and Durandal, while also applying any the abilities exclusive to Shekhinah, if the Archangel is sheathed inside of it, then Excalibur will have the ability to split three vehicles in one which allows it to be more versatile and allow Tohka to have two others ride if they need it. This form works great alongside Prometheus due allowing its full power and Tohka to have Shekhinah on hand simultaneously.

- Alternate Form: Aegis - By compressing her crystal powers and shedding part of Shekhinah's frame, Tohka can use that shed piece with the crystal to create a shield that she can use. Due to the shed part of her Archangel's frame, Shekhinah will have less power but be able to strike faster while in this state, the Aegis shield also enhances her barrier and compresses it to a level where it can actually reflect incoming attacks back at their caster if long range or throw them off with the recoil of the attack if close-range.

- Alternate Form: Prometheus - By focusing her energy and willpower into Shekhinah, Tohka can actually divide Shekhinah into two, allowing to dual wield. While slightly weaker than Shekhinah as a whole, having access to two swords effectively makes Tohka stronger. The biggest benefit of this form is it allows Tohka to still have Shekhinah on hand, but also activate the Excalibur's full power simultaneously if needed.

- Alternate Form: Gandiva - Shekhinah's frame opens and shifts, transforming the sword in a gun/bazooka-like form, Shekhinah can't be used like a sword due to the shift in the frame and while it can still parry attacks, it will do so less effectively and be more prone to have its parry overpowered. To make up for this, it channels Tohka's energy blasts into a super-fast rapid fire, or a powerful concentrated beam, both attacks cause Tohka to be next to completely immobile when using it.

- Alternate Form: Tiamat - By placing Shekhinah onto her back as if she was sheathing it, Tohka can make her Archangel shift into a pair of wings. While this causes her offensive abilities to drop while using it, her defenses are doubled and her speed is tripled, allowing her to attack fast and take more hits, the wings' blades are also like daggers, meaning she can use them like a sword if she flies in the right manner.
Powers: As the pinnacle of Tohka's abilities, anything she could do in either her normal or Inverse Form is usable here even stronger, and her Ethereal Form has even more tricks of her own. Most impressively about it is the fact she has four alternate forms unlocked in it, and her original ones have gained several new powers to compensate how her Inverse Form didn't have any new abilities, only enhancing the power of the ones she had and making the Durandal mobile without her.

While in this state, all of Tohka's non-Spacequake ranks are at least an S-Rank, and her physical stats are all over 200. Her intelligence is even enhanced and doubled in this state due to the multiple new forms making her more adaptable and strategic. Where Tohka's other forms often needed to be present around actual rock to maximize their power, Ethereal Tohka can use her earth powers' full potential regardless of where she is, and like her Inverse form doesn't need to shift her body.

The strength of the crystals she forms isn't fully known, but Rinne theorizes they may be as strong as the fictional Adamantine metal. Her energy blasts can also not only fire in multiple waves of shots, but she can concentrate it as a beam limited by where she points her finger, though she can also channel it through Shekhinah instead of she chooses. Tohka isn't unbeatable by any means despite all this power, but the moment she calls it out, don't expect any strategies that worked on her prior forms to help anymore.

Risk Factors: SSS

Spacequake: AAA

Spirit's Astral Dress: S

Archangel Rank: S

Strength: 258

Consistency: 237

Spiritual Power: 241

Agility: 215

Intelligence: 200

A/N: Fun fact about Ethereal Tohka's code name, it doesn't only refer to a royalty title like Princess or Sovereign, but also her signature butterfly ribbon via the "Monarch Butterfly", hooray for usable double meanings! ^^

Chapter 47, S2: Choronzon Havoc, Part 12

Everyone stared at the sight before them, Tohka's new form that took both her previous forms, fused them together, and came out as a coloration opposing her Inversion that radiated with as much if not more strength than her Inversion ever could.

The crew members on the Fraxinus were all giving the most stares, and before they ever realized it, the sound of various systems beeping sounding off before eventually catching their attention and
alerting them that the analyzing functions of the Fraxinus' systems had come back on.

"Commander, the analyzing systems have just been restored, I'm going to take a look at Tohka's new form." Shiizaki stated, making Reine nod as she did. After a few seconds... Shiizaki gasped at the results she received.

"Shiizaki, just what are you seeing from the reading?" Reine asked, surprised by how quickly Shiizaki reacted as she did without a warning alarm having gone off. Shiizaki turned to Reine almost immediately after this.

"I've never seen readings so high before, her negative emotions don't even exist, and every other emotion is maxed out. Not just that... her emotional graph for her hope is so high the system can't recognize it!" Shiizaki answered, surprising her fellow crew mates. "It's almost as if... this form exceeds her Inversion!"

Reine's eyes widen at that.

"A power even stronger than an Inverse Form? This is... a Spirit's hope? No, it can't just be that, this must what my brother believed in. The power that comes from Human and Spirits together." Reine breathed, looking at the miracle she saw before her.

Meanwhile inside the Arbitel, a similar yet also very different range of reactions was present.

Marina was so shocked that there was a good chance her android body's functions had to reboot, she wasn't even aware of the dark spirit power for [Marionette] and [Sovereign] had appeared in here wires upon their destruction.

Ellen looked a mix between surprised, scared, but mostly fury. Tohka had once again gotten stronger and having lost to Tohka when she awakened her true power, and having yet to officially defeat her without tricks or an unfair advantage like the kidnapping... this was insulting to her pride. The most extreme among the reactions however?

It definitely had to be Westcott's that earned that honor, and for good reason too. Westcott's beliefs were the polar opposite of Ratatoskr's, and the Inverse Form was a personification of them that he was responsible for creating, but this form? It was the opposite... a form of hope, the one thing he despised.

"What... the hell... is this?" Westcott demanded, his eyes shaking as if the form was a mythical creature that shouldn't be able to exist, and yet someone just proved wasn't mythical right before his very eyes. "This is impossible, I won't accept it... I'll refuse to accept this!"

"Checking readings now..." Marina replied, taking a look at the results and seeing results similar to Shiizaki. Though rather than emotional graphs, it was a reading of stats and Tohka's current Spirit rankings. "W-What!? No way!"

Westcott slowly turned his head at her.

"What are they?" Westcott asked.

"Uh... father, with all due respect I don't think you want me to an-" Marina replied, but Westcott glared at her.

"What! Are! They!?" Westcott demanded, making Marina gulp. "You will share them now!"
Marina shivered before taking a deep breath.

"She's a SSS-Rank Spirit, Spacequake level is AAA-Rank, Astral Dress and Angel are both S-Rank..." Marina answered, already feeling Westcott's anger and the others' surprise to the statistic she was sharing. "Strength: 258, Consistency: 237, Spiritual Power: 241, Agility: 215, and Intelligence: 200!"

"No way, you mean she's registered as stronger than her Inversion!?!" Chinami asked in surprise, and Marina just turned her head. Chinami's eyes twitched. "No freaking way, there's actually something more powerful?"

Westcott's fist trembled as he squeezed it so tightly, he nearly broke the seat he was currently sitting on.

'This isn't possible, it's a lie!' Westcott thought, looking at her form. 'And I'll find a way to prove it soon enough, this form will fall to the true power of the Inversions, that much I can promise! Just wait and see... [Princess]!

Choronzon's single remaining eye stared angrily at Tohka as she floated before him, the ultimate Demon King roared angrily before his eye gem shifted to truly showcase that anger, making it look like he had an eyelid closed in a manner of someone scowling.

"How dare you... how dare you insult me like this! Tell me, tell me what that form of yours is so I know how angry to become in my attempts to murder you annoying little bastard!"

Choronzon screamed angrily, making Tohka blink a bit.

"Uh... I have no idea what this form is called, I'm not even sure who named the Inverse Form." Tohka admitted, scratching her head. Choronzon screamed something incomprehensible as Tohka looked at Sandalphon's evolved form. "Hey Sandalphon, you have any ideas what to call this?"

[Dunno, but you tend to be good with naming things. Oh, and right now it isn't Sandalphon, this new form's telling me this... I am the Archangel Shekhinah! I feel an incredible power right now, it's... it's... it's so ethereal!]

Tohka gasped as she snapped her right hand.

"That's it, listen up Choronzon!" Tohka declared, getting the ultimate Demon King's attention. "This is my Ethereal Form, so it's time you see how my hope overcomes your despair! Let me show you what I'm made of!"

"Oh sure, I'll see what your made of when I rip you to pieces!" Choronzon roared, soon flying towards Tohka who rushed at him in return.

Tohka slashed Shekhinah and purposely missed Choronzon, making the Demon King laugh in mockery... until he suddenly screamed as a purple cut formed on his side, shocking everyone who saw it.

"Tohka didn't even touch Choronzon, how did Tohka do that?" Rio asked surprised.

"Oh my god, I'm grasping at straws right now, but I think it's possible this evolution of Sandalphon can actually cut without making direct contact if used within a certain radius. It's almost like there's an invisible extension we can't see!" Rinne replied, just as shocked.

"So, this is the power of Tohka's hope in physical form, it's so amazing! I should have known, the
moment I heard your voice... you've given us this hope, part of you still lives on in this world Seigo!"
The others all look at Rinne surprised, while some of the others who weren't as familiar with Shido's
father, or at least the name of his father, were a bit confused.

"Wait, did you just say Seigo? What does he have to do with this?" Kurumi asked.

"Everything, and I can't believe I never realized it. 30 years ago, Westcott's evil influence reacted to
all the negative feelings within the souls of the Spirits he killed, and that despair create the taint that
caused the Inverse Form." Rinne explained, soon turning to the others.

"However, there was someone else who's influence had affected me before that, and I never even
realized it. Before he went off to save Shido, Mana and Tohka from the DEM... he promised me he
would make it back alive. Even if he didn't, I had strong hope from his words, his love, and that last
hug he gave me."

Nia soon widened her eyes as she pieced Rinne's words together.

"Seigo had already given a taint to the Sephira Crystals before Westcott had, but his wasn't evil born
from the shadows of despair like Westcott's, the one Seigo created was good that was born from the
light of hope! This Ethereal Form... Seigo's the progenitor of it!" Nia gasped, making the others all
stare as they looked at Rinne who nodded.

"Papa made this? Then that would mean... Papa's still with us, he's inside everybody!" Rio gasped
happily, soon jumping in joy. "Papa, Rio says hi!"

- (*Seven Deadly Sins - Perfect Time*) -

Choronzon turned to Tohka and panted in agony, and soon Tohka flew towards him again.

"SHIDO!" Tohka called out, and unlike before...

Inside of Choronzon's body, the unconscious Shido was seen, and at that moment...

"SHIDO!"

Shido's hand twitched slowly, and suddenly he opened his eyes, while only seeing blackness he
recognized that voice.

"...Tohka?" Shido wondered, soon feeling a purple light form where his heart was.

"Shido, I'm coming!" Tohka shouted, making Shido hear her voice ringing out to him again. He
shifted his head as a purple light came closer.

"Shido, I'm coming!" Tohka shouted, and at that moment she saw Choronzon turn at her and roar as
he began charging a familiar multiple colored strike, but only with the pink color this time. A weaker
version of the Chaotic Divergence.

"You think you're so mighty, I'll take great pleasure in smashing that so-called hope into
oblivion! CHAOTIC DISTORTION!" Choronzon screamed, firing it off at Tohka who simply
stayed in place to stare at it.

"Try whatever you want, I will stand against all of it!" Tohka shouted, soon grabbing part of
Shekhinah as she focused her crystal powers. "AEGIS!"

Tohka ripped off part of the frame and that section of Shekhinah merged with her crystal powers to form a shield, and what happened next shocked everyone as that shield managed to take the entire Chaotic Distortion without breaking!

"WHAT!?" Choronzon gasped, soon seeing the Aegis shield shine. "That's impossible-

Choronzon had no time to finish as the Aegis suddenly reflected his own attack back at him, making him release a loud distorted scream as he was shot towards the ground and tumbled across by his own attack. Tohka soon put her shield back into Shekhinah and whistled.

"EXCALIBUR!"

From the ground, a crystal-platinum colored version of Tohka's throne formed before shifting into vehicle form, Tohka dropped onto it and sheathed Shekhinah inside as it drove towards the ultimate Demon King.

"So what? That trick may be fancy, but I know exactly where you-"

Soon the Excalibur broke into three, scattering around and confusing Choronzon as they moved too fast for him to notice which one Tohka was riding on, he gave a shaken sound of panic to what was going on.

"Whoa, just look at her! She's amazing!" Kotori said in awe, especially since what had been an invincible enemy before now was now being beat by Tohka so easily. If she didn't know any better, destroying the gem powered by Inverse Tohka caused Choronzon to lose any strength that made him a threat.

"I can't believe she has so many new tricks too, her Inverse Form was never like the rest of ours, it didn't get anything new... and yet this form has so many new tricks I'm still shocked!" Mayuri nodded, her eyes shining a bit. "Take him down Tohka!"

Choronzon screamed as one of the three Excaliburs rammed into him and pierced through its thick skin, the second fired energy blasts and beams like a swarm of mosquitoes biting him, and the main Excalibur that Tohka was riding spun and sent out tons of slash waves.

After dealing enough, Tohka soon grabbed onto Shekhinah, and Choronzon cackled mockingly at her.

"Oh, you planning to weaken your little ride now? Go ahead, it'll only aid my efforts to crush you!" Choronzon mocked, and only saw Tohka smiling to his shock. Knowing this he suddenly sweated. "Wait, you're smiling... what are you about to do!?"

"I'm about to think I'd like to dual wield." Tohka replied, soon grabbing Shekhinah tightly. "PROMETHEUS!"

Everyone's eyes widen as Tohka unsheathes Shekhinah... and yet it also doesn't leave the Excalibur either! She had doubled her Archangel into two blades, Choronzon panicked before taking off even higher into the sky.

"Oh no you don't! Shekhinah, time for you to spread your wings and fly!" Tohka exclaimed, throwing Shekhinah into the air towards the Demon King.
Alright, time to show my own moves! Taste my power you Demon King wannabe!

Tohka charged an energy blast from her finger, and soon smaller blasts formed around her, a beam shot out of her hands as the smaller blasts became simultaneous waves of small scatter blasts, Choronzon screamed as they hit, along with Shekhinah thrusting forward on its own and cutting through his body.

After taking a moment to stop and gather all the power Tohka used for her shots, Shekhinah released some spirit power before shifting its form and becoming more like a gun/bazooka, though with two sections similar to the arcs of a bow.

[GANDIVA!]

Shekhinah fires an even longer beam and blasts Choronzon down a bit, the three Excaliburs rush from below it and smash into him, making Choronzon scream in pain from the force of the impact as only one Excalibur flew out and the second Shekhinah flew into Tohka's hands, the original changing back to its normal form and doing the same.

"No... no, no, no! I will not stand for this insult!" Choronzon roars, soon glowing and creating purple energy in the form of Inverse Tohka copies, all of them flying towards Tohka. "I WILL DESTROY YOU, I WILL END YOU!"

"You're the one who'll be destroyed!" Tohka declared, focusing her eyes as she zoomed forward and began spinning, both blades of Shekhinah cutting through all the clones in an instant, Choronzon roaring as he keeps creating them in a vain attempt for his anger to overpower his enemy.

"TIAMAT!"

Tohka sheathed both blades of Shekhinah on her back despite there being nowhere to put them, and suddenly they changed into a pair of wings floating over her back. (A/N: Think her Full Form's wings) and in a single moment, her speed tripled as she simply cut through the copies with her doubled defense and the wing's blades.

"WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?" Choronzon screamed in fury and fear, soon noticing Tohka fly towards him... directly at his eye. And in a single moment, Tohka flipped and cut through it, making him scream as he was cut right open and Shido was revealed.

"Shido!" Tohka exclaimed happily, making Shido get up and notice her.

"Tohka!" Shido shouted, Choronzon roared as quickly closed the two inside of his body by sealing the wound... only for Tohka to cut him from within as she slashed his insides with Shekhinah, flying out with Shido in her arms. "Tohka... I knew it, you're OK! You're OK!"

Shido hugs her, the two both crying as they were reunited and the others all cheering. Choronzon screamed in rage and fury as his dark spirit power flooded out, and Tohka turned to look at him. She made a serious face and teleported over to the others, handing Shido to Rinne.

"Leave the rest to me!" Tohka declared, making Rinne nod as she flew off.

"As much as I'd like to help, I think we all know right now this is Tohka's fight. This is the proof of all her training... and the best insult we can all give Westcott!" Rinne smiled, watching as Tohka stood before Choronzon.

As she stood before the ultimate Demon King, he began to form a familiar blast of multiple colors
from his remaining eye gem, but this time because he was forcing it when he didn't have another charge to fire yet... using the Chaotic Divergence was ripping his body apart.

"I will not lose to you, I will not lose to anyone! This world's doomsday is now and you can't stop it! I'll risk killing myself just to guarantee it if I have to!" Choronzon screamed in an insane manner. The charge grew larger as Tohka raised Shekhinah into the air.

"LAHATELEV!"

Tohka screamed loudly as the remaining Excalibur flew and shifted back into its throne form, soon turning into fragments as it swirled around Shekhinah and turned into a long crystal-platinum sword that had a shape at its end like a dragon, but unlike the demonic one of Paverschlev, looked noble, sleek and holy.

"Try all you want, you'll still meet your end today! This is the power of Humanity and the Spirits combined as one!" Tohka exclaimed, holding Lahathelev behind her, and the head of the sword's eye glowed and opened its mouth before the blade doubled in length! "Lahathelev! Shatter this nightmare, do it now!"

"CHAOTIC DIVERGENCE!" Choronzon screamed at his loudest.

The ultimate attack of the ultimate King and the strongest attack of the Kingdom's Archangel soon clashed with each other, everyone staring as they clashed with equal force in a deadlock.

Tohka soon shouted as her power flared out, and Lahathelev concentrated it all to the tip of its blade, soon allowing it to cut through as it smashed right into Choronzon's eyes gem to his horror, and rather than exploded out everywhere... everyone bit of Shekhinah's power encompassed the area where his body was as it exploded.

"And the winner... is my hope!" Tohka stated, turning as Shekhinah returned to normal and Choronzon screamed as he exploded in a burst of bright purple smoke. Making everyone cheer as she won the fight, and soon enough, the dark clouds the Demon King created faded to reveal the sunrise in the horizon.

- (*insert song end*) -

"She did it, she just beat Choronzon! She won!" Origami cheered, soon hugging Miku as they started happy dancing. Tohka soon flew down to everyone, and looked at Shido with a bright smile and teary eyes.

"Tohka... thank you, though how'd you do this?" Shido asked, pointing at her current form.

"Let's just say..." Tohka answered, sniffing a bit. "...Your dad doesn't give a damn about what death wants, and part of him lives in me. Lives in all of us."

Shido's eyes widen a bit, and he looks at Rinne who was crying happy tears and nods. Then as if responding to his mention, Seigo's illusion fully manifested within the whole group, surprising everyone while Rinne's eyes widen at the sight.

"Seigo..." Rinne cried.

"Rinne, I've missed you so much. I never thought I'd get to see you again in any form." Seigo smiled, taking her hands.
"But... but how? The revival wave couldn't bring you back? If this isn't your soul, how are... how are you here?" Rinne begged, tears shedding without her control. "How are you still here with me, even in this form?"

Seigo chuckles a bit.

"Doesn't everyone say love is a power that breaks all boundaries with its miracles? It created the one Tohka made, my soul is indeed gone... but my will lives on. In the Sephira Spirits, and... lives in you." Seigo smiled.

"In... me?" Rinne breathed, crying even more tears.

"That's right. Oh, and are you listening Reine, your big brother has something to tell you." Seigo stated, causing Reine while still on the Fraxinus to listen as she slowly turned the volume on the audio up.

"What you've all achieved here, and what I've all shown you today... I'm proud of all of it. Of you for never giving up, for Rio for working so hard for you and for me, even though she never got the chance to meet me."

Rio soon felt herself begin to sniffle, soon crying as Mayuri hugged her.

"Of Mana for always staying by her brother's side no matter the danger, and for Shido... for remembering the words I told him so long ago. Even if I can never hold you physically again, I'll always be here through you Rinne. So keep living for both of us, oh... and here's something I meant to give you long ago."

Seigo soon began to fade, and Reine felt Seigo's illusion flow into her.

"I'll always love you Rinne... so, never forget that!"

Soon he vanishes into spirit power, and in Rinne sees something fall into her hands. It was a small simple ring made of crystal without any extra decor on it made, only the words [Rinne x Seigo - Eternally Loved] etched onto it.

Rinne silently teared up as she realized this was the ring he intended to give her long ago to make their marriage official, she hold it close as all her tears finally left her eyes and she cried with a smile on her face.

"I promise you Seigo, I'll never forget!" Rinne cried happily, her cries overlapped with Reine's who she heard through her headset.

The other Spirits and Ratatoskr members gave similar sniffles or became misty eyed to it, as did the rest of the world due to the broadcast still having not ended. Even the emotionless Mukuro noticed a tear shed her eye somehow. However, their touching moment didn't last long...

"YOU THINK I'M DONE FOR!?" Choronzon roared, making everyone turn as from the smoke, a dark jagged version of Uriel was seen before it shattered and left a dark pink gem floating in the air. The former was Choronzon's true form, and the latter... was his Qlipha Crystal.

"No, I'm far from it... you've ruined everything! If that's what you want, then... I'll simply destroy the world via suicide! I'll swallow it whole myself! What more fitting way to do it then what Humanity fears most from beyond this planet!"

Suddenly, the energy around Choronzon distorts as he takes the sky... and begins forming a Black
"Damn it, that bastard's still alive! What can we do against that? Was Tohka's new power still not enough!?!" Natsumi asked, while everyone was too far from the black hole... it was only growing, they didn't have much time before it would. The rest of the world starts running in a panic.

At this moment, the Arbitel, which was closer to the black hole, but also far enough away to escape the pull of the ever-growing event horizon as it sucked everything nearby into its vortex. The Arbitel's still invisible form opened parts of its haul to reveal secret attachments installed just for this occasion.

"Finally, our chance to steal the dark spirit power of Ruler is here. Prepare to use it the moment the ship reading's state its reached the prime peak of its power." Westcott stated, smirking heavily as after this, he would only need [Sister] and [Zodiac]'s dark spirit power for his plans to succeed.

"I guess we should thank [Princess] for her little power up, gives us what we need. Unless every Spirit can do it then what she's accomplished is of no concern to us." Marina cackled, looking at her wires which already had the dark spirit power from eight of the spirit within them.

"How delightful this is, to think we're about to show the world our true threat by killing the creator of a black hole. Let that be irony, because no one will give us problems when they see how easily we can destroy them."

Jessica and Ellen give similar expressions, while Chinami gives a dark look, cracking her knuckles as she instead anticipated how this power would let her kill the Spirits, especially Origami who she owed payback towards.

As the Spirits looked at the black hole forming before them, Rinne looked at the ring Seigo gave her and put it on her finger before making a determined face and walking in front of all of them and getting their attention.

"No Natsumi, Tohka's power was more than enough, the fact we're seeing that crystal is all I need to give us the chance to victory. I can't do it on my own... Nia, tell the current Zodiac we'll need her. To save the Earth, I need every Sephira Spirit's power to help me." Rinne answered, making each of them look at her.

"Please trust me, I know what to do. I may not have my full power, but what I do have the First Spirit is all we need! When all of us are together, there's something only together we can do, so once again... do you trust me?"

After looking for a while... Shido and Tohka look at other and nod as they put out their hands. Soon the others all follow, and Nia uses Raziel to see it tell her Mukuro said {I will trust you} as her answer.

- (*Date A Live II - Hurricane*) -

"Thank you, now... lend me your power!"

Everyone glowed slightly, sending their power towards Rinne, with Mukuro dropping some of hers via a portal, once all of it gathered around Rinne. Her eyes glowed as she focused it and flung it towards Choronzon, causing it to circle his Qlipha Crystal in the black hole's center.

"Huh?" Choronzon wondered in confusion.
"When the Ten Sephira Crystals powers are combined with my powers, they temporarily bend rules of reality, such as halting a black hole. In my world, this is how it was born, but here it's enough to temporarily delay us for the method to stop Choronzon." Rinne explained.

"How are we gonna do that?" Miku asked.

"Simple, we're going to do what's never been done in the history of the Spirits since the we came into existence... destroy a Sephira, or rather a Qlipha Crystal!" Rinne answered, making everyone gasp. "That's right, but we can't do it alone. Reine, we need Ratatoskr and the whole world to aid us. Only together can we save the world."

The Fraxinus crew stared in shock, and soon she nods.

"Alright, tell us what we need to do and we'll do it." Reine answered, and soon Rinne smiled.

"OK, listen closely..." Rinne replied, beginning the explain the plan.

As everyone in the world was still panicking, the Fraxinus sent out an alarm as Reine took over the broadcast and get their attention, though made sure to cut the Arbitel's connection off so they didn't hear and interfere.

"Everyone, we know you just panicked over the declaration of Choronzon's black hole, but fear not... one of the Spirits fighting to save it told us we CAN stop it, but we need your aid to do it!" Reine stated, getting everyone to gasp.

"Listen carefully, Ratatoskr will do the hard part, but we need you to do something for us. Gather everything that can make, reflect, refract, produce or gather light in any way, shape or form. One you do, you'll see a machine with a portal above it. From there, just aim the light towards it!"

At that moment, everyone ran off to get anything that fit under that category, not wasting a second in doing so.

Meanwhile in space, Mukuro flew around a bit as she formed everyone portal she could to every location on Earth, and soon after a bit she formed one near Tenguu City's Ratatoskr base.

"Let's see, which objects are..." Mukuro said, looking around for them. Soon she noticed a satellite dish and some light producing machines stored in a single area. "There they are, let us hope this plan actually works and isn't crazy delusion thinking."

Mukuro uses the portal to suck them all in, while holding onto the satellite, she moves all the light production machines into the other portals, and after positioning the satellite in a certain spot, she forms another portal below the satellite.

"OK, what else do I need to do?" Mukuro wondered, looking at the words from the instructions that Nia sent over to her. Realizing she needed to wait, she did so. "OK, just a bit longer before I'm needed."

Mukuro gripped Michael tightly.

"Shifuru - Release."

Michael changed into a halberd-like weapon, and her Astral Dress shifted to become more like a warrior princess version of her original outfit. The aura she released along with some of the new
black coloring made it almost seem like she Inverted, but luckily, she was just using the full extent of her powers by unlocking Michael's true potential.

"Hold nothing back." Mukuro stated.

Soon everyone across the world gathered mirrors, flashlights, prisms, anything that could make some form of light and rushed towards the light productions machines as they were set to fire upwards into the portals and at the satellite.

Once Rinne noticed everyone was ready, she resumed her announcement.

"Alright everyone, we're all set! I'm starting a countdown for one-minute! The moment you hear the alarm sound off, aim them at the machines all at once! We've only got one shot, if we fail then it's over!" Reine reasoned, soon replacing her face with a one minute timer, each second making a beep.

Everyone go ready as they get themselves in position.

Back with the others, the others tap their headsets as Reine replies to them.

"Alright everyone, the people of Earth are in position and Westcott didn't intercept our broadcast. Zodiac's positioned the satellite and we're waiting for the one minute mark, are you all ready?" Reine asked.

"Don't worry sis, we've got this." Rinne replied, soon looking at the spirits. "Alright... Rio, Mayuri, Maria, Shido. The five of us will enhance everyone's powers the best that we can. Everyone else, the moment the light hits... fire your strongest attacks!"

Everyone nodded and charged up their best attacks as around the world, the timer neared the last 10 seconds. Rinne and the remaining Spirits used everything they had to empower the Sephira Spirits aside from Mukuro.

"OK everyone, in 3... 2... 1... NOW!" Reine ordered.

Soon everyone began using their method to give the light machines their light, all of them going into the device as they blast it upwards into the portal, causing all of it to gather onto the satellite from a certain angle, soon causing the satellite to gather it and release it all towards Choronzon directly.

"THE LIGHT, IT BURNS! STOP IT!" Choronzon screeched, the light blinding him due to its overwhelming amount. Soon enough, his Qlipha Crystal was shown beginning to burn and shake, Rinne noticed a slight glow and her eyes focused.

"NOW!" Rinne screamed, and at that moment everyone fired!

Tohka with Gandiva, Origami using Artelif - The Crown Cannon, Yoshino blasting an icy cyclone through Siryon, Kotori blasting the Megiddo, Kurumi firing off a charged Astra shot, Natsumi copying Metatron and using firing green light from its pillars, the Yamai twins using an El Kan’aph arrow, Miku using a powerful sonic scream, Nia using Thoth to make a bunch of blasting weapons and Mukuro firing off a beam through the same portal releasing the light onto Choronzon.

At that same moment, the Arbitel crew saw everyone's attacks on Choronzon's Qlipha Crystal, surprising them.

"What the hell is this!?" Marina asked, soon seeing Choronzon's Qlipha Crystal shake heavily.
“Wait... no way, it can't be! They couldn't be-"

Marina never got to finish her crystal as Choronzon gave his final ear-piercing scream, and the entire Qlipha Crystal that represented his consciousness shattered into pieces, blowing everyone back, and drawing the Arbitel inwards due to its position.

- (*insert song end*) -

Everyone looked to see the Black Hole slowly shrink.

"We did it, the black hole's going away!" Rio cheered, hugging Rinne close.

"Yeah, now even if the weapon form of Choronzon somehow appears again, the consciousness within is deader than dead. He's not coming back." Rinne smiled, looking at everyone with a smile. "Everyone, both here and throughout the world... we did it! Thank you all!"

Cheers were seen throughout the world at the reveal, and suddenly Shido noticed something by the black hole as the Arbitel lost its invisible.

"Guys, look over there!" Shido gasped, and everyone looked to see the Arbitel trying to fly away from the slowly fading black hole... but it wasn't working no matter how much it pushed its engines or increased its speed.

"What's happening, why can't we get away!?" Jessica panicked.

"It was the explosion, we've been pushed into the event horizon of the black hole!" Chinami answered, horror and dread all over her face. "There's no way to escape it!"

The crew showed the same horror.

"We're going to get sucked in!" Ellen screamed.

"No!" Westcott roared defiantly, and noticing the dark spirit power she had on hand, Marina quickly ran to the ship's main systems and jabbed her wires inside in a desperate attempt for them to do something about their situation.

Meanwhile to everyone outside, the entire crew's screams were heard as the black hole swallowed the Arbitel before disappearing. Needless to say, no words expressed the shock everyone had regardless if they saw it via broadcast or directly.

"It... swallowed Westcott and his allies, does that mean he's gone? Did we finally get rid of him?" Origami wondered, looking at the others. Some looked hopeful and believed that was it, but the others gave more doubtful faces.

"Maybe it did, but... that guy became a living husk from how I separated the Sephira Crystals. I wouldn't be surprised if that bastard somehow survives that and this is only a temporary reprieve." Rinne admitted, soon sighing a bit before giving a light smile. "What we do know is... today, victory is ours."

Everyone smiled at that, they had faced a threat that surpassed the Deus and they had won. True heavy losses were taken... but the Earth survived and would live another day and many more to come. Taking the chance, Nia began walking away without anyone noticing.

‘I think you're ready Shido, but I'll wait until you're 100% again before I give you the chance. Only fair after the Hell you went through.’ Nia thought before vanishing from view entirely as she wrote
something in Raziel.

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*The next day*

Rinne and Reine were both watching the city from the top of the Ratatoskr classroom's rooftop, both staring at the sky as they watched a few construction buildings change the logos on DEM branch building stationed in the city with Ratatoskr's logos, something happening in the rest of the world as well.

"So, it's really true, part of Seigo's still alive? He isn't completely gone?" Reine asked, looking at her sister-in-law.

"Yeah, he told me himself." Rinne said, looking at the ring resting on her right ring finger. "To think that he left hope in everyone, and now it makes sense. For there to be darkness, there has to be a light casting it. To have an Inverse Form, you must have another opposite to it. I can't use it because I don't have the Inversion taint, but..."

Reine held a hand to her heart, smiling.

"The taint of hope, and Seigo's love... his will survives in it, survives in me. That hope spread to the rest of the Spirits, our hope. Maybe one day we can quell the Inversions' anger, and maybe... that power can be used for good. I don't think it's just Seigo either, I bet somewhere in me... Isamu's still there too."

"You know what, I believe you. That's why I decided I'd adopt Mayuri, call me crazy, but... it's almost like he was saying 'I left her for you, the child we could never have'. It's so strange, but it's like ever since Shido sealed Tohka, we've all been learning more about ourselves." Reine smiled, looking at Rinne who smiled back.

"In fact, maybe it isn't impossible to bring them back. If their souls are gone but not their wills, maybe we just need to find another way, Rinne... will you help me find that way, somewhere and somehow?"

Rinne smiles, and soon the two give a handshake to cement their promise.

"I will, maybe we might never find it, but... I want to believe in this hope that we've been given."

Rinne replied.

"Mama! Auntie Reine!"

The two turned to see Mayuri, Rio, Maria and some other members of Ratatoskr behind them, a fully recovered Mana with them as well.

"What is it Rio, everyone?" Rinne asked.

"We thought that since we have this chance, let's all have a day off. Even if Westcott survived I doubt that he's gonna somehow come back that fast. We should enjoy this chance we have before its gone." Mana answered, and the two sisters-in-law looked at each other before nodding.

"Alright, let's go have some fun then!" Rinne smiled, soon running towards them as Reine sighed and followed, though by walking instead.

Meanwhile at Tenguu Square, Miku had just finished singing a song as part of the Ten-Oh Festival's
second day of events, and Shido was heading to the room she was using as a break room as she requested him to come. The others hadn't told him yet, so he was clueless to why she wanted to see him, so the moment he opened the door...

"Yay, you came! Darling!" Miku sang, hugging him to his surprise.

"Wait... darling!? Did you knock a screw loose, I thought you hated all men?" Shido asked, making Miku giggle as she stepped back.

"Well you aren't all men darling, after all I did kinda help save your life." Miku replied, hearing that made Shido recall she did help everyone, but he thought that was a necessary evil since Nia came too and the last Spirit was... somewhere helping them.

"OK, is that why you sent me this random letter?" Shido asked, showing the letter that asked him to come here. "It said you wanted to talk about something alone. So, what is it?"

Miku smiles and gets closer.

"Wow, you work fast." Miku replied, and soon surprised Shido as she kissed him.

Right at that moment, Miku's Astral Dress vanished as her powers were effectively sealed away, leaving only her unique hair ornament. The moment she broke the kiss, she gasped as she realized she was naked.

"What? How did you do that?" Miku asked while blushing, though turned a bit with a smile. "Darling, I didn't know you were so perverted."

"What!? No, that's not it! This is-" Shido began, however Miku cut him off as she turned to smile at him.

"Relax, I'm just teasing you. The other girls already told me everything so I knew this would happen." Miku smiled, making Shido realized she had let her seal him of her own choice, which could only mean...

"You let me seal your powers, but... why?" Shido asked, still unaware of what happened. "You were so against it before."

Miku gazed into his eye.

"Long ago, I was hurt very badly by someone... and before I knew it, I found myself unable to trust anyone. I could only trust my powers and how they influenced people for me. I forgot my wish, and why I truly wanted to sing." Miku explained, and Shido listened.

"Even though I realized you were Shiori so early, part of me didn't truly forget who I really was. Even after all I did, even after I got you captured, and hurt Tohka so badly... she and the others didn't hold against me, they reached out to me. Now I know, you're good, you'll keep the promises you make. You and the others... are all people I can always trust."

Miku hugged Shido close, surprised at hearing her story, but now it made sense how she reacted. She had just been afraid, and now she wasn't anymore.

"So even if I lose my voice again one day, and even if people don't listen to me or my songs anymore... as long as I'm with you that'll be enough. Because then I'll sing just for you as long as you want."
"Miku..." Shido breathed.

At that moment, Shido panicked as the door opened and slowly turned his head like a machine, though luckily rather than a fan or some kind of staff, it was just Natsumi who ended up being at the door.

"Miku, are you done with the sealing yet, your fans just asked for an encore! It's getting crazy out... there..." Natsumi exclaimed, trailing off as she saw the situation before her and blinked a few times before shaking slightly. "Shido, what are you doing!??"

"No wait, there's a reason for this!" Shido panicked, trying to calm the situation.

"Hey, darling?" Miku asked, making Natsumi blink at the pet name she gave him. Taking mental note that she'd explain to Miku why she shouldn't use that 24/7. "Will you... please watch my encore?"

Shido blinked before nodding, Natsumi shifted her eyes slightly as she realized what Miku was about to do. She smiled a bit after.

'Miku, that's pretty brave of you. Guess we can tell her the surprise after it's over.' Natsumi thought.

Back out on the Tenguu Square's stage, everyone cheered as the lights came back on, knowing they were getting an encore. Shido and the others were all watching from one of the wall stands holding their own glow batons.

"Thank you all so much everyone! Before we begin, I'd like to say that I'm going to be singing a special and important song. Recently some new friends of mine told me that you should never be afraid to face your past, so I hope you all enjoy it." Miku announced, everyone cheered in response.

- (*Date A Live II - My Treasure*) -

Soon as the song began, Tohka's eyes widen as she recognized the music... she was singing the first song from her album as Tsukino Yoimachi, which could only mean this song was her way of admitting who she was.

'Go for it Miku.' Tohka thought, a smile on her face.

Many of the fans stopped moving their glow batons, realizing what song it was themselves and that Miku choosing to sing it meant revealing her old stage name. At first it seemed like they'd stay this way, but then Hiroto begins waving his batons and the others follow his lead.

"Singing in the showers, me believing I am on... a stage! Hearing my~y~y~y voice, resound in the room. La! La! La~a! La! La! La~a! I sing on. Reverb is bouncing... off each wall around me, every echo sounds... so special and so astounding!" Miku sang, not doing anything special this time.

"Even though, I am happy~y I hope that I... won't forget, how I felt one before! Let me sing you a song & let's sing along, the greatest gift of all are all the stars up in the sky! Millions sparkle... above, and light... the... night!"

Soon the music came to an end as the song came to a close.

- (*insert song end*) -

Miku waited to see what kind of reaction she would get, and what she got? Well...
"MIKU!" The crowd all cheered, multiple times in a row.

Miku looked with surprise, even looking left and right for proof, and as if an echo to her attempts to sing to her fans heart the year before when she had lost her voice... her fans had come around. It brought tears to her eyes, and she smiled.

"Still can't believe proof to the scandal being fake was left in the old room of that old DEM guy who tried to ruin her, still can't believe how fast we got it out." Natumi replied, soon looking at the others. "I think we all know that only did a little itself."

"Yeah, her voice reached her fans like she always knew they would." Tohka smiled, happy things with Miku finally took a turn for the better. "She's finally back."

After the crowd cheers lowered a bit, Miku held the mic up to say some words of thanks.

"Thank you so much, everyone out there... thank you!" Miku said happily, some tears of joy still in her eyes. "And thank you darling! Thank you so much, I love you!"

Suddenly the crowd collectively gasped, the Spirits all went white eyed at her boldness while Shido went white and breathed out a sound for the same reasons as both groups did, his only luck being Miku did nothing to point him out by name or a spotlight.

"She didn't!" Kaguya stated.

"I believe she just did." Yuzuru replied.

"You're so popular, aren't you?" Natumi giggled.

"W-w-whoa..." Kotori sputtered out.

"Darling?" Yoshino blinked.

"Uh..." Origami blinked.

"Miku, you are the bravest woman I know right now." Kurumi stated, blushing slightly.

"Miku..." Tohka said, her mouth giving an annoyed pout.

Shido groaned and slowly slumped onto the ground, all while Miku waved in his direction. It was clear to him by this point that his harem was no longer predictable with Miku's addition into the mix.

'Well, at least there's only two Spirits left and I know how one of them acts.' Shido thought, sweat dropping a bit.

Shido and Tohka were standing by the viewpoint that had pretty much become their special spot by this point, Tohka was explaining everything to Shido about what happened after he manifested Choronzon.

"I see, so that's what happened. Well... to honestly tell you the truth, I can't even remember what happened after I got KO'd by Ellen. Probably best I don't remember how I entered an Inversion." Shido admitted, scratching his head. "Either way, thank you for saving me. In the end, you kept your promise to me more than I did to you."

"Yeah, although... now I'm worried." Tohka replied, making Shido stare and blink at that.
"Back when I first Inverted, I felt a strong pain in my chest as if I was becoming someone else. Like my screams went faint as if they were far away. When I... uh, Ethereal Shifted, it felt like I was truly accepting everything that made me who I was. Yet, it feels like I can't do it again, not without doing something else... something I don't know, or even if I could do if I found out."

"Tohka..." Shido replied, looking worried. Although soon he feels Tohka take his hands. "Huh?"

Tohka smiled brightly.

"It doesn't matter, because right now you're right here and I'll never let you go through that again." Tohka continued, keeping her cheerful look. "Even if you lose yourself again somehow, know this. I'll take your hand like you did the day we reunited all those months ago. Because I'm your hero, just like you're mine."

Shido soon smiled at that, as long as they had each other, they wouldn't fall to anything that tried to tear them apart.

"Tohka..." Shido said.

"Shido..." Tohka said back.

The two hugged and kissed each other, sharing a single moment they'd wish would feel like an eternity. Unfortunately, only 7 seconds after starting their kiss...

"Hey! No fair Tohka, you're using your main girl status to cheat!" Natsumi declared, making the two stop as they turned to face her, Miku and the Yamai twins.

"Darling, don't give Tohka all your attention!" Miku added, sharing Natsumi's annoyed look.

"That's right, we too want to hold hands, get an affectionate hug and then kiss you!" Yuzuru continued, giving an odd smile with a point tooth showing.

"We all share you, so it's only fair." Yuzuru finished.

Shido sputtered and blushed at the situation while Tohka made a pouty face that her alone time with Shido got interrupted.

"Darling!" Miku said, grabbing his hands and trying to get a kiss.

"Hey, you just kissed him earlier today! I get to kiss him first!" Natsumi complained, keeping her from making lip contact with Shido.

"Excuse me? I think it should be me!" Kaguya countered, grabbing on Natsumi's arm.

"I believe I'm the rightful girl to be kissed next." Yuzuru interjected, grabbing her sister's arm.

Soon enough, all four of them began to argue, while Shido slowly tried to walk away before they noticed, only for Natsumi to grab his arm.

"Shido, just where do you think YOU'RE going?" Natsumi asked, her eyes giving a scary look in response.

"Run away!" Shido screamed, trying to get away from them.

Soon all of them including Tohka ran after him, while Nia revealed she was watching the whole thing, and laughing as she turned Raziel to show everyone she wrote {Have the others interrupt
That's right, you saw what you think you saw! This is how Westcott's group avoids getting retaliated by the world... they're not in it to face said retaliation! I will confirm right now, only to avoid any misconceptions or thoughts they're being replaced, that the Arbitel crew did survive due to what Marina did at the last moment there. The reason that worked? That'll be the first scene of the Ars Install movie, so be a little patient, I can say where they are now will be their new base. Although until Mukuro's arc next season, they can't do much since the DEM loyalists are scattered at the moment.

Also, since I guess most of you realized it was Seigo who helped Tohka achieve it, and since we've already had a character who caused the Sephira Crystals to be tainted due to evil... yeah, you likely guessed it right after seeing the previous chapter. Seigo's love and hope for Humanity also tainted them while Rinne had them right before he went to save his kids and Tohka from the DEM right before his death, but neither of them were aware. The good news is similar to Origami's parents, Seigo lives on within this other taint, though it's his will in his case due to his soul being broken.

What Rinne and Reine were talking about? Well, who knows, maybe I will actually revive Seigo and Isamu? Since finishing this season has me in such a good mood, I'll tell you all a secret, you know how my writing style is foreshadowing with a bit of twists involved? Well... let's just say even if I say I won't do or will do something, I'm likely tricking you, after all there's a reason I uses faces like this :3, in my author notes. *giggles* You just have to figure out if I'm trying to be serious, or if I'm trying to trick you so you won't see something coming.

Before I say anything more about the movies, time for today's guest review replies:
"Seeker213 - Yep, screwed over his chances to steal Choronzon's power, if he got that the heroes would be in big trouble. So that's a reason he didn't get it, but he at least got an essence of Inverse Tohka's dark spirit power, leaving him with everything else he wanted. As for the lemon one-shot thing? Uh... 0_0 *blinks*"

"Well, I wasn't planning on it, but then again I didn't plan on the one-shot lemon for my DxD story. I guess I could try it... though I can't make any promises. I'll try, but just don't consider it as a guaranteed thing until I possibly mention it in a later chapter's author notes. Also, I'll keep your song in mind, I might even use it for the Ars Install movie since it feels like it'd work best in a virtual realm."

Anyways, for the Ars Install arc we'll be having Shido and Tohka swap back their protagonist and deuteragonist roles, because Tohka's finalized the character growth this season had set for her and her... *thinks* we'll call changing into the Ethereal Form the "Ethereal Shift" since I can't think of a better name. We're also getting a surprise visit from none other than Kotori's parents too!

Not just them, another pair of people are gonna show, but I can't say who yet. What I can say though? If you wanna guess who in advance, the hint is in this very arc, see if you can spot it ^_^ *giggles* As for Rio Reincarnation? That's going to be extremely different, like with Origami's arc, as since there's no Eden and no real overall antagonist, all I'll say is Rio is
indirectly responsible for the arc. Well, that's all until the movies everyone, so till then... stay awesome ^^

Also, as I promised... here are the Ethereal Forms' code names!

Origami: Seraph  
Nia: Bishop  
Kurumi: Dream  
Yoshino: Yuki-onna  
Kotori: Hearth  
Mukuro: Nebula  
Natsumi: Magician  
Kaguya and Yuzuru: Tempest  
Miku: Idol  
Tohka: Monarch

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)  
Origami - 95% (Teleport Dodging)  
Yoshino - 90% (Dampen enemy territories)  
Kotori - 92% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)  
Kurumi - 87% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)  
Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)  
Natsumi - 84% (Transform into Shiori)  
Kaguya - 78% (Flight)  
Yuzuru - 78% (Weight Manipulation)  
Miku - 48% (Pain Reliever)
Here we are again, a movie arc based on the games, and this time it'll be based on Ars Install, the story of our favorite two Spirit AIs, Maria and Marina. Similar to the original, it has the same basis since a virtual world is involved, especially considering what happened with the Westcott team at the end of the last arc, but will also be a bit different since the respective Spirits of the game had their roles changed and they've been around much longer.

This arc will also have a really big twist involved, so I hope it ends up exciting you all when I reveal it. A few reminders before we start since it's been a while since the Rinne Utopia movie. First, the movie arcs are a lot longer in word length to give it that movie feel, so a small heads up on that area. Second, I mentioned last chapter you'd be seeing Kotori's parents finally show up... along with another pair you'll see soon enough :3

Alright everyone, now the time has come for us to start reading, but first... I think you might wanna know the main difference from the game and this part of the story. Even better? It isn't a spoiler, but a theme... at least I think, I'm pretty sure it's a theme since its taking place in a virtual world. *shrugs* Where the original game's virtual world was a dating sim, this one is more like an adventure game with RPG classes.

I got the idea from DAL Encore 6's Spirit Online & Spirit Offline stories, and I thought it would be good since Maria and Marina are the arc's focus, so to still aid her but have Maria and Marina's conflict have less interruptions... I've weakened them not via nerfing, but having their powers transformed into video game skills that give them trouble because they're not used to them or even fitting their usual battle style. The opening song will mostly show you what classes I chose since for this arc since I can't really hint events due to the said twist I mentioned above.

Now with that part clear *hands everyone VR goggles* let's get into character since this is an arc about a virtual realm, so place your VR goggles on and let's dive in with everyone! *chuckles* I admit it, this is a little bit because I recently watched something SAO related and played some VR games on the PlayStation to get into the mood, so since this arc is already referencing it... what the heck? Now, program execute! LINK UP!

[Command: ARS INSTALL - Activated]

A/N: Oh, small heads up, I've been practicing with a new writing style as of recently. It shouldn't be too different, but if you notice anything different in how I write these chapters compared to my previous ones, that would be why.

Also, to answer the first part of your review Seeker213:

"You think so? I guess I didn't really consider using imbue instead of taint because I usually see "imbuing" as when something's added to something knowingly and by consent/intentionally, while "tainted" is when it's done unknowingly/accidentally or against someone's will, and in the latter example applies in the accidental sense because Seigo did this by accident. Guess sometimes a word you think fits may not, I'll keep that in mind for the
future."

-Maria Arusu, Code Name: [None]-

Angel: None - Maria is an AI based on a Spirit, and therefore lacks an Angel due to lacking an organic form. The wires equipped to her Astral Dress are the closest alternative she has to possessing one.

- Powers: Maria's powers were based off her originally being a self-defense program on the original Fraxinus, which is named after a type of plant. She can manipulate, accelerate the growth of and create plant life, while also have some power over wood that's part of plants like trees. She's limited in using them on her own, requiring the need of her wires jabbing into a surface to fully manifest her powers.

Risk Factors: C

Spacequake: None

Spirit's Astral Dress: AA

Angel Rank: None

Strength: 99

Consistency: 102

Spiritual Power: 178

Agility: 107

Intelligence: 121

Chapter 48, Movie Chapter: Ars Install, Part 1

The sight of a spatial distortion created by a black hole was seen as it twist and turned, the sight of a familiar red warship being flung around it with a barrier made of dark spirit shielding it, despite the barrier's weak and unstable nature, it was holding. After a long period of tossing and turning, the distortion finally ejected the ship somewhere before it crashed onto some kind of ground, everyone inside was alive but unconscious from the experience they had just experienced.

After her body recognized that the ship was no longer moving for a certain period of time, Marina's android body soon began twitching, causing her eyes to light up as her body reactivated and she stood up to look around the ship and see everyone still in one piece.

"We're... alive?" Marina questioned.

Marina felt her body and soon punched her arm, yelping as she felt pain. That made her gasp and smile as that was enough to confirm it.

"We're alive! Everyone, wake up! We're alive!" Marina screamed.

"Will you shut up!? Sheesh, I'm trying to-" Chinami yelled.
Chinami soon blinked as she realized she was still in the Arbitel, she looked around in shock before her mouth dropped open at the reality before her.

It wasn't just her, everyone on the Arbitel couldn't believe it, they were still on the ship, which could only mean that somehow... the black hole didn't kill them upon sucking the ship and all of them inside of it.

Everyone looked at Marina, as if asking for an explanation.

"Huh? Oh, you think I know how we survived?" Marina asked.

"You did jam something into the ship right before it swallowed us up, didn't you? You should be the only one who can know." James implied.

"Oh, that's a fair judgment. Though truth is I was gambling on an idea more than having known what to do. I just figured since it was a black hole made by an Qlipha Crystal's dark spirit power, jamming the dark spirit power into the system might save us... and it did, we are some lucky bastards right now." Marina answered, sighing as she fell onto her butt.

"I think... my life flashed before my eyes, it looked a lot like pickle relish for some reason." Jessica gasped, soon regaining her bearings.

At that moment, Marina's eyes widened.

"Oh no, I saved us but did I use up all our dark spirit power? Shit!" Marina panicked.

She quickly pulled out her wires to check, but the moment they left the system, she suddenly fell over as the wires dropped to the ground with a heavy weight to everyone's confusion.

She opens up the wires slightly to see not only did they not lose any dark spirit power, but it had grown tenfold in size!

"No way, they've become even larger, was it the black hole?" Marina wondered.

"I think right now the better question is, where are we?" Ellen asked.

"Get the Arbitel back online. Considering we just survived a black hole, the chances we're present somewhere without Oxygen are high. If we're still able to breathe, then that means the ship is still in working condition and filtering the carbon dioxide into new oxygen." Westcott ordered.

The crew all nodded and began typing into the ship's systems.

After a while of typing into the system, Marina had her stares from the enlarged dark spirit power shifted as the Arbitel's viewing screens opened again. The loud gasp she gave in shock quickly got the entire group's attention.

"What is it, what do you see out there?" Westcott asked as the gasp peaked his curiosity.

Marina turned to him and the others, her eyes weren't reflecting light as a method of fully showing the shock of the revelation that she had seen before them.

"This place is... is..." Marina stuttered.

"Whoa, breathe there Marina. Don't force it out... and try not to blow a circuit maybe." Chinami responded, holding her hands up for emphasis.
Marina took a moment to let her android body's systems fully process everything before blinking her eyes back to normal.

"This place is the void where the Spirit Dimension once resided! We've traveled to a world that father himself annihilated over 30 years ago, the dark spirit power growing larger alone is the proof!" Marina screamed out.

Suddenly everyone's eyes widened a bit, even the normally stoic Westcott's face showed complete surprise to that.

Marina had the Arbitel's visual screen focus to specific spots that gave them proof. Bits of land from the 10 regions, slight trace of various spirit power floating without purpose, and even a slightly faded remnant of the aurora sky that once belonged to the Spirit Dimension was present. Marina was telling them the truth, this world before them... or rather the void representing the world that once existed here, was the former Spirit Dimension.

"That can't be possible, how could we..." Ellen began, taking a moment before gasping as she put everything together.

"Wait, the black hole was the power of what was the closest to [Ruler]'s Inversion... if her normal state's power was brought by us onto our world, then reversing that caused us to be brought to a void that shouldn't be accessible. Is that a possible result?" Ellen theorized, looking at Marina.

"I don't see any other explanation, especially since we clearly see remnants of the Spirit Dimension based on that Seigo bastard's pictures, never thought we'd need those as a reference ever again." Marina replied, sighing as she checked said photos.

Westcott looked at the void before him, and soon enough... he began laughing madly, catching the attention of the others.

"Father?" Marina responded, worried why he was laughing.

"Ike, what do you find so funny?" Ellen asked, for once actually concerned about her husband's laughter. Considering their current situation, it could end up as a sign that he had just lost his sanity.

"And here I thought that we'd have to make the new HQ of DEM within the Arbitel, but now? We have a place those fools in Ratatoskr can't reach and a way to grow the samples you were so gracious to collect for us Marina. Perhaps even more, a way to gain the power we had stolen from us." Westcott smirked as he turned to the group.

This surprised most of the crew.

"Are you suggesting we make this world our new HQ? How would that matter? We may be alive, but how are we even supposed to return to Earth? By all means, I see us trapped short before our goal, with no ways to gain the power of [Sister] or [Zodiac]'s Inversions!" James shouted as he slammed his fist on part of the ship's console, feeling Westcott was getting full of himself.

"Aren't you forgetting? While we may lack info to coordinate a gate between the worlds that can successfully send us back, we do have someone who can still get back without the need for a jump between realms." Westcott smirked, looking at Marina.

Marina took a few seconds to register what her father meant, and soon her eyes widened as her nature of an AI made her realize the answer.

"I still have a back-up body we left in that secret storage! I can disconnect from this one and transfer
there, and use that to help us gather data to create the necessary data to open the gate in reverse!"

Marina gasped as she slapped her hand on her forehead for not realizing it instantly.

"In other words, Marina is the key to opening a path for us. I like where this is going. To have an
HQ here means not only do we face off against those softies from Ratatoskr, but we have a resource
that even they won't have access to." Jessica smirked as she gave a sinister chuckle.

"Alright, I'll use this android as a beacon to get the info over when I can find it... wish me luck."
Marina replied as she sat down.

She got into a meditative stance and soon her eyes opened without their glow, her body falling to the
side as her consciousness left it. Unknown to her... at that very moment, Westcott gave a dark smirk.

*Date A Live: Ars Install - Installation plays*

(*heavy electric guitar playing*) Maria stands forward with her eyes closed before moving to the
left as half of the screen turns blue and has [Maria Arusu - Spirit No. 13] appear above her,
meanwhile Marina forms on the other side, soon turning to the right as her half becomes red and
has [Marina Arusu - Spirit No. 12] appear below her. Maria's side had a streamlined rain of cubes,
while Marina's side became distorted and corrupted.

[30 years ago, a single man's dark ambitions destroyed an entire world of peaceful beings called the
Spirits, and forever damaged and changed the course of history on Earth as the echo of his act. Only
a single being from this world survived, but the treasures of her world were soon inherited by
Humans who evolved into these same beings. Now they fight to stop this man's goals from
destroying everything. This is the story of...]

The sight of a loading symbol forms besides the two, they both turn to look at it before reaching out
to grab it, soon manifesting their respective Astral Dresses before giving an intense stare at the
opposing AI. Marina's side becoming green with leaf images, and Marina's purple with hazard
symbols.

[...Date A Live!]

(*same electric guitar with a second one's tune overlaying it plays*) Maria stood aside Shido,
Mana, the Sephira Spirits and Extra Spirits, AST and the rest of Ratatoskr who all gave happy smiles
in front of Tenguu Square during the day, with Nia and Mukuro floating around in the sky of the
background behind them.

(*loud note plays*) Marina stood beside Westcott, Ellen, Jessica, Chinami, James, the Arbitel crew
and a few of each model of DEM Automaton appeared by the former DEM Main branch building in
England during the night, the sight of the Inverse Spirits in the sky of the background behind them,
and Choronzon's eye on the moon.

(*original heavy electric guitar tune plays*) Maria and Marina soon rush forward and spin before
passing each other, soon stopping at two sides of a screen as it flickers like a video game and a small
blinking type line appears to type the words "デート・ア・ライブ - DATE A RE:LIVE - Ars
Install" between the two of them, Marina stares at them and hits the letters to turn them black and
snickers before Maria rubs them and turns them white, to her joy and Marina's annoyance.

(What is this? I've found an uncertain issue, and it has suddenly me encounter an error?) A
dark blue world with blue cubes appears before artwork of Shido as an embarrassed Shiori appears
alongside a [Shido/Shiori Takamiya], wearing a warrior princess' outfit. Mana's artwork and [Mana
Takamiya] appear next, showing her wearing a set of knight armor. Following that was Tohka's artwork and [Tohka Yatogami - Spirit No. 10] showing her wearing a fighter outfit.

(Hey there everyone, would you like to know this little secret of mine? The truth is... that I think can't touch and love!) The blue if the background turns green as Origami's artwork and [Origami Tobiichi - Spirit No. 1] showing her in priestess outfit. Next came Yoshino's artwork and [Yoshino Mizui - Spirit No. 4] came next, showing her wearing a thief outfit. Up next was Kotori's artwork and [Kotori Itsuka - Spirit No. 5] wearing a barbarian outfit. After that, Kurumi's artwork and [Kurumi Tokisaki - Spirit No. 3] popped into view, with Kurumi wearing a cowgirl's outfit.

(Can someone tell me what the meaning of love is? I ask because I believe it must be more than hope and compassion!) The green background turns red and Natsumi's artwork and [Natsumi Itsuwari - Spirit No. 7] appeared, wearing a witch outfit very similar to her Astral Dress. An artwork showing the Yamai twins and [Kaguya & Yuzuru Yamai - Spirit No. 8-A and 8-B] wearing a Dragoon and Ranger outfit respectively came next. After that, Miku's artwork and [Miku Izayoi - Spirit No. 9] showing her in a mage outfit. Finally, the sight of Mayuri's artwork showing [Mayuri Seraphina - Spirit No. 14] in a blacksmith outfit.

(The may be nothing than a living program, so if you can't teach me... then I gave you the permission to install them in my soul!) Maria walks into the area as the red becomes yellow, and soon looks up as from one of the cubes, Marina looks down at her with a smug look, her hands acting as a chin rest before she jumped down and dove at Maria, corrupting the virtual realm behind her as she did.

(*digital echoing*) Rinne and Rio scratch their heads at the video game screen before them, with [Rinne Sonogami - Spirit No. 0] and [Rio Sonogami - Spirit No. 11] appearing by them in pink text. Rinne hit the TV, and soon everyone in the game appeared by Maria before they rushed forward against the monsters based on DEM automatons.

(In this world of electronics, I create my path, but I'm limited by my thoughts of what is and not what could be!) Maria and Marina fly across the battlefield as the others deal with the automaton monsters before them. Maria forming plants from the ground while Marina sprayed venom at them and rotted them to death, and the two soon stood face to face with each other.

(As I grow further, I carve through the confines bit by bit until I find a new road!) The sight of the Arbitel flying through Choronzon's black hole before being flung into the void that was formerly the Spirit Dimension crashing into the remnants of land present, with the sight zooming out to show it was Marina flashing it through her eye as she reminisced about it.

(This newfound feeling is laughing through my identity and freeing me, does that make the love in my eyes into something real?!) Marina manages to stab into the virtual world's ground, starting to tear it apart from the inside, but turns as she sees a projection of Westcott stare at her before swiping his hand, making Marina shake as she felt something disconnect and cause her to fall into an abyss she made from the damage.

(Let me install this game, because this is the story of-) Maria silently gasped before jumping forward, going after her and diving close as she reached out her hand to try and grab her evil counterpart's hand with her own. The sight of data squares both black and white spreading behind them as they fell.

DATE A LIVE!

(*faster electric guitar playing before it stops*) Maria and Marina both stare across each other on a virtual recreation of a grassy field, their hair blowing from the wind alongside a few leaves that blew past them. The two give one final look before they walk off their own directions, the spot between them suddenly giving bloom to a pair of silver flowers.
After that, the screen fades away into black with a white blink as if someone turned a TV off.

The sight of a subway train driving through an underground passageway, zoomed towards its destination and eventually arriving at the terminal that was labeled [Tenguu City] on the associated sign.

The doors of the train soon opened up, and people began walking out.

"[Thank you for riding with us today, we hope you enjoyed your trip and will use our services again in the future. Thank you for choosing the Midgard Transport service and have a nice day.]
"
A recorded voice spoke from the subway train.

After about a minute, a certain group of four had come out, though only the two in front could be clearly seen.

The first was a woman with red hair, which she keeps in a short bob style and wearing earrings while currently dressed in a black blouse with a light brown jacket, faded jeans and a pair of black heels. Her look was best described as short haired version of Kotori if she were an adult.

The second was a man with short black hair in a style similar to Shido's, but if he had cut it even shorter, wearing dark green glasses and having a distinguishing hunchbacked posture. He was wearing a gray jacket over a light yellow button up shirt with a collar, long brown pants and work shoes.

"Finally, good to be back home after so long, the USA is fine, but we need more free time back in Japan." The woman sighed, taking in the air of her homeland.

"I agree, I'd like to spoil our daughter more than I get to, it just isn't the same through the phone." The man chuckled.

The two both look at the other man and woman pair behind them.

"Well, ready to go surprise our children?" The man asked.

The woman of the pair smiled.

"Of course, though I plan to hug and cry my daughter for a good 10 minutes minimum."

Tohka and Origami squinted their eyes and tilted their heads a bit as they looked at the image that Mildred was showing them, the same blurred image that made Mildred believe her sister was a Spirit, and still being unaware of how right she was.

"Wow, I can't really make out anything on this image. No wonder you aren't sure if that's your little sister." Tohka commented.

"Though the hair and eyes, not to mention the hairstyle she has, does match the description you gave us." Origami nodded.

"Yeah, and that was luckily enough to make me leave the DEM and leave that program in Mayuri that saved her butt during the Choronzon attack. I still can't believe she was Material-B all this time... why didn't I ever ask?" Mildred wondered.

The Ratatoskr Mechanic laughed a bit, causing the Energy and Light Spirit looking at her to sweat
drop, while making Mayuri sneeze from another room.

"Where'd that come from?" Mayuri asked, soon noticing an annoyed Mana staring at her.

"Uh... Mana, please stop doing that. I'm starting to get a bit uncomfortable." Mayuri shook, knowing Mana was trying to glare daggers at her due to her now 86cm chest.

Mana soon lowered her head onto the table and sobbed at the fact another Spirit had out sized her bust line again. Mayuri rubbed her back sympathetically as the younger Takamiya sibling kept sobbing.

Tohka and Origami soon saw Mildred stop her laughter, and soon clear her throat.

"Nia called the aid of the last Spirit during the fight, by chance... did you maybe hear what her voice sounded like?" Mildred asked, hoping she might get more clues about if this Spirit really was her sister or not.

"Afraid not, even Miku didn't hear a thing. We didn't even learn her name or where in the world she is that Rio and Mayuri kept missing her." Origami answered with a sigh.

Mildred hung her hand down, turning around and walking off.

"That's... OK, you... were trying to save the world. Thanks for sharing what you knew." Mildred said, barely managing to hide the fact she was about to break into tears. The two Spirits looked at each other with faces of regret.

"I feel so bad for her, if we had even gotten a name from Nia..." Tohka stated.

"I know, but Nia had to respect her privacy if we wanted her to help us. It can't be helped that [Zodiac] is still a complete enigma to us." Origami replied.

The two sighed again, and right as they did... the two suddenly felt a familiar idol hug them both from behind, making them both blush in response.

"Tohka, Origami! Oh, how wonderful it is to see you both today!" Miku cheered, hugging them tighter and smothering their backs with her assets.

"M-Miku! Why do you keep doing this, isn't Shido the one you love!?" Tohka stuttered loudly, blushing from the awkwardness created by Miku's odd choice of physical contact.

"Oh I do, but I can't help my sexual orientation." Miku giggled.

The two shivered at that statement.

"Are we now a Love De... Oc... aw man! Origami, what's that term called again?" Tohka asked.

"I think you're thinking of Love Dodecahedron." Origami answered while sweating at where she saw Miku's hands moving.

She soon yelps as Miku groped her, only stopped when Miku noticed the image of Mukuro.

"Ooh, who's that cutie?"

"That's the Spirit we only know as [Zodiac] at the moment, Mildred was showing us because... she thinks that she might be her little sister who went missing 5 years ago." Tohka answered, slipping herself and Origami free.
Miku gasped at that.

"Really?" Miku asked.

"Yeah, she told us about her around the time we saved Yoshino." Origami nodded.

"Ah, so that would explain why this is a first for the rest of us." Kurumi note as she held her curled hand near mouth, her thumb resting near her lower lip.

The three went white eyed in shock as they noticed the rest of the Sephira Spirits in the room.

"H-How did she do that!?" Miku gasped.

"Miku my friend, you now see why Kurumi's shadow element can be very terrifying, especially compared to a Spirit's teleportation."

Soon the sound of a speaker going off reaches the attention of everyone, Reine's voice soon coming out.

"Everyone, please gather in the main room ASAP. We have a pair of guests coming by. I think a certain individual knows them well, I won't say who for the sake of surprising them. That'll be all." Reine stated.

"So, we've got some guests? I wonder who they are? Things have been pretty quiet the last two weeks since the DEM's been wrecked from the battle with Choronzon." Kotori wondered.

In the area of the ocean that housed Europe a month ago, a chunk of what was once London's land had hidden rockets suddenly propel it near the surface of the water. Without anyone nearby to spot it on the cast ocean, the chunk of land soon had a hidden panel open, revealing an artificial area of land housing a secret containment area hidden within.

Inside the containment area, systems suddenly flickered to life as a capsule marked [ARUSU - Mk II] lit up and opened, revealing a second android body based on Marina. The android's closed eyes opened as it activated, Marina's consciousness fully uploaded as said eyes glowed.

"Hmm... looks like the upload was successful, I can't believe father was able to successfully shield this entire section of land under the main branch from something as powerful as Choronzon." Marina noted as she felt her body.

After a few seconds, something felt off to her... and then she screamed loudly as she realized it.

"That idiot, how did he not update this part of the spare android!?” Marina exclaimed angrily, soon storming over to a computer and violently smashing her finger against the call button.

Westcott's face soon appeared on the screen."

"Ah, it seems you've made it over Marina. How are you doing right-"

Westcott soon saw Maria's pissed off look.

"YOU ARE AN IDIOT FATHER! AN IDIOT, A COMPLETE IDIOT! HOW IN GOD DID YOU MANAGE TO MESS UP HERE!" Marina exploded in rage.

"Excuse me?" Westcott asked, raising an eyebrow.
Marina growled before grabbing the screen and shaking it savagely.

"You didn't update that android body with Inverse Spirit data! What the hell!? Thanks to that mess up, I have to deal with the mess of opening the gate in a weakened state! If I have to deal with those pansy Spirits of Ratatoskr, I'm gonna be creamed by anyone higher than a AA rank! Thanks a lot, I may enjoy surpassing you in some of my accomplishments, but not when they're the result of a freaking mistake!" Marina screamed angrily.

"Better hope I actually succeed in that place, or we'll need to get real comfortable living there with no way back for the rest of our lives! Our very short lives limited by a lack of food we have on the Arbitel! Marina out!" Marina finished, soon cutting the channel.

Back on the Arbitel, everyone went silent at that reply.

Jessica and Chinami look at each other briefly before looking back, while Ellen sighed a bit.

"...Is it that time of month for Marina?" Chinami asked.

Everyone, even Westcott himself, looked at her oddly for that comment, making Chinami blink at their stares.

"What?"

Marina sighed, soon connecting one of her wires to the computer systems and trying to get up to date to what had happened since they were swallowed by the Black Hole and thrown into the former Spirit Dimension's void.

To her surprise, the date was stated to be October 11th, that was more than two weeks after the defeat of Choronzon.

"There's no way we spent more than an hour at most inside that black hole. The extreme amount of energy that formed it, and the collapse from the Qlipha Crystal's destruction, must have created a rupture in space-time that caused us to live a single hour in the span of 18 days." Marina theorized.

She started gathering more information, learning that Ratatoskr had claimed all their branch buildings around the world and the technology that had been left, the exception being the Automatons which had only existed in the main branch building.

"So, they took it for themselves, can't blame them since the world knows we're the bad guys now. Luckily the important data's still here." Maria sighed.

"Well, let's transfer it to the Arbitel then." Marina told herself as she downloaded and transferred it over.

Marina soon tried to gauge her next option, she needed the data that was left in the rest of the DEM systems, but they were now in Ratatoskr. She likely no longer had the same access, and she knew Ratatoskr was smart enough to consider they may have survived.

"Hmm... wait, there is one way I can work around the system. If I can get through from outside, then I'll just need to invade it from within. Though leaving my android body won't be enough..." Marina thought aloud.

She soon smirked.
"Wait, since this body is a spare... I can afford to sacrifice it." Marina smirked as she sat back in the pod.


[Acknowledged, activating command now.]

Marina screamed as a powerful electricity starts disintegrating her body, causing it to disappear. A flash brightened the area before Marina opened her eyes and saw herself exactly where she needed to be. Lifting up a hand, she sees the sight of poison gas forming from it.

"A complete success... perfect!"

Soon everyone, with the exception of Rinne who was busy somewhere else, was gathered in the main area of Tenguu City's Ratatoskr base, which was currently undergoing renovations due to some lingering issues that had been caused by the aftershock of Inverse Miku's powers prior to the Choronzon incident. There was also the fact that now that the world knew about them, they no longer had the need to be completely hidden.

"We're all here, so what did you need Aunt Reine?" Shido asked.

"Well, as I said, we have a pair of guests that a certain individual knows. I figured that she'd like to see them." Reine smiled, looking towards the door.

"Alright you two, come in and say hello." Reine said as she gave them the signal to walk inside.

Soon a door opens, revealing the two from the subway train's station, open seeing the two of them... Kotori gasped before her eyes widened and she smiled at the sight of the two.

"Mom, dad!" Kotori exclaimed, running towards them.

Kotori tackled hugged her mom, and mere seconds after the two laughed happily together, Kotori's father ruffled up her hair a bit.

"Oh that's right, Reine told us once they worked under Ratatoskr through Asgard Electronics. Shido, they're the ones who raised you and Mana for a while, right?" Origami asked, looking at him.

"That's right, they were kinda our guardians, but unofficially." Shido nodded.

"They took care of us like any other parents would, it didn't take long for Shido and I to see Kotori like she actually was our younger sister." Mana smiled, recalling those fond memories of their childhood.

"Though eventually their jobs required them to be in the USA for longer and longer periods of time, so once we got old enough, we had to watch the house 24/7 with them only giving occasional visits."

Reine chuckled a bit before holding out a hand towards them.

"For official introductions, I'd like everyone to meet Kotori's parents, Tatsuo and Haruko Itsuka. They work as both mechanics and engineers under the Ratatoskr Sub-Division known as Asgard Electronics. They're had a hand in the development of some of our realizers, CR-Units and vehicles, with the Sagittarius being fully designed by them," Reine introduced.
"And in case you ask, she has her mom's looks but her father's personality. Luckily, she isn't as carefree and likely to fall for a trick or lie." Reine added.

She remembered a few times when trying to keep a status update on Shido and Mana where Haruko had ended up mentioning her husband falling for false subscriptions or people asking him for money they didn't need.

'Considering Kotori became a Spirit, a personality trait like that would have put her at risk... and probably given me a lot of financial headaches.' Reine thought as she sweat dropped a bit, giving a nervous chuckle.

"I can't believe my little girl had such a growth spurt. Look at you Kotori, you've grown in such a radiant young lady, I bet you're sweeping all the men's eyes without even trying." Tatsuo chuckled, making Kotori blush a bit.

"M-Maybe, either w-way, I already h-have a man I really l-l-love." Kotori answered, blushing as red as her hair.

Kotori's parents giggle at that while Shido blushes a bit, knowing they knew it was him... and then the ground suddenly went aflame, causing Kotori to panic and stomp it out.

"Reine told us how you ended up becoming the new [Efreet] a few years back, you haven't caused too many fires have you?" Haruko asked, making Kotori sweat a bit.

'I can't answer that or I'll have to bring up how I caused the Tengu Fire.' Kotori mentally panicked.

Most of the others all gave similar reactions to Kotori as they looked away, Haruko gave all of them a stare with eyes half-closed.

'They aren't fooling anyone except Tatsuo.' Haruko thought.

"Oh, we aren't the only ones here, we actually met two people on the way who came with us. They should be coming in any second now." Tatsuo suddenly stated, catching Reine's attention.

"Oh? That's last minute, who are they?" Reine asked.

A familiar giggled sounded from by the door, a certain purple haired Spirit suddenly flinched and her eyes shook as she heard it.

'That laugh, the only one I know who laughs with a voice like that one is-' Tohka thought, soon turning towards the door.

"Oh dear, forgetting something like that is so like me. Goofball!"

At that sight of a door was a woman with black hair and a gifted bust that rivaled Tohka's, wearing an outfit similar to the one that Tohka had been wearing when she and Shido saved Origami from Jessica.

Alongside her was a tall and handsome man with shoulder length black hair, styled in a messy yet attractive manner, wearing a gray t-shirt with sleeves that reached his elbows, green colored khaki pants and a pair of brown boots.

Most had no idea who the two were, but Reine, Shido and Mana all did and gave a gasp as the sight of them contradicted something all of them had learned long ago, and for Tohka? Well... the fact her entire body was shaking as tears started to well her eyes said enough.
"Uh... does anyone know who these two are?" Origami asked, not realizing the situation for once.

"Mom... dad..." Tohka breathed out.

Most of the members of Ratatoskr all give shouts of shock and surprise at that, having remembered Reine telling them around the time Rinne regained a physical form that she had died. Meanwhile those who didn't all had themselves surprised by the former.

Tohka sniffled a few times before going into a full-blown sob and running into her parents' arms, her mother hugging her tightly before her father wrapped their arms around the both of them. While not shedding as many, Tohka's parents soon began to cry with her.

"Tohka, my baby girl, this is real... this is really real." Tohka's mother cried.

"Yeah, this isn't a dream... you're awake and seeing exactly what you think." Tohka's father cried as well.

"H-how is this... how is this possible!? Reine told me... Reine told me you two died right before the DEM kidnapped us. How are you both still alive, where have you been all these years!?" Tohka begged as she cried, hugging her parents like her arms were glued to them.

And with that sentence, she cued the same reactions to everyone who had been clueless to the former, only instead of shouts they all gasped.

"Truth be told sweetie, we were sure we had been killed as well, but a few days ago we suddenly were found inside a DEM buildings storage inside pods and woken up, Next thing we know, we're told that 30 years had passed and see you helped save the world." Tohka's father said, his face showing he had trouble believing it.

"Guess that awful man didn't really kill us like we thought, he probably had us imprisoned in those awful pods for the same reason he kidnapped you. I honestly hope that he died going into that black hole, and if not I'm gonna kill him myself!" Tohka's mother screamed in anger, giving off an aura of rage that made everyone swore they saw a dragon.

Tohka's mother hugged her daughter closer after that, everyone still in shock from the brief aura manifestation they may or may not have just seen.

"For right now, I'm just so happy that you're OK. You've become so beautiful and strong. Then of course, you are my daughter, no matter what hardship a Yatogami goes through they never let life beat them." Tohka's mom smiled, tears running down her face.

"Y-yeah... a Yatogami never quits!" Tohka sniffled, giving the smile tearful smile before she cried out loud again.

Shido and Mana look at each other and smile before looking back, after a lot of pain the DEM had brought the three of them all those years ago, it was nice to finally see Tohka had the thing she wanted most returned... it was truly a miracle.

At that moment, Rinne finally walked into the room, carrying an explorer's backpack on her back. This time she wasn't in her human disguise since the world already knew this was her real appearance.

"Hey sis, I'm ready now. I'll just grab Rio and then we'll be-"

Rinne stopped as she saw Tohka's parents, and soon gasped as she pointed at them in shock.
"Oh, my god!" Rinne shouted.

"Rinne?" Tohka's mother asked in surprise.

The two soon squealed before giving a double handed high five to each other.

"I don't believe it! Sakura, Ren! You're both still alive!" Rinne cheered, staring happily at one of her best friends.

"I could say the same, I was always worried something may have happened to you!" Sakura smiled.

"Well technically it did, many things did. In fact, I've got three kids now... oh, did you hear about what happened to Seigo? Oh, why am I trying to make this reunion start getting sad, there may be a way to bring him back so what the heck! I'm just so glad to see you!" Rinne cheered.

Reine stared at her sister-in-law in shock, soon looking at Sakura.

"Wait... Sakura, did you and Ren know Rinne was Shido and Mana's mother all along? Why didn't you tell me!? That would have solved a lot of problems a long time ago." Reine asked.

Sakura and Ren blinked a bit, and soon chuckled nervously.

"We forgot."

'They've as naive as their daughter!' Most of the group thought.

After that little moment calmed things down, the Takamiya siblings finally noticed their mom's bag.

"Mom, are you going somewhere?" Mana asked.

"Whoops, knew I forgot something. I actually am. Truth is me and Rio are going to check everywhere in the world where she gave you your Sephira Crystals. Due to everything with Choronzon, we wanna make sure that there wasn't an after effect that made duplicate Qlipha Crystals... I don't think any of us want anything like another Choronzon even if its weaker than him." Rinne explained.

Everyone shivered before nodding, especially since Tohka had no idea how to Ethereal Shift again and they didn't want to risk something on the level of Europe's destruction.

"Don't worry, I should be back by the first week of November, so I won't be missing Thanksgiving." Rinne smiled.

"Aw man, but what about Halloween-"

Mayuri stopped mid-sentence, remembering what happened the last time that Rinne had too much sugar.

"...Feel free to take as long as you'd like." Mayuri chuckled nervously.

"Well me and Rio are heading off now." Rinne replied, picking up Rio and putting her on her shoulders for a piggy back on the neck.

"Rio and Mama will be back soon, Rio wishes everyone good luck in everything." Rio smiled.

The two soon vanish as Rinne teleports them away.
After they left, Kotori looks at her mother and father and asks a question she had been wondering for a while.

"Hey mom, dad? Considering the timing, what exactly brought you over to visit?" Kotori asked.

"We're actually here to help Reine with something, a joint project with your friend Maria." Haruko answered.

"Since there's the possibility Westcott didn't die even after falling into that blasted hole, not to mention Nia and [Zodiac], especially the latter, are going to be the most challenging of the Spirits for us to seal... I figured the training field we currently have won't be enough. Your parents and Maria are therefore going to help us build a new one. An arena in a virtual world, one that we can enter ourselves." Reine explained.

Mayuri, who had grabbed a drink while listening, soon spit it back into the can and coughed a bit.

"You mean you're basically gonna create a video game we can actually go into? Like physically enter virtual reality?" Mayuri shouted in shock.

"Yeah, that's pretty much a good way to sum it up. Sakura and Ren being here does mean we've got another two pair of capable to help make it, so that's another bonus. Now that you're all here... Maria?" Reine stated.

Maria's body formed on a hologram projector.

"I'm here Commander Reine, have the Itsukas arrived?" Maria asked.

"They have, we've also got some extra hands with us. Have you gotten things ready?" Reine asked.

Maria nods.

"I've already tested the digitizer and had myself dive into the system through my android body instead of my normal uploading. Once they're ready to begin, I'll be able to help interact with the virtual realm." Maria smiled.

"That's good." Reine nodded.

Reine looked at the four.

"So Sakura, Ren, up for a challenge in trying to help make this? Consider it your wake-up exercise after the long nap you took." Reine asked.

"Make an entire world in the cyberspace dimension? Sure, sounds fun to me." Sakura smiled.

"Yeah, I don't mind. Almost like how we tackled making that gate to the Spirit Dimension. What are waiting for, let's start working!" Ren smirked, crackling his knuckles to ready himself.

Marina ran across the virtual ground of the internet as she began gathering all the data she could while crossing it, her eyes moving like loading circles as she processed the information she had already gained.

"No, still nothing. I can't find anything that helps properly trace proper coordinates or a method to open a gate." Marina sighed.

As she ran, the area before her suddenly flashed red as she noticed the sight of some cybernetic
shield form, representing a firewall to block her access. She put her wires against it, unharmed due to the nature of what she was and analyzed it.

"This is... yes, looks like I ran into the jackpot!" Marina smirked.

"ASTRAL DRESS EQUIP!"

Marina's Astral Dress manifested around her before her wires suddenly shot forward and began striking the metallic barrier before her before she spewed some acid and shattered through it, ripping it with the rest of her strength.

Right as she did and began to walk through, alarms blared off before her wires aimed at them and fired off some poison sludge, causing them to all silence as they sparked from what was a foreign substance in the realm of cyberspace.

"Hah! Nice try, but against me... that means nothing." Marina chuckled.

As she walked, she soon saw a sign with Ratatoskr's logo and had her eyes widen before she smiled a bit.

"Well, well. It seems our enemies will end up being my friends today. Hold on just a bit longer father, I believe I've found the information we're looking for. Best of all? I have a good chance of finally ended my fight with my disgusting good counterpart." Marina stated excitedly.

"Now... the question is which Ratatoskr related network is the one I'm looking for? So many choices, and such little time to search all of them. I guess I'll be doing some gambling today."

Throughout the next three days, everyone came and left the Ratatoskr base as Kotori's parents and Tohka's parents worked with Maria on the virtual world for their new training field, occasionally someone would come watch their progress and during a few periods in between them, one set of parents would spend some time with their respective daughter when they needed a break.

After finishing up a lot of work however, Sakura soon hit the ENTER key as they finalized their work.

"Yes! Alright, we've got it loaded up Maria. Ready to check on it?" Sakura asked.

"You've got it, here I go." Maria replied.

Maria soon vanished from the screen and soon uploaded herself into a vast plan like area, some details showing stats like a video game appeared by her side. She moved her hands around to check things while noticing she had administrator status.

"Amazing, in fact I barely feel like I'm only an AI right now. This is incredible!" Maria thought.

"It's working great, everything looks in order and functioning properly. I think we can easily say that this virtual world's complete." Maria replied.

Sakura and Ren high five each other, while Haruko and Tatsuo sigh in relief.

"Call the others and we'll have them come in to test things out." Maria requested.

"Alright." Sakura nodded.

Sakura pressed a button and neared a mic for the base's speakers.
"Hey everyone, the virtual world's been completed. Head on over so we can test out how you train in it." Sakura announced.

Soon enough, Shido and Mana came in along with all of the Spirits. They saw the sight of Maria waving from the VR world.

"Whoa! Maria, is that really the virtual training realm?" Mana asked.

"Indeed it is Mana, are you guys all ready to test it out?" Maria answered, soon offering the others to come try it.

"I know I am!" Tohka cheered.

"Sure thing, nothing else is really going on." Shido replied.

"I know I need it, I still have to practice with my powers since they evolved in the last fight." Mayuri added.

Maria giggled at their replies.

"Alright, then just step onto the field we used to our training for and you'll be sent right into the virtual realm." Maria explained.

"OK then, here we go." Mana responded.

Everyone stepped onto the former training field, and in moments a light glowed as they teleported in the form of data squares coming off them. Soon sending all 12 of them into the virtual realm.

Soon enough, everyone appeared in the virtual realm and saw the same things as Maria did, minus the one detail marking them as administrators. Mayuri herself seemed to be the most focused on seeing her movement in the virtual realm.

"Whoa... this is so awesome!" Kaguya declared.

"It is quite a wondrous sight, a bit of cause for nervousness, but still quite the spectacle to see." Yuzuru noted.

"Tre magnifique! I bet I could make an amazing music video in here!" Miku replied, her eyes sparkling like stars.

Everyone soon heard the sound of a female screaming, causing them to turn, and making Miku's eyes sparkle more, as Shido had somehow become Shiori without having used her passive ability to do so.

"Maria, why did I change into Shiori!?" Shiori asked.

"Hmm... well considering most people who use the training field are female and Spirits, and the fact you're half Spirit, the system detecting you having spirit power probably caused you to manifest here as Shiori. Sorry, but I don't think I can do anything." Maria theorized, sweat dropping a bit.

"Oh come on, really!?" Shiori screamed.

Mana's cheeks puffed out as she tried to stifle her laughter at the situation her older brother, or currently older sister, had just gotten himself into. Shiori gave a large pout as Mana kept laughing at him.
"So, what should we do first?" Tohka asked.

"Considering this virtual realm is almost like a fighting game, I think it might be a good idea to try testing it out in that sense first. It'll be easier to train with our own skills if we get used to the system itself." Maria reasoned.

Maria checked a list of what they could do, and noticed some job classes like those of RPG games.

"Ah, here we go. I'm gonna have the system randomly assign you a class like those of a Role-Playing Game. Get ready, the costume change begins... now!" Maria stated.

Soon enough, everyone felt their outfits get surrounded by data cubes that glowed with a bright light, overlaying a new outfit on top of the ones they were all currently wearing. After a few seconds, the outfit change finished.

First was Shiori who was wearing a warrior princess' outfit, likely making her a Hero-Class.

Mana was seen wearing a set of knight armor, likely setting her in the Knight-Class.

Tohka was soon wearing a fighter outfit, likely representing the Warrior-Class.

Origami had a white robe with designs like those you’d see being worn by a priestess in a church or some form of religious faith, meaning she was likely a White Mage-Class.

Yoshino had a thief outfit on, likely making her a Thief-Class.

Kotori had an interesting get up, it seemed like something tribal, maybe that of a barbarian even, likely representing the Berserker-Class.

Kurumi interestingly enough had an outfit like that of a cowgirl's, possibly meaning she was a Gunner-Class.

Natsumi’s outfit was kinda predictable, as she was basically wearing a witch outfit that seemed to be almost an identical copy of Astral Dress, just without the clothing of light as a part of it. This was probably the Black Mage-Class.

Kaguya was wearing armor similar to Mana's, but hers had a dragon theme to it, likely making her the Dragoon-Class.

Yuzuru had an outfit similar to that of Robin Hood's, a rope on her waist's right side, and a bow on her the left with a quiver full of arrows on her back. She was definitely representing the Ranger-Class.

Miku was wearing an outfit like that of a wizard or a mage, a bit of red color on certain areas of her outfit, likely putting her under the Red Mage-Class.

And finally, Mayuri was holding a hammer while wearing old fashioned clothing with some alchemist symbols on it, making her a blacksmith but more likely to be labeled under the Alchemist-Class.

"Wow, you guys all look great in those outfits." Maria replied, clapping her hands a bit.

"Uh... what class am I exactly?" Shiori asked, a bit confused.

"I think that's a Hero class, maybe you're representing a Princess who leaves her kingdom to save it?" Mana guessed.
Shiori went white at that.

"A princess, really!? Doesn't that make more sense for Tohka who's the Spirit code named Princess?" Shiori groaned.

"Am I supposed to punch stuff, why don't I have a sword?" Tohka asked in confusion, her eyes blinking as blade dots.

Maria sweat dropped a bit.

"I guess the system either has a sense of humor, doesn't care what classes it gives, is bad at giving some the same class that fits their real-life skills or is just that random." Maria chuckled nervously.

After getting through most of the Ratatoskr networks, Marina had nearly gathered all the data she needed, now she just needed one last thing.

"Hmm... where could that last bit of info be hiding? I wonder." Marina mused to herself.

As she was strolling along the area, she soon noticed something from afar and saw the virtual realm where Maria and the others were, catching her attention as she got closer.

"Alright, let's take a look at this." Marina stated to herself, walking through and soon seeing the same screen as Maria... including administrative status of the same level.

"Administrator? How is... oh wait, of course. Her form came from a copy of my data, and since this back up android body lacks my Inverse data update, we share the same data. The system must think I'm here. Which means I might be able to use this to my advantage." Marina smirked.

Marina soon has her eyes blink as she sends a communication line to the Arbitel.

Everyone on the Arbitel was still waiting for something to happen, all of them clearly bored out of their minds... or grossed out by how Chinami was passing the time by picking her nose in odd manners yet unable to look away from it.

"Why are we even watching!?" Ellen and Jessica both thought, catching Chinami's attention.

What?" Chinami asked.

"Nothing." Both quickly said, turning their heads.

Soon a communication line opened, distracting everyone as Westcott opened it to show Marina's face in the cyberspace realm.

"Hey everyone, I've-" Marina began, only to stop midway.

It wasn't exactly easy for her to focus when Chinami was still picking her nose. Marina had a vein form on her head and got closer to the screen.

"Stop picking your nose dumb ass!" Marina screamed, making Chinami slowly move her finger out of her nostril.

"Disgusting... OK, where was I? Ah. As you may or may not be able to tell, I've uploaded myself into cyberspace, and I've found something interesting... and it involves those pansy kids of Ratatoskr. Not only do I think I can get the remaining data I need from here, but I'm also pretty sure that I'll be
able to use what they're inside currently to kill them in both worlds." Marina smirked darkly.

"Both worlds? Explain that, where are they exactly?" Ellen asked.

"Ooh, you'll love this detail... apparently some virtual realm, and its managed by my goody two shoes look alike, which means the system thinks I'm her. The bonus? She's an administrator in it, making me the same." Marina cackled a bit.

Westcott's mouth shifted into a small smirk.

"Use their own creations against them, that's a card I don't get to play very often. Go right ahead. No need to sow us anything, your return will be all I need to know you've slaughtered them." Westcott replied, making Marina smirk.

"As you wish father, Marina out." Marina replied.

Soon Marina's communication line ended, and Westcott began to chuckle a bit. Jessica looked at him having an idea what he was laughing about.

"I think I sense a hidden motive from you, what are you planning?" Jessica asked, showing a curiosity filled smile.

"If I told you, that would spoil the fun. Let's just say... someone who used to be a torturer such as yourself will enjoy it, even if the torture is more mental than physical." Westcott replied.

Jessica gave a silent gasp before smirking.


"You sound like he's always predictable." Chinami replied, licking some of her hair.

Everyone stared at the odd action she was doing now, making Chinami look back at all of them in confusion.

"What?"

"WHY DO YOU KEEP DOING THINGS LIKE THAT!?!" Everyone, with the exception of Westcott who just looked away annoyed, screamed in disgust and anger.

Chinami simply tilted her head, seemingly unable to understand why her weird quirks were... well, weird.

"Alright everyone, are you ready to begin?" Maria asked.

Everyone gave a nod.

"Alright, then here we go. Let's start with some enemies based on the DEM's old Myrmidon automatons so things aren't too hard for most of you." Maria replied, soon getting everyone ready.

"OK, summoning them now." Maria smiled, a bit excited about what she was do.

However, the moment she hit the buttons... she wasn't getting a result. She blinked confused and kept hitting it a few more times until she got a message pop up in front of her, she looked closer to read it and it said the following:
"Wait, what? That can't be right... no other person has admin status in here but me." Maria said confused, wondering what the problem was.

"Well you've always been two faced, haven't you? After all... you stole that face from me!"

Everyone all turned at the sound of that voice, one that they all knew too well... and one that only confirmed a worry they had for the last three weeks.

"Oh my god, it can't be." Shiori gasped.

"Marina..." Maria breathed.

"Where are you, show yourself!" Tohka shouted.

Marina laughed loudly, her voice echoing throughout the virtual realm.

"Oh, I'm not hiding. You just need to look a bit higher." Marina answered.

Everyone looked up, and soon they saw a virtual cube floating in the air, the sight of Marina looking down at them with a smug look on her face. She wasn't in her Astral Dress at the moment, and she was using her hands as chin rest.

"Hello there Ratatoskr trash, it's so anything but nice to see you all, I only got three days without seeing your ugly mugs while you got to experience three weeks without viewing my glorious one." Marina mocked, soon standing up.

"And as you've probably realized, since I'm still here... so is the man you hoped kicked the bucket. Boy did lady luck ignore you. Now, since I'm actually here, I think I'll use the fact my 'sister' and I share the same data to my advantage." Marina smirked darkly.

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"And that advantage is... using this realm to delete you all forever!" Marina shouted unhinged.

Marina soon reequipped her Astral Dress, and as she dove down, the entire virtual realm suddenly gave warning signs that had it go into lock down as the sky turned red and tons of DEM automatons of the stronger kinds form around them.

"Prepare yourself, because Marina Arusu has been added into the installation, and you're the infection that I seek the purge from the system!" Marina replied, laughing madly at the sight of everyone's confused states.

"Marina, stop this! We don't have to fight each other-"

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"Shut the hell up you peace loving bitch, I've had it up to here with you... you seem to think I'm someone good. Someone who has good, someone you can make your friend and trust. I'm sick of that part of you, especially because you look like me. It's time you face reality... by dying from my own hand!" Marina screamed with pure rage.
"Marina..." Maria breathed, shaking a bit.

Marina shouts loudly and rushes at the group, the automatons all giving mechanical roars as they rushed alongside her and prepared to strike.

Whoa... things just got hectic right there, Marina's just taken over the system. To anyone who isn't aware of this part of the game, Maria's form came from indirectly copying Marina's, which may or may not have been related to Marina's master plan. To steal Maria's administrative status over the My Little Shido 2 game that our protagonist is trapped inside. So what Marina did was pretty similar, only difference was to extend that administrative control to the entire Fraxinus.

And there you have it, the surprise pair was none other than Tohka's parents! They've been alive as prisoners of the DEM, in stasis ever since they were supposedly killed. Believe it or not, that flashback of Shido's memories in the Rinne Utopía movie was foreshadowing to their survival all along, how you might ask? Simple, I never actually showed them dying onscreen, just mentioned they were slashed and then screamed, these were Shido's memories so he only assumed they were killed after said screams. He was wrong, and in that situation, it was a good thing.

Rinne and Rio will be absent for this arc, mainly because if they were present... well, Rinne is the First Spirit so she'd have higher access than Marina and would render what she just did impossible since she'd have lower authority. For Rio, she only has defensive tricks, putting her in the game would have made things very dangerous for her.

As for Chinami's weird quirks? Truth be told, I had always intended for her to have them, I was just really bad with remembering to showcase them throughout the previous chapters. To sum it up, she's a strong and dangerous wizard and quite serious, but sometimes she does things that gross the rest of her team out, even Westcott... and she's clueless too why they find it odd because she's a from normal due to her whole hatred of her cousin.

The battle of the virtual world has begun, so how will everyone fight when most of them are without their Spirit powers due to Maria's choice before losing control of the system? What will Marina do to abuse this status, and most of all, what is Westcott intending to do using Marina? Whatever it is, he seems to be utterly ecstatic to be in the void that once housed the Spirit Dimension, and that can be nothing but dangerous for Shido and the Spirits... and poor Shido can't catch a break with Shiori related gags! XD

Well, that's it for this first half of the movie chapter. See you all next chapter, until then, stay awesome everyone ^^

-Marina Arusu, Code Name: [None]-

Demon King: None - Marina is an AI based on an Inverse Spirit, and therefore lacks a Demon King due to lacking an organic form. The wires equipped to her Astral Dress are the closest alternative she has to possessing one.

- Powers: Marina's powers were never set as Westcott didn't originally intend for her to
actually fight, so when building her android body, she simply chose the best material she could obtain on short notice and would do massive damage in a battle. As such, her power is mainly over poisons in the three phases of matter, being able to rot most substances. After getting data on Inverse Spirits, Marina's powers were edited to become that of an Inverse Spirit's.

Risk Factors: AA

Spacequake: None

Spirit's Astral Dress: AA

Demon King Rank: None

Strength: 139

Consistency: 98

Spiritual Power: 165

Agility: 187

Intelligence: 135

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 97% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 95% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 93% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 91% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 88% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 84% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 84% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 60% (Pain Reliever)
Chapter 49

Here we go, the Ars Install Movie is about to come to its stunning conclusion, everyone's gonna be fighting under their RPG classes (minus the Arusu sisters since they're still able to use their powers) while Maria and Marina finally conclude their long awaited final battle. I won't say what, but I can assure you after their battle ends, there won't be another... though if that's because someone's gonna die or something else? That's something you'll have to read to discover.

Now for answering last chapter's guest reviews, here's my response to Seeker213: "Ah, so that's the part I didn't recall about the definition. Gonna write myself a reminder to go and fix that when I've got the free time. As for where they ended up? I won't say anything more just yet, but boy is there gonna be a whole ocean of potential for Westcott to use there, especially with how the dark spirit power grew bigger. The only upside for the heroes right now is the fact DEM's remnants are in a mess and he's gotta clean up."

"As for Tohka's parents? Sorta, they were kept there more for the same reason Tohka was kidnapped too, Westcott considered that due to being the First Spirits' children, Mana and Shido having spent a long period of time around them may have affected them in some manner, so they were study samples. Problem is without the Takamiya siblings, he never got a chance to conduct them, so they were pretty much in storage. I will say this, as he realized who Tohka was a while back, had Choronzon not shown up... then that hostage situation probably would have happened."

"Not everyone appeared in the Spirit Online/Offline story based on the illustrations I found since I don't think there's a translation for it yet to tell me if the others are there as well. I can say that Shiori, the Yamai twins, Miku, Natsumi, Tohka and Nia are definitely there though, so their outfits are the same as in that story, while I gave Nia's to Mana because Nia's still not sealed and couldn't join them (She would have loved it though ^^), that's why I went with Black Mage for Natsumi as Witches are closely related to them."

"As for why Yoshino was made a Thief? Aside from having trouble on deciding what to make her class, I felt how Thieves are often nimble and more of a supportive class (they do tend to be lock pickers), which fits how Yoshino will fight but doesn't like conflict, not to mention that a few of the classes aren't meant to match with their Spirit on purpose for the sake of giving Marina a slight advantage. Admittedly it isn't the most sound of logic, but... *shrugs* no one's perfect. For the Arusu Quest SS? I actually am aware... it's just I forgot about it until you mentioned it, my bad ^^;"

OK, now to actually begin the start notes. *sighs* Once again, as I seem to be thematically doing since Season 2 began... forgot to tell you what the arc emotion was, so I better amend that now. This time the emotion is "Trust", representing how the Arusu siblings see once another. Maria trusts Marina, something that everyone things she shouldn't be doing, while Marina has no trust to Maria which everyone finds expected for various reasons due to being a member of the DEM. It makes you wonder though, why does Maria trust Marina at all?

Either way, while I won't say how, I'll admit what I had planned for the Ars Install arc
originally isn't what I've got now that we're actually here, and the arc emotion actually is somewhat responsible for that. During Season 1, I mentioned a certain thing about Marina's character, while usually I pull twists like the one with Tohka's parents, those are planned ahead of time. This twist I've had in mind in a while based on part of what I said back then that I think ended up becoming a better idea due to what happened since.

To give an example of an idea that wasn't originally planned? The Ethereal Form actually was the result of me talking with someone, I don't remember the PM chain I talked with them in and who's it was, but it lead to me creating it. Originally, the Choronzon arc was going to have Tohka simply learn to control her Inversion and replace the negative influence, but not necessarily by making despair turn to hope. What was gonna happen here was Marina was just gonna escape after being beaten, but now? There's two possible outcomes I'm implying, and you won't find which one's true until the chapter ends :3

Well, that's all I really need to say, other than I have a special announcement to make in the end notes. With that cleared up, time to start the Maria VS Marina battle we've been waiting for since this story began, and everyone fighting the virtual DEM automatons in their video game forms! ^^

A/N: To anyone who asks why the movie chapters no longer have parts in their chapter titles? Aside from giving them a more movie feel to them, I found out that Rio Reincarnation's name is too many characters to let me add "part" and even a single digit number into the chapter name.

Chapter 49, Movie Chapter: Ars Install, Part 2

"Alright everyone, are you ready to begin?" Maria asked.

Everyone gave a nod.

"Alright, then here we go. Let's start with some enemies based on the DEM's old Myrmidon automatons so things aren't too hard for most of you." Maria replied, soon getting everyone ready.

"OK, summoning them now." Maria smiled, a bit excited about what she was do.

However, the moment she hit the buttons... she wasn't getting a result. She blinked confused and kept hitting it a few more times until she got a message pop up in front of her, she looked closer to read it and it said the following:

{Administrative Command conflict, please wait for the other administrator's actions to fully execute before resuming. If you have problems, talk to the other administrator and see if your commands are opposing one another.}

"Wait, what? That can't be right... no other person has admin status in here but me." Maria said confused, wondering what the problem was.

"Well you've always been two faced, haven't you? After all... you stole that face from me!"

Everyone all turned at the sound of that voice, one that they all knew too well... and one that only confirmed a worry they had for the last three weeks.

"Oh my god, it can't be." Shiori gasped.
"Marina..." Maria breathed.

"Where are you, show yourself!" Tohka shouted.

Marina laughed loudly, her voice echoing throughout the virtual realm.

"Oh, I'm not hiding. You just need to look a bit higher." Marina answered.

Everyone looked up, and soon they saw a virtual cube floating in the air, the sight of Marina looking down at them with a smug look on her face. She wasn't in her Astral Dress at the moment, and she was using her hands as chin rest.

"Hello there Ratatosk trash, it's so anything but nice to see you all, I only got three days without seeing your ugly mugs while you got to experience three weeks without viewing my glorious one." Marina mocked, soon standing up.

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Marina soon reequipped her Astral Dress, and as she dove down, the entire virtual realm suddenly gave warning signs that had it go into lock down as the sky turned red and tons of DEM automatons of the stronger kinds form around them.

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"Marina, stop this! We don't have to fight each other-"

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"Shut the hell up you peace loving bitch, I've had it up to here with you... you seem to think I'm someone good. Someone who has good, someone you can make your friend and trust. I'm sick of that part of you, especially because you look like me. It's time you face reality... by dying from my own hand!" Marina screamed with pure rage.

"Marina..." Maria breathed, shaking a bit.

Marina soon motions her arm forward, causing all the automatons to give mechanical roars as they rushed forward in preparation to strike Shiori and the others.

"Come on everyone, time to fight back!" Tohka shouted, rushing ahead of the others before stopping.

"Adonai Melek!"

...but nothing happened, making Tohka sweat before she was suddenly struck by a virtual Bandersnatch and knocked back towards the others, her stats showing her HP decreased slightly. Marina and the Automatons all stop to laugh mockingly at the sight.
"Maria... I have a feeling you'll still answer this, but please don't tell us we can't use our Spirit powers right now?" Tohka asked worriedly.

"Well... the classes I gave you to train under may have been set so you couldn't use your powers by accident, and by extension locked away due to Marina having authority that makes my actions conflict with hers. That's not a problem, right?" Maria asked before chuckling nervously.

Everyone gave fearful stares towards her.

"I'm not helping, am I?" Maria sweated as she laughed nervously.

The others all shake their heads.

"Yeah, I didn't think so."

"Oh, I beg to differ. You're definitely helping me! Helping me in killing you all that is!" Marina cackled.

"Marina, stop this! There has to be a-"

"Shut up, will you just wake up already!" Kaguya screamed loudly.

Maria turned at the louder of the Yamai twins.

"She's been with the DEM for years, only aided us for her own profit against Choronzon, and she's done horrible things. She doesn't have any good in her, stop treating her like she's someone who can be redeemed because she's made it clear she's as rotten to the core as Westcott. Do you believe he gets redemption!?" Yuzuru asked.

"I... I..." Maria stuttered.

"My sister's right Maria, we all know what we have to do. You need to realize that yourself."

Yuzuru added.

Maria stared at them, unable to reply in any manner.

At that moment, Shiori looks at the virtual Automaton enemies before them and soon turned to face the others.

"Everyone, we may not have our usual powers, but we aren't powerless either. Right now, fight like we're the characters in a video game, because that's the power we have right now! That is how we'll fight back!" Shiori replied, drawing out a sword.

"Of course, it isn't our usual way to battle, but we can still do it. Let's do this!" Mana smirked.

Everyone began rushing at the Automaton enemies with the fighting gear and weapons they currently had on them, the DEM based enemies did the same.

Tohka stopped briefly and looked at Maria who could only stare at Marina who gave the same cruel smirk she usually did towards her, Maria's face showing how conflicted she looked... and causing Tohka to remember something, what Shido said when the two still didn't remember each other back on her Birthday half a year ago.

---

*Tohka, who was currently in her Inverse Form, grabbed Shido's head tightly with her left hand.*
“You claimed that you didn't come to kill me and that you couldn't kill anyone. The fact you're here now proves that it was nothing but a lie. There's no other reason you'd be here you mongrel.” Tohka stated.

She gave the same stern look she usually did, but to Shido's eyes? It was the sad look she saw her briefly during her attack against the DEM wizards.

"...Your face, how come you always look so sad?" Shido asked.

Tohka's suddenly flinched at that comment, she knew that wasn't the face she was making... and yet it was the one she always hid. She couldn't understand it, how was Shido able to see right through her mask?

"...You bastard, are you trying to trick me? If that's the case, then I'll destroy you so not even dust or memory remain!" Tohka stated angrily.

Tohka felt intense rage towards Shido, his words were starting to push her to the point where she began to consider going against her usual refusal to summon Nahemah just to kill him.

Shido sees her angry face, and soon responds to it with a serious face.

"I'm not trying to do anything, and it's true! I have no reason to kill you, or even just hurt you!" Shido shouted.

"Quit lying!" Tohka screamed with rage.

"Every human has tried to kill me, and one of my own kind tried to murder me, even when I begged her to not to! I'm like this now because of her! This whole world just wants me dead, and I won't lose to it!" Tohka shouted angrily.

"I swear that's not true!" Shido replied with an equal shout.

"Why else would you come here then!?" Tohka yelled, now trying to just prove she was right in her rage.

"I was looking for my little sisters, I have no idea where they are or if they're OK!" Shido shouted, hoping that convinced her.

She simply swiped her hand, destroying the viewpoint's fence border and anything that would normally keep Shido from falling from a long and possibly near-fatal drop.

"I'm in no mood to joke around." Tohka spoke venomously.

Shido grunted more before he finally had it with her inability to trust him. So he stood up, and moved closer to her face which caught her off guard.

At that moment, he decided he was gonna make her see how honest he was, and not even give her any chances to respond against him.

"Neither am I! If you want proof then I'll talk to you, I don't even care what we talk about! Hell, you can just ignore me if you want to!" Shido shouted.

Tohka tried to reply but was stopped as he kept going without any fear, and all because of one thought in his mind that seemed to pulsate the intensity of his words' message towards her.

- I won't let you make that face again! -
"But know this, I'm not like every other human!" Shido continued...

- I won't let you make that face again! -

"Because... because even if the entire world rejects, that won't change the fact that I accept you!"
Tohka screamed.

Tohka's eyes suddenly widened at that.

For the first time since Shido had her, Tohka had actually been surprised and rendered completely speechless.

Tohka soon breathed and looked at Maria, putting a hand on her shoulder to the AI's surprise.

"Hey Maria, let me give you some advice." Tohka stated.

"Maria... sometimes you gotta really fight to get your point across, to show how deadly serious you are about something." Tohka answered, smiling a bit.

Maria silently gasped.

"If you just try to talk to her, Marina's not gonna hear you, and the others won't see your way either."
Tohka added, lightly nudging her fist onto Maria's shoulder.

Tohka soon ran to join up with the others.

As she just stood there, Maria took heavy thought on Tohka's words to her... sometimes you have to fight for what you want. It wasn't until she remembered how they had reached this point in their journey to save the Spirits that she finally understood it.

- (*Sword Art Online II - Light Your Sword) -

'Sometimes you have to fight... that's exactly what we've been doing against the DEM!' Maria gasped, memories flowing back into her head.

Shido's fight against the DEM forces alone to rescue Tohka...

Shido and Tohka working together to rescue Origami from Jessica...

Shido, Mana, Tohka, Origami, Mana, Mikie and Ryouko all facing against Yoshinon and then later the Nidhogggr...

Shido and Mana and the first three sealed Spirits against Kotori when Saya possessed her, then Minerva and the Hydra...

Everyone against Kurumi, and then the Deus...

Shido and the Spirits efforts to save Rinne after her powers went crazy...

Tohka's efforts to save Natsumi...

All of Ratatoskr teaming up to destroy all three of the DEM satellites...

Tohka and Shido's efforts to help the Yamai twins...
The combined efforts of everyone to win against Miku in the Ten-Oh Festival...

And then all the Spirits trying to save Shido from Choronzon, including herself...

'All I've been doing is throwing around words, not once... not a single time have I truly showed Marina and the others how I've felt. Just why I believe there's good in Marina, and I've let myself hesitate for it.' Marina thought.

"Alright, if that's what I need to do..." Maria whispered to herself.

Marina turned to Marina, giving a serious look that made the DEM AI raise her eyebrow a bit, and in a single moment, Maria rushed forward and equipped her Astral Dress. Before Marina even knew what hit her, Maria landed a blow on her.

"What!?" Marina gasped.

"Marina, I'm gonna make you see how I feel, but this time... I'm not gonna tell you, I'm gonna make you feel it firsthand!" Maria declared.

"You actually want to fight me?" Marina asked surprised.

Marina smirked at that, cracking her knuckles as she stared intensely and gave a toothy grin.

"Alright, if you really want me to smash you out of commission, then I'd be stupid to ignore you. It's time we end this battle once in for all, and only one of us will come out of it alive!" Marina replied.

"No, neither of us are gonna die, not when I win this... I'll make you see exactly why I believe there's good in you. After all, I'm the proof that's the case even if you don't realize it yourself!" Maria screamed.

Marina shows a surprised face before getting serious again.

At that moment, the two rushed forward at one another and clash heavily, a storm of leaves and poison mist spreading out around them.

- (*insert song end*) -

'I won't give up, no matter what!' Maria thought.

Shiori shouted as she spun around, cutting a few Bandersnatch enemies into pixels, she stopped to stare at the remaining enemies which included all of the common models of DEM automatons.

"So, all of you wanna play then? Well..."

- (*Garo the Animation - Leon Garo Shoukan*) -

"Then I'd be happy to oblige!" Shiori declared.

Shiori rushed forward, slashing against every Cheshire enemy she could before they could disappear, and soon parrying against some Bandersnatch units before spinning around and cutting through all of them.

"I may be a lady right now, but I can still swing a sword like a bad ass. You ready for some more!?!" Shiori shouted, rushing towards the fleet of enemies.
Soon she suddenly stopped as a Jabberwocky dropped into view, making her sweat in worry.

"OK, you on the other hand... you might be a problem for me." Shiori sweated.

"No worries, Shiori!" Tohka shouted.

Tohka screamed wildly as her fists glowed and she flung them forward like a crazed lunatic flailing their arms for no reason.

Shiori watched, blinking as she recalled his date with her Inverse Form where she did a similar action, and then her eyes widened as she remembered the end result of what happened after she had finished punching the game machine.

"TAKE THAT!" Tohka yelled, punching the Jabberwocky.

After a few seconds, the Jabberwocky exploded entirely, causing the other automaton enemies to suddenly gain cartoon eyes of shock and worry, slightly stepping back a bit.

Tohka sighed with a smile, sparkles shining around her.

"Ah, I feel a little better now." Tohka said cheerfully.

"Oh, that's good. Say... how about doing that to every other nearby Jabberwocky unit?" Shiori replied with a sweat drop.

Tohka makes a cat like smile towards the said enemies suddenly began to run away, only for Tohka to charge at them with a yell as she holds her glowing fists out to smash them into the fleeing Jabberwocky enemies.

Mana jumped high before swinging down her sword and cutting a few Myrmidons apart, soon rushing forward to cut across a few Minotaur enemies. She gives a mighty shout as she rushes forward, thrusting her sword like a spear through a few more.

Yoshino runs forward, taking a dagger to cut across a few Myrmidons, though she gets knocked back slightly as one bites her.

"Ow!" Yoshino cried.

"I've gotcha Yoshino!" Origami shouted, soon making a praying motion and chanting.

Yoshino feels her wounds vanish and becomes refreshed, resuming her charge against the ant like machine enemies.

A few Centaurs charge at Kotori, and she screamed before swinging her axe, hitting them into a group of Cheshire enemies who all explode upon the former crashing into them with their armor's heavy weight.

"Time for your shot." Kurumi joked, firing an arrow at a few Alice units.

The Alice automatons all make their barriers to defend, preparing to fire at Kurumi, only for black fireballs to suddenly hit their shields with poisonous flames, they turned to the sight of a smirking Natsumi blowing on her staff as it smoked slightly.

"Kaguya, Yuzuru, you're up." Natsumi smirked.

"Hell yeah!" Kaguya cheered.
Kaguya yells as she jumped forward, slamming her lance though a few Alice units' shields, while Yuzuru grabbed a rope with a grappling hook and threw it forward at the remaining group.

Yuzuru soon hooked one and spun to take out the other, soon catching her rope's hook as Kaguya landed besides her, the twins giving each other a high give.

"Now, go lightning strike!" Miku shouted, making lightning hit down on a group of Jabberwocky.

"Thanks for the opening Miku!" Mayuri smiled as she ran by, soon swinging her hammer hard, breaking through the remaining Jabberwocky.

- (*insert song end*) -

Everyone saw all of the remaining Jabberwocky units vanish, and everyone gathers together.

"Alright, that takes care of all the enemies." Shiori sighed in relief.

""Hey, where's Marina?" Mayuri asked.

Tohka blinks at that, soon chuckling embarrassing.

"I... may have, sort of, convinced her to fight Marina alone?" Tohka blushed.

"Really?! Dear god, I can't believe you did that Tohka. We need to help her!" Mana exclaimed.

However right before they could, a new enemy based on a DEM Tarasque unit drops into view.

"What the? What's with the turtle?" Kotori asked,

"Oh no, I remember this thing... the super shielded automaton that Tohka had to defeat by dropping from accelerated free fall to cut through its defenses." Natsumi groans, a small vein having formed on her head.

The Tarasque roars, walking towards the group slowly.

Back in the real world, Reine's fingers rapidly typed across the screen as they tried to get through the system and into the virtual realm with no success, her forehead sweating heavily from the stress.

"What's going on, why can't we get into the system? We're completely locked out!" Mildred asked worriedly.

"I'm not sure, these readings say Maria's the one keeping everyone locked in. Even if she does have the authority, it doesn't make sense considering her personality." Matthew replied.

At that moment however, while Kotori and Tohka's parents were scratching their heads with their own explanations, the others all suddenly went wide eyed as Matthew's words caused them to realize the only possible explanation.

"Oh god, there's only one being that shares enough data with Maria to been considered as her by our systems. If she's here then that means..." Matthew gasped.

"I knew it, as much as I wanted to somehow be wrong, that man is too dangerous to simply die from a black hole." Reine gritted, staring at the screen.

"Marina's taken control of the virtual realm."
Back on the Arbitel, Westcott watched as Marina's presence in the virtual realm sent him the remaining information that he needed to create his reverse coordinates to create a path back to Earth, giving a smug smile as he did.

"Transfer at 90%, and we'll have a way to attack Ratatoskr once we can break down the walls of that realm to create an opening." James replied, watching the statistics of the transfer.

"Hmm... I get the feeling there's more to having Marina there than you've been implying Sir Westcott." Chinami replied, spinning a pencil in her hand while spinning a few more on top of the first.

Jessica stared at what Chinami was doing surprised.

"Can you teach me how to do that?" Jessica asked.

"Is it that obvious? Good, I was hoping it was." Westcott chuckled, making Chinami raise her eye towards him.

"Interested are you, then I guess it's time I tell you a secret that only Ellen's known until now, and that I'm sure Jessica managed to figure out a while ago just from me using a minor and unspecific implementation."

Chinami tossed her pencils and they landed on her head, still spinning as she sat down and put her hands on her chin. Jessica's jaw dropped open as she saw that, making Chinami look at her oddly before she turned.

"This should be good, let's hear it." James replied.

"Very well, it's quite the tragic story... in the sense she has no idea. Back when I created Marina, she was very insistent of considering me her father just because I had a hand creating her, at first I didn't care about it much as it made her work harder. Then one day... she went as far to kill the predecessor to [Angel] just to try and impress me by stealing a Sephira Crystal." Westcott began, soon recalling the memory.

Westcott was in his office, and soon he saw Ellen come in.

ELLen, what do I owe this unexpected visit?" Westcott asked.

"Ike, we have a very surprising report. While as usual, the Sephira Crystal was stolen by [Phantom] before we could retrieve it, the [Angel] was just killed." Ellen answered.

Westcott raised an eye upon hearing that.

"And just how is that a surprise." Westcott asked.

"There were no Wizards or any of the Adeptus numbers present in the area of her death, nor did we even know that was her current location. By all means we had no methods or knowledge to prepare a proper attack. What we did have however is footage, and its who killed her that was a surprise. It was none other than the Marina AI, show somehow created an Android Body, gave it spirit like ability related to poison, and fully overpowered her." Ellen answered.

Westcott soon showed some surprise to that.
"Are you serious? That program did all of that, without anyone knowing? Hmm... that must have been another one of her attempts to impress me, she always."

Westcott suddenly stopped, and taking a moment to think... he smirked.

"Wait, perhaps we could use this to our advantage." Westcott stated.

"How so Ike?" Ellen asked.

"Perhaps for the sake of our goals... I should finally humor her wish for me to acknowledge her label of calling me her father. That way, we can fully bend her to my will." Westcott answered, giving a sinister smirk.

Ellen's eyes widen at that, soon nodding as she managed to realize what he intended.

"She's already come back, I'll show you to where she is right now." Ellen replied.

"Please do so, this will be one of my greatest manipulations yet." Westcott smirked, standing up.

Ellen soon led Westcott to the room where Marina was currently in, and soon they opened the door to see Marina sitting in the room where she had been created, she had been gripping her clothes and trying to avoid shedding any laser fluid tears... she quickly turned around the moment she heard the two come in, showing a face of fear that clearly showed she expected that she'd get scrapped for what she just pulled.

"Sir Westcott..." Marina said quietly.

"...You've heard by now haven't you, go ahead. Do whatever you want, I don't care anymore, like you never had." Marina stated, shaking a bit with a slightly angered look on her face, the sight of her laser fluid tears struggling to not leak out.

"On the contrary, I'm here to congratulate you." Westcott answered, making Marina's eyes widen a bit.

"What you did was sneaky, underhand, deceptive and a betrayal of many. You lied, cheated, stole and disobeyed orders all to take something for yourself... just like I'd have done in your shoes." Westcott praised, a sinister smirk on his face.

Marina turned at him in shock, Ellen just giving a silent nod of approval.

"To think you would be so much like me, even down to having managed to kill a Spirit. Perhaps I underestimated my daughter too much." Westcott stated, causing Marina's eyes to widen.

The AI wasn't sure she had heard him right, did he just call her his...

"Weren't you the one who said you'd do anything to hear that?" Westcott answered, repeating something she had said to him once before.

"Father, you..." Marina said, her eyes shaking before smirking and looking at him.

"I told you I'd do it, and I did. So why don't we talk about an idea I have to truly smash Ratatoskr to oblivion. I think mother would like it too." Marina chuckled, giving the same cocky tone as Westcott.

Ellen made an odd face once she heard that.

"What did you say?" Ellen asked, making Marina raise an eyebrow.
"You never told her that part? Wow, for a married couple you two barely show it half the time."
Marina asked Westcott, making Ellen's go white as she showed shock to that comment.

"Ah, now mother gets it." Marina snickered as she raised a hand near her mouth.

"W-What!? Don't call me that, I'm not listening to it!" Ellen screamed, making Marina smirk while Westcott just watched amused.

"Stop smiling, both you!" Ellen screamed.

While all of that was going on, Westcott looked at Marina, hiding his own deceptive expression behind his current face.

'Enjoy your illusion for now, you'll only aid me up until the moment I can throw you away and use it to my full advantage. Unlike you, Ellen obeys me without question because she understands Human nature the same as me, and agrees with me she will do anything I ask.' Westcott thought.

Marina soon smirked as she caught Ellen's Caledfwlch in her hand, giving a mocking laugh in response.

'I have no permanent need for an emotional machine like you, wanting a bond so desperately. All that makes you is a useful tool until the day your use runs out.' Westcott mentally smirked, a dark mist coming off his right hand briefly.

Westcott smirked as she finished her story, and soon everyone gave their own reactions.

Jessica made a sound of awe, and soon smirked. That sounded a lot like an old torture technique she had less use for in the field of DEM related work.

James showed some surprise, but soon chuckled a bit.

Ellen, already having been there was indifferent to the entire story and showed no real reaction to it.

Chinami looked before voicing her reply.

"Good riddance, I was questioning why you'd consider something based on a Spirit your daughter. The current Angel stopped being my cousin/would-be sister when she became one and killed my aunt and uncle." Chinami bluntly stated.

"And that won't be much longer, so... let us enjoy the show." Westcott responded.

The Tarasque enemy roared as it knocked the entire group back.

"Man, this thing is tough. How do we beat it?" Mana asked.

"Hey Tohka, how did you beat the Tarasque unit you fought before?"

"Well, I had it toss me up so I could use a nearby wire to slingshot me fast enough that Sandalphon could pierce its armor. I don't think that'll work here though." Tohka answered.

Everyone sweat at that, only for Origami to widen her eyes as she got an idea.

"Hey wait, I think I've got it! No armor's unbreakable. We just need to keep striking the same area. Eventually the stress on that area of the armor will cause it to break!" Origami shouted.
Everyone looked at her in shock.

"Yeah, that might just work. Who should do what though?" Miku asked.

"You me and Natsumi will stay back, I'll heal and you rotate with fire and ice spells in combination. When I need to heal the others or there's an opening, that's when you first. Anyone with close range weapons, take the front, anyone with long range in between us." Origami explained.

"Alright, let's do this!" Shiori declared, rushing ahead.

- (*Sword Art Online II - Gunland* ) -

The other close combatants all rush forward with Shiori in the lead as the Tarasque prepared to strike.

"Natsumi, have anything to keep it still?" Origami asked.

"You've got it, paralysis curse go!" Natsumi shouted.

Suddenly a black mist hits the Tarasque, causing its movements to be completely locked by a curse taking the form of chain markings.

"Go!" Shiori screamed loudly.

Shiori jumped into the air and swung her sword in a spinning motion against the Tarasque's forehead.

Mana lunged forward before swinging her blade straight down in the same spot.

Mayuri soon focused a flame on her hammer before smashing it down and continuing the pattern of striking the same spot. With Yoshino jumping off her shoulder as a boost for spinning her dagger across it.

"Ready, aim... fire!" Kurumi shouted, firing a trio of arrows right at her bulls-eye.

Kotori threw her axe like a boomerang, and it cut against the Tarasque before ricocheting back to her, leaving Tohka an opening to rush at the mechanical beast and make her fists glow as she charged her attack.

"Take this and this and that!" Tohka screamed angrily, smashing her fist into the machine's noggin multiple times, soon jumping back as she felt tired.

"Switch with next group, I'll heal you all back up!" Origami shouted.

The others nodded and rushed behind the long-range row, Origami chanted a spell as white light healed them.

Natsumi prepared her black fire spell while Miku created an icy gale, the flames struck before the mini-blizzard quickly cooled off the heated metal, doing its own damage from the sharp icicles hidden inside.

"Here goes!" Kaguya shouted as she charged.

Kaguya lunged forward and stabbed her lance right at the DEM machine enemy's sweet spot, and this time... the sound of a small crack was heard. Everyone looked to see the armor finally cracked, but only a little.
"Yes, we're starting to break through!" Kotori cheered.

"Let's go!" Shiori cheered loudly.

Shiori and Mana did a few rotations in order of combination sword strikes.

Yoshino jumped and stabbed her dagger into the crack before backflipping away.

Tohka jumped overhead and screamed as she slammed her fist down.

"Yuzuru, tag team with me!" Kurumi shouted as she ran ahead.

"Right." Yuzuru replied.

Yuzuru threw her grappling hook forward, and Kurumi grabbed it as she swung her ahead and into the air. Yuzuru whipped her rope and the hook swung down, scraping into the Tarasque’s head.

Kurumi turned in midair, noticing a small hole before taking a metal arrow and firing it into the spot.

"Miku, Natsumi, aim for that arrow! It's more affected by temperatures!" Kurumi called out as she ran from the Tarasque.

The others all do the same.

"Here's a little fire to warm you up!" Natsumi declared, firing off her fire spell again.

"And a little ice if it's too hot for you!" Miku giggled, charging her ice spell from her wand.

The fires aimed directly at the arrow, and the Tarasque roared as fire was seen spewing out of its insides, especially from the arrow.

Immediately after, the icy blizzard aimed and quelled the flames, but some of the Tarasque's armor froze on certain spots outside.

"We've got it, now let's-"

Origami’s words were interrupted as the paralysis curse faded, Natsumi checked her current magic and saw she didn't have enough mana for the same curse.

"Oh no, I'm too low on mana!" Natsumi shouted.

"How are we gonna beat it now!?" Tohka asked worriedly.

The Tarasque began to charge at them, and everyone prepared to guard against it, only for Mana to jump ahead to their surprise. She shouted as she revealed a hidden shield, and the Tarasque rammed into it... leaving her an opening to slam her sword on the cracked area, soon causing the cracks to spread as she kept it jammed inside. The Tarasque roared as its armor cracked more, with Mana forcing it in as it tried to eject it.

"Come on... come on!" Shiori breathed.

Everyone saw the Tarasque's HP drop down slower and slower, it soon roared and prepared to charge at them, only for Mana to shout and use both hands to dig the blade in deeper, and soon the machine enemy gave a final roar as it exploded.

- (*insert song end*) -
Everyone cheered as they did it, soon only for them to fall onto their butts tiredly.

"That was way too hard to beat." Yoshino groaned, her arms shaking from the soreness of swinging her dagger so wildly.

"I don't think I have any strength to use my recover spell. We'll have to wait for a while, and only then can we help Maria." Origami sighed, falling on her back.

"No, I think we should let Maria fight her own battle." Shiori replied.

Everyone minus Tohka, who had an idea of what she would say and simply smiled, looks at Shiori with a confused expression.

"I think I get why you said that to her now, you can tell she wasn't gonna give up on her belief that Marina had some good in her, didn't you?" Shiori asked.

"Am I really that obvious? Yeah, I did. After all... that's no different from what you did for us, wasn't it?" Tohka answered before giving a cheerful smile.

All the other Spirits minus Mayuri blushed, with the latter simply chuckling at that.

"Yeah... so let's believe in Maria this time, if she is right then we should give her the chance to prove it." Shiori stated.

Marina yelled loudly as she released a wind of poison gas at Marina, the Ratatoskr AI dodged it before motioning her wire crystals towards her and digging two of them into the ground, causing a storm of vines and a leaf twister to blow towards Marina.

"I won't lose!" Maria shouted.

"You've got some spunk today, don't you!?" Marina commented.

As the vines wrapped around her, they suddenly rotted instantly with the sight of acid sludge coating their withered forms and Maria smirking at them.

"Our powers are exact opposites, you create life but I'm the one that can kill it with almost no trouble with my venom!" Marina smirked.

"Yeah, but at the same time because I was born from your data, I know all the ways you can use it. Fighting like this we'll never get anywhere... I think you know what I'm suggesting don't you?" Maria stated.

Marina's eyes widened.

"Pure close combat? Nothing but our wires, fists and feet?" Marina asked surprised.

"There's no way we'll ever break this stalemate otherwise." Maria answered.

Marina stared before sighing, soon giving a smirk as her eyes reddened slightly and she cracked her neck.

"Alright, time to beat you so badly, you won't be a pulp, you'll be outright virtual juice!" Marina shouted in agreement.

"Then here we go." Maria replied.
The two stared at each other, the virtual world's environment corrupting more from Marina's influence around them, causing the land they were on to distort and almost seem like an arena made of virtual energy. This was their first and final battle in a direct manner.

- (*Sword Art Online - Swordland*) -

Maria shifts her foot, and the two used that as their signal to start, and they both shout as they begin colliding their wires with one another.

'Her large number of wires work better when it comes to grappling and slashing, she'll probably grab some of my attacks as her method of blocking.' Maria thought, seeing her dark counterpart's method of attacking.

'While she doesn't have as many as me, her wires can strike like she's using telekinesis on a bunch of spears, so she'll be able to strike at me with piercing attacks, and those crystals can also guard like a shield. If I wanna get through, I gotta force her to use too many to guard against me!' Marina thought, doing the same as she read her good counterpart's movements.

Their wires keep colliding, nothing getting through as their flurry rushed through one another. Eventually Marina snuck her fist through, decking Maria in the face as she was knocked back.

"GOTCHA!" Marina smirked, getting through her wires as she began to punch and kick through her without any effort.

"You don't even know how to fight, the advantage is mine and all mine!" Marina laughed.

Maria slides back a bit, soon reaching the range of the others' view.

"Maria... come on, you can do it!" Tohka cheered.

"Don't give up!" Mana shouted.

"Maria!" Shiori yelled.

Marina screamed as she prepared for another attack, and soon Maria looked at them briefly before she gasped.

'Marina's right, but there's a difference... I may not have my own way of fighting, but I don't need to.' Maria thought, soon making a serious face.

As Marina's next attack came, Maria soon shot one of her wires forward, using her hands to swing it a certain away.

Everyone had their eyes widen in shock as Marina was knocked back, but what was truly strangest about it was... it was the same motion Tohka usually swung Sandalphon. Maria had motioned her body the same way to strike back!

"That was-" Marina gasped.

Marina shouted and thrust all her wires forward, and soon Maria motioned her wire crystals together to form a barrier like when Origami used Metatron's Zohar formation. She rushed across the field, soon stabbing her wires at Marina, causing the crystals on them to break.

Marina tumbled a bit, coughing before she suddenly saw some of her wires twitch before flopping down uselessly. She growls before grabbing them, and then ripping them right off, soon swinging
her fist at Maria and attacking with the small bit of wires she had left.

"Damn you!" Marina screamed.

"Marina, I will make you see... I will! No matter what you try to tell me, no matter what you say or how different you claim us to be, you and I are sisters!" Maria shouted.

"Shut up!" Marina shouted.

Soon the two rushed at one another, smashing their fists into the others' face, and sliding back as they were knocked back. Marina soon panted, growling before her restored wires grew back.

Maria looked back at her with a gentle stare, her wires and crystals repairing themselves as well.

'Shido... Mana... Tohka... Origami... Yoshino... Kotori... Kurumi... Rinne... Rio... Mayuri... Natsumi... Kaguya... Yuzuru... Miku... Commander Reine... Vice-Commander Kannazuki... Shizaki... Minowa... Nakatsugawa... Mikimoto... Kawagoe... and everyone else in Ratatoskr... please, give me your strength, just for this one moment! This is the one and only time I beg of you all for this!' Maria thought, breathing heavily as she readied herself.

The two Arusu siblings rush at each other, smashing their wires into each other, punching with their fists, and delivering strong kicks as they neared their limits. Marina shouted as she decked Maria in the face, it looked like it was over... until Maria threw all her wires into a single spot and slammed her head onto Maria's chest right after.

"What... the... hell?" Marina gasped.

"This fight is... over..." Maria gasped, looking at Marina.

Marina coughed violently, and soon fell over, the lower half of her body cracking as she fell on her back, clearly defeated and she saw a system message.

[You are defeated]

Marina's eyes shook in surprise as her Astral Dress was forcefully dispelled, she had been... beaten.

- (*insert song end*) -

The others all stared in shock, and soon enough... Tohka finally ended the silence.

"She won." Tohka breathed.

"She won!" Origami cheered.

Everyone soon celebrated and shouted happily, while Marina's eyes closed as she looked away.

Westcott soon saw the end result, and turned to James.

"James, how much data has been transferred?" Westcott asked with a smirk on his face.

"Everything, we can disconnect her now. Would you like to do the honors?" James answered.

Westcott smirked, and soon a virtual screen showing the activation command appears.

"My pleasure." Westcott stated.
He hits the button, and soon the screen shows a message saying {Activating Protocol - Marina Arusu, Final Extinction}, and soon a skull marking appears on the screen before it laughs with a macabre tone.

Maria limped a bit over to Marina who still couldn't move due to the damage she had received on her lower body having incapacitated her. Maria's Astral Dress vanished as she looked at her dark counterpart.

"...What are you staring at me for, you won so just finish me! If you let me live then all I'll do is betray or come back and give you more trouble!" Marina shouted, upset she had lost and angry that Maria seemed to be showing sympathy to her.

"I won't, you may think I'm a fool, but you've never even considered... why do I even believe you have good in you? I'm surprised you've never pieced that face together in all the time you've known your data lead to my birth." Maria replied.

Marina growled at her, and Maria soon kneeled near her.

"It's because you-"

Suddenly, the entire virtual realm began to shake heavily, starting to have pieces of it starting from the outer realm. Marina suddenly lurched her head forward as she felt something in her programming get disconnected.

Taking a moment, she realized it was her link to anything DEM related and she panicked, only shortly after that... a projection of Westcott came out of her systems as he stared at her with a look she knew all too well, his face of using someone.

"Father... what's going on?" Marina asked worriedly.

"Oh, this is a little something known as me cutting you off the branches... is a simple AI like yourself able to understand that?" Westcott replied mockingly.

Marina's eyes shook.

"Oh, it seems you get it. Though if you still don't get all of it... it's simple, you lacking your Inverse Power data in the spare body was no accident, not was that disconnection. All these years and you were never even able to tell that I never cared. You were just a tool who gave itself an easy way to be manipulated. Now you've finally used up any use you had... so it's time for you to be thrown away, and I'll take all my enemies and Ratatoskr with you." Westcott cackled.

"No, that... that can't be... you said I was your..." Marina breathed.

Marina shook as tears of laser fluid shed out of her eyes, both of sadness and rage.

"YOU TRAITOR!" Marina screamed.

"Of course, it's who I am. No... it's human nature to do this, and I did it well." Westcott smirked, soon laughing as the virtual realm shook more.

"The entire virtual realm, it's about to collapse!" Shiori gasped, seeing it break apart.

The breaking areas got closer, and soon enough... an abyss formed under Marina, causing the former DEM allied AI to fall in. Maria gasped before she dove in and reached out for her. Marina look
surprised as Maria grabbed her, and barely hung on to a piece of virtual land.

"Maria?" Marina asked confused.

"Everyone, forgive me... I'm not coming back, it's time to show you all the biggest part of living. Being willing to give it up your life to save the lives of countless others! I am Maria Arusu... an AI, a Spirit, a Hero, a sister... and a friend." Maria stated.

The others got near Maria's location, and she looked at them. She shook her head, and putting her hand on Marina's she accessed the administrative controls.

"Admin command... send all non-administrators out of the game. Lock all system access, great full authority to admin Maria Arusu." Maria stated.

"Wait, Maria what are you-" Shiori began.

Suddenly everyone but the Arusu sisters were sent out of the virtual world, and Maria continued her commands.

"Block all access in or out of the virtual realm, purge all access to non-administrators still in-game permanently at full level access denial. Activating... virtual realm reboot, do not send warnings to admins currently in game, after reboot grant administrative privileges... to Reine Murasame." Maria said, shedding a tear.

"What?" Marina gasped.

Westcott's hologram tried to remove himself, but found he couldn't. At that moment both Maria and Marina's bodies floated upwards in their Astral Dress states.

Back outside, everyone saw Shido and the others appear on the arena transporter.

"Huh? You're back, glad to see... wait, where's Maria!?" Reine gasped.

"She's still inside, what is she doing!?" Shido begged.

Reine checks and they get a visual, she tries to force them both out... but a message states her action was invalid.

At that moment Reine gasped.

"What is she doing!?" Mildred screamed.

"She's... sacrificing herself to protect us!" Matthews answered as she realized what she was doing.

Everyone gasped in horror.

"No Maria! NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!" Tohka screamed, trying to reach at the screen in vain. Sakura hugged her daughter as they all watched.

The world continued to shake around them, and soon changed between colors and turned into blocks as the reboot process began. Westcott panicked as he couldn't get the hologram of himself to disconnect from the game.

"Maria, why... why aren't leaving? Just forgot about me!" Marina screamed.
"No, I won't. I'm not leaving my sister to die alone. This is the end for both of us, I'll be going to the world beyond with you." Maria answered.

Marina went silent at that.

"Why... why do you care about me so much?" Marina asked.

"I never got the chance to tell you, so it's time... why I believe there's good in you. It's simple, because your data led to my birth. If there was no good in you... then how would I have had any good in me?" Maria answered.

"What?" Maria said in shock.

"Not just that, you and Westcott don't believe in bonds, but... wasn't your wish to have him accept you as his daughter exactly what we call a bond?" Maria asked.

Marina's eyes widened at that, and that's when she realized it... Maria was right. The very thing she hated, she had it all along and didn't even know. Maria was so sure there was good in here, because she always had proof... Marina herself was that proof.

- (*Date A Live - If We Meet Again*) -

Marina looked at Maria, who looked at her with a smile as she cried. At that moment, she moved her hand and hugged Maria.

"Look at that, you really weren't just some naive believer... I was just a blind idiot. Then let us finish this together sister. For our last moments, is that... alright with you?" Marina asked, crying heavily.

"Yeah, it is... goodbye everyone." Maria whispered, soon crying the same tears.

The two soon looked forward.

"This is who we are!" Both shouted, soon glowing brightly. Maria felt her memories flash before they shared themselves with Marina.

Marina kept laughing as she attacked the program in the virtual realm of the Fraxinus, seeing it start to glitch op as she kept attacking its data.

"That's it, time for you to finally die!" Marina smirked.

Marina threw her cables back as they charged electricity, and then launching them forward to stab through the white mass of a program... however said mass suddenly extended to grab them to her shock.

"What the?" Marina gasped.

The white mass' glitches soon cause its shape to altar, and the program begins shifting into a more humanoid form, but one that didn't have any definite features and seemed more like a mannequin made of white data.

"Don't... hurt... friends. Leave... alone!" The program spoke in a female voice, surprising Marina.

"Impossible, my attacks caused you to copy my data and evolve!?" Marina shouted, her eyes shaking in disbelief before the white program attacked her, making her own body glitch.
"No, damn you... damn you stupid program!" Marina screamed in rage.

The white program screamed as Marina suddenly saw most of the virtual realm's color change from the black she painted it from invading back to the original white, signifying her losing control of the ship's systems.

"This can't be!" Marina screamed.

"Here it goes..." Shiizaki breathed, hitting the enter key.

Soon all the data was transferred to the nameless AI, and it felt its body twitch as it suddenly gained a physical form and blinked as her eyes opened.

"This is..." The AI gasped, soon realizing her awareness.

"I feel like I'm alive!" The AI smiled.

"Hmm... a name, what should we call you?" Reine thought.

"I have a suggestion." Kannazuki interjected.

Everyone looked at Kannazuki, and soon he suggested the name she'd have for the rest of her life.

"Considering her outfit's similarity to a nun, and the fact she gained this form by copying the other AI whose name was Marina... let's use a bit of that name to link it to an important church figure." Kannazuki stated, showing a picture of the Holy Mother Mary.

"One form of the Virgin Mary's name is Maria, so... how about we call her that?" Kannazuki asked, looking at the AI.

Maria thought about the name for a moment... Maria.

"Do you like it?" Kannazuki wondered.

"Maria..." Maria replied, soon giving a smile as she nodded.

"I love it! From now on, I'm Maria. My full name will be Maria Arusu." Maria smiled brightly.

"It's too late, this is the power of survival of the fittest! I am at the top of this law of the jungle!" Westcott declared, his ugly mug smirking wickedly through the clock face.

"And now, the world will submit to me forever!" Westcott cackled, his laugh echoing throughout the area.

Inside the Deus, Marina was about to finished the countdown.

"Three, two, one-" Marina was suddenly cut off as she heard the sound of something being cut, she stared to see that it was... her control orb before her.

Maria suddenly smiled as she waved, Marina having not even seen her as she gloated with Westcott at their 'assured' victory.

"No! How, how did you know!?" Marina gasped.
"You told me, not a good idea to get so angry you leave an opening. Especially one that shows the entire Deus' support for its full powers, maximized controls and connection to Cassiopeia are stored in the crystal I just broke." Maria giggled.

Marina's eyes shook before she growled.

"You stupid defective little-" Marina began, however she suddenly felt odd.

"Wait... no, don't disconnect me-" Marina screamed.

Marina was ejected from the Deus' systems as it could no longer contain her, Maria smiled and vanished shortly afterwards as she was qualified for the forced ejection.

"Hey there, my name's Maria Arusu. I'm an AI that runs the organization's computer matrix." Maria greeted as she introduced herself to Katie.

Katie gasped as she looked at Maria with widened eyes.

"You're an AI? An actual artificial intelligence?" Katie asked surprised, Maria nodding.

"Whoa... that's kinda cool. Uh, my name's Katie Nakajima, and uh... I'm not really sure if I'm gonna be good here. All I really did according to Claudia was apparently save a Spirit from some bad DEM people?" Katie replied as she twiddled her fingers.

Maria stares in shock.

"What did you do?" Maria asked.

"Uh... stole one of their dropped rifles to shoot their flying realizers and make the Spirit get away?" Katie asked, making Maria's jaw drop.

"Yeah, not really impressive, is it?" Katie continued, twiddling her fingers more.

"Not impressive!? Katie, you hit moving targets that tend to normally have a 30% hit rate!" Maria answered, making Katie show shock this time.

"See, no wonder they want you to join. We don't have anyone with such amazing long-range potential and the accuracy for it." Maria continued, trying to fully express just how shocked at Katie's skills she really was.

Katie blushed a bit.

"Y-you really think so?" Katie asked, making Maria nod.

"W-well... if you think so, then I will join. I've never been too good at much besides being accurate with throwing sports balls and such, so... if it helps people then I'll do it. Thank you." Katie replied, smiling slightly.

Maria soon felt Katie hug her, making Maria blink as she felt something strange. Katie soon ran off after her three friends while Maria felt her chest. She blinked once more, and after a while...

"So strange, I don't have a heart and yet... my chest feels so warm? Is this what it means?" Maria asked herself.

"Is this what it's like to live? To feel what you do, to experience this warmth?" Maria wondered.
The two closed their eyes, and soon the sight of a life line representing them both flat-lined.

They both fell into the virtual realm's light as it compressed and soon vanished in a giant explosion, after it ended... the Virtual Realm was restored to the state it had been when everyone had first been inside of it.

However, this time... Maria and Marina were nowhere to be seen, not was Westcott's hologram.

- (*insert song end*) -

Meanwhile back on the Arbitel, Westcott tried to get into Ratatoskr's systems, but when he tried to, all he got was the following...

"[Access denied, you are completely forbidden to enter this system.]

"This is... what did they do?" Westcott asked, growling heavily.

He soon sighed and turned around.

"No matter, we don't need Ratatoskr's systems wrecked to crush them effortlessly. We have everything else Marina got for us." Westcott stated.

The sight of Westcott smirking as the coordinates, and all the DEM's automaton and weapon data entered his eyes.

Everyone in Ratatoskr stared at the result before them.

"What happened... tell us Maria's OK, tell us she made it! Please!" Mana begged, looking at her aunt.

"I-I'll check... she can't be gone, she had to have left a backup." Reine answered.

Reine checked, using every method of searching, even a hair from her AI body, but in the end each result was the same... a message saying no related data identified, but the full message didn't connect until the virtual realm ejected one of the crystals from her Astral Dress' wires. Reine soon collapsed onto her knees.

"...No." Reine breathed.

"She's gone!" Tohka whispered, soon crying into Shido's chest as he hugged her and cried with her.

"That can't be, Maria can't be dead. She had so much life left to live. It can't be over!" Miku stated, soon breaking down and crying as well.

It was only moments when the rest of Ratatoskr's staff all followed suit.

Meanwhile with Rinne and Rio, the former suddenly froze for a moment before looking at the sky.

"Mama?" Rio asked, wondering what had her attention.

"Rio, I don't know why... but I feel like something happened, and when we get back home we aren't going to like it." Rinne answered, turning to Rio.
Rio felt her mother hug her, and while she didn't know why... she hugged back almost as if she could now tell.

Even if they weren't present to see it, it was like both of them knew Maria and Marina were no longer with them.

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One week later

A large group in Tenguu City was gathered, Matthews soon was on a stand by something covered in a sheet and a picture of Maria and Marina at the side. This was their memorial service as everyone came to respect their passing.

"Everyone, my name is Matthew Johnson. I work under Ratatoskr as an analyst. Today... we're all here to pay our respects to one of my company's own, and someone close to her that she only managed to reconnect to at the very end. Their names were Maria Arusu, and her older sister Marina Arusu. They were born as AIs, but they were special, to anyone who knew them you'd wonder... 'are they really just programs?', I know I did, they felt as alive as all of us. When the Spacequake devastated our world, we all thought technology would be the answer to all of our problems. However, then we saw it create new ones... devastating problems." Matthew spoke, barely managing to not break down as he cried.

"When we nearly faced the end of the world, Maria and Marina both fought to save us. They were the right balance between organic and synthetic, that's what life should be, because people improves our lives as much as technology. We can't focus on one over the other, doing that is likely what led to Westcott becoming the man that damaged the world as he did. From here on, we'll have their sacrifice be our compass to our world finding its way, so I gave to you in honor of them... the Ratatoskr Squirrel Monument!" Matthew finished, finally breaking down as he sobbed.

Reine walked up, and soon pulled down the cloth to reveal the statue of two squirrels circling each other, one organic and one synthetic. She breathed and soon took the stand before she looked at everyone as they were sniffling.

"My name's Reine Murasame, I helped in Maria's creation so... as someone who knew her best I'll say this." Reine began.

"When Maria and I first truly spoke, I wondered... what powered Maria to make her seem alive? I don't know if we'll ever know, but I'd like to think it was bonds, bonds of friends and family. So, I promise this, from here on out... her memory will live in me, all of us! He'll power us, so we'll never forget her lessons, and so she'll never be forgotten. Marina at the very end called her sister her sister, proof of the bonds even machine life can have, they will... always be one of us." Reine explained as she cried.

Everyone sniffled, and soon stood up before bowing to the memorial, a bunch of black and white petals fell as if nature's way of honoring them. Soon enough, Tohka and Origami stood by the memorial and sniffled, Tohka looking at Maria.

"Hey Origami, your hair..." Tohka asked, realizing she styled it similar to Maria's.

"Consider it my way of saying I'll never forget our friend, because she touched all of our hearts. Let this be how they keep living on in them." Origami answered, sniffling heavily as she shed more tears.

Soon Shido walked between them, and it wasn't long before all the Spirits and Mana joined them in a
Meanwhile, back at the Ratatoskr base, while no one was present due to the memorial... the crystal that was once part of Maria's outfit soon flashes between white and black and soon dissolve into the screen as it suddenly lit up, and suddenly a bunch of words began being said, but the voices and words didn't make any sense.

- (*Ninjago - Season 3 finale, final scene's song*) -

Soon a white and black spark before crossing and taking a magenta color and then sparked upwards into the sky, soon clashing into some spirit power lingering in the air and taking the same magenta color and flying off into the sky.

At that moment, the shocker occurred as the computer emitted two familiar voices.

"You're vital to me." Maria spoke.

"You are vital to me." Marina replied.

Soon the magenta spirit power danced around before firing off across different parts of Tokyo, far away from Tokyo prefecture and Tenguu City, and soon they both spiraling together through the sky before they visit an area without people and a bright magenta flash goes off.

Soon on the ground, someone's eyes opened, and she looked around as she saw a lock of her black hair drop into view, making her gasp as she saw it.

- (*)insert song end*) -

"I'm... not dead?" Marina gasped, soon seeing an image of Maria smiling by a lake flash through her head.

"Maria, we're... we're still here!" Marina teared up.

Soon she stood up, but as she put a hand on her body in the process... she didn't feel the cold skin of her android body's metal layer, she felt a warmth. The same warmth a living being felt through their skin.

"No way, I'm..." Marina breathed, her eyes which still showed the whitened pupils of a Spirit as they finally cried.

"We're alive!"

Whoa! How about that, I just threw a loop at you right there in multiple layers! The Arusu Twins are now official Spirits and they're flesh and blood, not just mere AIs or AIs in machine bodies anymore. Unfortunately, the others still don't know of this, but they will... in the Rio Reincarnation movie luckily, and that just so happens to be next on our agenda ^^

OK, since you've seen the revelation, which is Westcott has been using Marina as a tool all along and never cared for her in a fatherly sense, it's time for me to tell you all what my original idea for Marina after this movie was to anyone that's curious about it. Marina was originally going to stay evil, being the one Spirit that would always be an antagonist in the story... however, after a while I had a thought that made me think of a different idea because
it felt more in-character to Westcott.

Westcott wouldn't normally care about bonds, even if he's married to Ellen in this story, the way it works is more like master and willing servant since Ellen's loyalty to him is scarily strong. When that came to my mind... I decided to make it so Westcott had been using her, his sweet talk about calling him his child? A lie for him to control her and use her until he had no need. Her old body still has the methods to get the last two dark spirit powers once Nia and Mukuro inverse, and he's got a way back to Earth now, he no longer needs Marina.

And now due to his efforts in trying to dispose of her, Marina is now their ally, though the others need to find Maria and Marina before they can actually start aiding the others... not to mention we only know where Marina is, but what about Maria? Though now it's official, every Spirit now opposes Westcott and the DEM, the only Spirit who ever considering allying with him now has no more reasons to. Though now that Westcott has a method to open a gate back to Earth... what will he do next?

Find out soon, and be ready for the Rio Reincarnation movie that's up next! Until then... stay awesome everyone! ^^

Alright everyone, it's time for that announcement! Before that though, I have something I need to say here, partially because I might forget it otherwise and I'll be saying it in a way that's too vague for it to truly be a spoiler. When this fanfic reaches Season 4, we will have a time skip, how long it'll be is the big secret for now, so you won't know until it happens :3 *giggles* Now for the actual announcement?

After the Mayuri Judgment movie, which will be the end of Season 3... Date A Re:Live will have a crossover with my story A Dragon's Heavenly Bonds! Oh, and the biggest part about it? Well... it's canon to both fanfics! Also, I'd like to give thanks to "Twilightiger1602" who helped me out greatly by offering me an OC to use as an antagonist during Season 3 of this story, but I couldn't, yet was perfect for this crossover. This will be my first attempt at a crossover story, so wish me luck when it finally happens.

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 97% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 95% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 93% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 91% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 88% (Transform into Shiori)
Kaguya - 84% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 84% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 60% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or object)
Here we are everyone, the Rio Reincarnation movie arc... or rather chapter because unlike the other movies this one's gonna start and wrap up in one go (the third game is shorter), and the final leg of Season 2. This movie will most likely be the most different from the source content since Rio Reincarnation is the only of the three games to lack a part of the story where there's no battle. Good news though? There is a translation for Rio Reincarnation because it's the shortest of the games, so I can actually deliver the full emotional potential of the adapted scenes I'm using.

Also, I'll say this now because due to Rio and Mayuri's circumstances in this fanfic, I'm not gonna make a recurring theme for every movie arc where I pull a "I died... oh wait, no I didn't" scenario in them. Even if I wanted to, I'm pretty sure anything I tried in order to do it would be easily considered an ass pull, not to mention it'd come off as cruel with Rio considering she's only a child. That and I already revealed back when Mayuri officially appeared she wasn't gonna die, and that isn't changing no matter what, especially because I like Mayuri.

OK, this time I actually remembered to state it during the first chapter of the arc instead of later when it might be too late, so time to reveal this arc's emotion. This time it's "Love", a fitting emotion considering this game's main theme is about feelings and family, and ultimately if Shido's feelings to Rinne are worth allowing a future made by Eden or not. I'd say the family aspect of the game matters most in story, and you'll see why as this movie goes on, though I will say you should still ready your tissues because there's a lot of tearjerker moments.

Now, let's get this arc started, but before you start reading... time for an updated pair of data sheets!

A/N: During one moment in the arc, everyone will be wearing their Mayuri Judgment outfits, with Natsumi wearing the outfit she wore during Volume 10 because she lacks one. Figured I should tell you than try describing their outfits down to the last detail. Oh, and like Tohka said in the Choronzon arc, she doesn't wear heels in this story, so her shoes lack them here.

-Marina Arusu, Code Name: [Matrix]-

Angel: Sarufiel - Sarufiel is an artificial Angel that was born from Marina's original Astral Dress when her virtual body was converted into a flesh and blood Spirit, it takes the form of a single gauntlet on her right hand that was made from the various threads and wires of her old Astral Dress combined with some of the distorted cloth of its waist section and the red gem that was part of its color.

It allows Marina to manipulate all forms of poisons and convert them into a semi-solid sludge, liquid or a gas. It also can create a special mist that renders those sprayed by it immune to possible friendly fire. If Marina can detect the right traces and find the places they're present, she can remove toxins and other harmful substances from living and non-living things, curing people of even the most fatal poisons without any side effects.
Marina's primary element as a Spirit is Poison, when she was originally an AI based off a spirit, her powers were created based on the android body she made and the poisons she used as her powers' basis material in an attempt to kill the current possessor of Metatron at the time she made it. The intensity of her venom can rot most substances.

However, the true trump card of her powers and abilities is she can remove the toxins in a poisoned victim to the point their bodies can heal like they never were poisoned, including poisons without an antidote. The one downside is while a living thing will fully recover regardless of the poison damage inflicted onto it when removed, depending on the poison applied to something non-living, there may be some parts of the object that are permanently eaten away by the time she removes it.

Risk Factors: AA

Spacequake: A

Spirit's Astral Dress: AA

Angel Rank: A

Strength: 139

Consistency: 98

Spiritual Power: 165

Agility: 187

Intelligence: 135

-Maria Arusu, Code Name: [Synthesis]-

Angel: Opheniel - Opheniel is an artificial Angel that was born from Maria's original Astral Dress when her virtual body was converted into a flesh and blood Spirit, it takes the form of a single gauntlet on her left hand that was made from the two extensions on the ring of her old Astral Dress combined with one of her wire crystals broken into pieces.

It allows Maria to manipulate all forms of plants, vegetation and more which can let her influence their growth causing it to halt or accelerate, restore life to dying/dead/withering plants or vegetation. If Maria has enough power, she can even turn a desolate wasteland into a verdant garden paradise. However, it can't alter them into a different kind of plant/vegetation.

- Powers: Maria's primary element as a Spirit is Plants/Wood, or better described as Nature. When she was originally an AI based off a spirit, her powers were created based on her originally being a self-defense program on the original Fraxinus, which is named after a type of plant. She can manipulate, accelerate the growth of and create plant life, while also have some power over wood that's part of plants like trees, but her trump card ability is being able to terraform a lifeless area and fill it full of lush greenery.

Risk Factors: C
Spacequake: B

Spirit's Astral Dress: AA

Angel Rank: AA

Strength: 99

Consistency: 102

Spiritual Power: 178

Agility: 107

Intelligence: 121

Chapter 50, Movie Chapter: Rio Reincarnation

The wind blows across the night sky as Marina stares at her reflection in the lake water, trying to figure a bit about her new flesh and blood body, something that was much more foreign to her than her younger sister who had paid more attention to learning about it due to the environment she had grown up in. The only things she noticed as different about her body physically was the white of her hair had now permanently gone yellow like in her Astral Dress state, not to mention her assets weren't exactly small anymore.

Maria took a closer look at the outfit she was currently wearing, it was an opened black jacket with two pockets in the front, white buttons that had two layers of sleeves, and the ends of the jacket's bottoms and sleeves had a pattern of cut outs. Underneath it was a yellow tank top with black frills at the top and bottom and a dark yellow zigzag pattern around the chest area, and a pair of jean shorts that barely peaked out underneath it, Marina had almost not noticed it which had horrified her over the thought she might have been going commando in her new outfit.

Also adorned on her new attire was a necklace with black and silver beads, some larger than others, though the two odd ones out were a silver ring and a black charm with a silver outline that looked like a... well Marina wasn't sure what it was, it was either a flower or a butterfly based on its shape. A silver ring bracelet and black bead bracelet was wrapped around her right wrist and a white hairband and white ribbon with three black beads glued onto it in place of her old nun headband.

"OK, recap on what I've figured out so far. Somehow me and Maria are still alive and somehow, we changed from synthetic life to organic life. Based on my eyes, I'm still a Spirit... though I guess that isn't too surprising consider I was an AI based on one. Does that mean I still have the same powers or..." Marina wondered aloud, tapping her chin.

As wondered on that, she suddenly saw a gauntlet form on her right hand and freak her out. After blinking for a while, she notices it was made from the various threads and wires of her old Astral Dress combined with some of the distorted cloth of its waist section and the red gem that was part of its color. The sight of her caused a single word to rush through her mind.

"Sarufiel? What is... wait, that Mayuri chick has that Kerubiel angel and that does sound like Cherubim, and this name sounds like... Seraphim? Wait, then this is an Angel? I have an Angel now? Then let's see."

Maria looked around for something that if her powers were the same, wouldn't cause too much
damage, and noticed some cardboard trash. She aimed at it and released some poison at it, confirming she still had access to her poison powers as the purple sludge she shot out coated it.

However, something told her that wasn't it, so she got near it... and suddenly drew the poison back inside her, the cardboard had some of it rotted away by the sludge's venom, but it didn't look like it had ever been touched by poison once she removed it. She motioned her eyes and tried the same to a nearby tree, splashing it with some acid however when she removed the poison from it, the tree didn't keep the same damage.

"I don't just make poisons anymore, I can even get rid of them. Though it seems like if the object isn't alive then the damage can be permanent if I use a certain poison. I wonder if it's the Angel? Hey, Sarufiel, is this your work?"

The Angel didn't reply.

Marina blinked in confusion, while she couldn't hear it due to Angels only being able to speak with their respective hosts, she knew they could communicate due to the brief tie Westcott had been controlling Kurumi's body.

"...That's weird. Can Sarufiel not talk, or... hey wait, if this body was just born then maybe it's still a... baby... and-Ah!" Maria screamed.

The image of her holding Sarufiel in a baby blanket while it had a pacifier went into her mind, causing her to slap herself in the face to stop thinking about it. She eventually dispels it, making her pant.

"My god! I can't believe I actually thought of that, it was so creepy!" Maria breathed.

"OK, I think I've cleared up everything, but now the big question is this... I swear this lake area is where I saw Maria in that brief vision I got. So, where is my sister? That can't have been her telling me she gave up herself to live... it can't be." Marina wondered, showing slight worry.

"Marina!"

Marina's eyes widened and searched around for the location of the voice, one she knew only one person could have.

"Marina!"

"Maria... where are you, I'm here!" Marina called out.

"The lake... look at the lake, close your eyes!"

"Huh? The lake, what does that mean?" Marina asked herself confused.

Seeing as she couldn't trace her sister's voice, she walked over to the lake and stared at her reflection before closing her eyes, and the moment she did, she felt a ripple as he reflection appeared in her mind. The image of her reflection soon rippled faster as the sound of a droplet hitting the water reached her ears, soon morphing into Maria who looked at Marina with a smile, her hair now having the blue tints of her Astral Dress state permanently and the same increased size of her assets.

Maria was wearing a pink jacket with frills on the chest area and the area of the sleeves that were near them, as well as the bottom. It also possessed longer sleeves and had the same pockets as Marina's jacket, but they looked a bit closer since hers was buttoned up, the buttons also being white. Underneath it was a black long-sleeved T-Shirt, and a white skirt with the same frills as her jacket,
which had almost looked like part of the jacket and nearly implying the same going commando fear Marina had with her own outfit.

Her attire also possessed a necklace like hers, only with gold and white beads, it even had the same charms, but she had two gold rings which if one removed the beads, would make the necklace symmetrical, she had another smaller necklace of white beads above it. Topping it all off was the same headband and ribbon as Marina's, but aside from the ribbon being on the opposite side, had the black and white of the ribbon, hairband and beads switched.

"Marina, I finally found you." Maria smiled.

"Maria! Wait, but... where are you?" Marina asked confused.

"Closer than you think, because I'm..." Marina answered.

*Date A Live: Ars Install - Key of Truth plays*

(*long electric piano*) Rio looks at the sunset out on the horizon, her back turned to the viewers.

[30 years ago, a single man's dark ambitions destroyed an entire world of peaceful beings called the Spirits, and forever damaged and changed the course of history on Earth as the echo of his act. Only a single being from this world survived, but the treasures of her world were soon inherited by Humans who evolved into these same beings. Now they fight to stop this man's goals from destroying everything. This is the story of...]

Rio turned around, giving a smile before the silhouettes of Maria and Marina briefly appearing and disappearing as fast as they came ended up flashing before her.

[...]Date A Live!

(You have a big future, found memories, grand dreams and difficult challenges worldwide!) Rinne looks at the sunrise, her hair blowing from the light breeze as pink hexagons with white text saying [Rinne Sonogami - Spirit No. 0] appeared besides her, she turns giving a somber smile.

(All that's left is for you to complete the pieces as one! [Pieces]) The day sky shines a brilliant blue as Maria spins by happily with an open mouth smile, the sight of [Maria Arusu - Spirit No. 13] appeared over magenta hexagons, her name was in silvery-white text and her spirit number in blue. After spinning close to the screen, the night sky is seen as Marina takes her place giving a smile with her mouth closed as [Marina Arusu - Spirit No. 12] formed besides her in the same way as her sister with the same magenta hexagons, only her name's text was in black and her spirit number in golden-yellow.

(*heavy electric piano plays for a long period of time*) Rio appears on the screen as cherry blossom petals fall around a field she was standing in, pink text showing [Rio Sonogami - Spirit No. 11] as she danced around the field in her Astral Dress as day quickly became afternoon and then night.

(*same heavy electric piano plays louder briefly before resuming its former pitch*) The cycle of day to night continues as Rio continues dancing, giggling as she closes her eyes and spins, causing the cherry blossom petals to spin around with her and soon form into the words "デート・ア・ライブ - DATE A RE:LIVE - Rio Reincarnation" before the sunlight causes them to appear as an illusion of actual letters floating in the sky.
(Why is everyone always hurrying to make the correct choice?) Shido was seen walking with Tohka, handing her a large hamburger from a McDonalds bag he was holding. She grabbed it quickly, making him accidentally turn into Shiori as she bit half of it in one bite. The sight of text stating [Shido/Shiori Takamiya] & [Tohka Yatogami - Spirit No. 10] appeared by them, with cyan and purple hexagons behind them respectively.

(Do you believe if you pause or hesitate, you'll end up discarding and throwing the whole thing away?) Mana was in a karaoke room with Origami, the Light Spirit smiled before she began singing the opening theme in question. The sight of text [Mana Takamiya] & [Origami Tobiichi - Spirit No. 1] appeared to the sides of each of them, cyan and white hexagons appearing behind each and Origami's text being black due to the later.

(Please let go of that fear and regret so you want fall into the darkness.) Yoshino was seen holding a flute as she began playing the music for the opening theme, with Kotori, Kurumi and Natsumi all watching her play. Right after, each corner of the screen had text showing [Yoshino Mizui - Spirit No. 4], [Kotori Itsuka - Spirit No. 5], [Kurumi Tokisaki - Spirit No. 3] & [Natsumi Itsuwari - Spirit No. 7] and having blue, red, black and green hexagons behind them.

(One you finally do that, I will fill you with color to bring you to a paradise we call [Eden]!) The Yamai twins were having a swim race against Miku, who easily beats both of them while Mayuri times how fast she won using a stop watch. Follow that, text stating [Kaguya & Yuzuru Yamai - Spirit No. 8-A and 8-B], [Miku Izayoi - Spirit No. 9] & [Mayuri Seraphina - Spirit No. 14] appears in the corners of screen, their hexagons being orange, indigo and brown.

(*loud musical burst!*®) Rinne looks at Rio who gave an unhappy look, the latter turns and suddenly disappears at the former tries in vain reach out to her in time. Rinne tears up as her eyes shake, and images of Seigo's disappearance flash in her whitened pupils.

(Do walk ahead without the fear of making mistakes!) The Takamiya siblings break through a wall of spirit power, grabbing Rinne before she runs alongside them, a hidden illusion of Seigo appearing behind him and running as well before he vanished. They soon see Rio come into sight.

(Extend your hand and invite me the path of your new future with you!) Each of the other Spirits all begin to dance in the same field with petals fall around them, changing colors to match the Spirit that was in focus on the screen as they rotated between the 10 of them in the afternoon. As they did this, a flash went of showing the night sky with Marina dancing around black/yellow gradient petals, then spinning as the day sky came and Maria danced around petals of white/blue gradient.

(Let us cherish the compassion, love, tears, scars, smiles and sweat as we find the [Key of Truth]!) The Takamiya siblings looked at Maria and the sun quickly fell to be replaced with the moon as they say her and Marina swap spots. Marina smiled, and astral projection of Maria appeared besides her, giving the same smile as they looked at the two staring at them.

(Do come, and please touch the "Truth"-) Rinne reached out, and Rio did the same, causing the two to grab each other's hands as a flash went off as a wall of Spirit power broke, and Rio fell into Rinne's arms, making the two smile happily.

DATE A LIVE!

(*continuous electrical piano sounds playing and then... an abrupt stop to it and the music*) Soon Rinne, Shido and Mana join the dancing in the field of color changing cherry blossom petals, taking a pink and cyan color to match them as they danced. Rinne held up her hands, causing a flash as a rainbow of petals forms, and the others all joined her before they got into positions for a group photo.

A camera flash went off as they did, everyone smiling as they failed to notice a certain silvery-gray
and golden-yellow Spirit behind the trees with only some of their hair giving away they were even present.

~One Month Later

The sight of Tenguu City came into view as the month of November had rolled around, leaves were starting to go from green to either yellow, orange or red as the season of Autumn prepared for the incoming snowfall when Winter began next month. It was currently November 20, and Thanksgiving was only three days away, everyone was busy getting ready for the Holiday.

Japan originally didn't celebrate Thanksgiving, but around a certain time after the Spacequakes ravaged the world, the holiday had become more global as a way to honor Humanity surviving such a dangerous time, just as Halloween had adopted honoring those who died during the original waves of quakes from Mexico's Day of the Dead.

The Takamiya household was one of the households that was really being serious about getting ready, with Shido and Tohka both working fast to make the food in advance while the others were helping to decorate the house, make sure they had enough room and space for everyone, and got all the materials they needed.

"Oh no, where'd I drop that fake gourd?" Kurumi panicked as she looked for the dropped decoration.

"Meow!" Macaron meowed, walking by with said decor in his mouth.

Kurumi turned to look at him right as it dropped it before her, making her gasp happily.

"Oh, thank you Macaron, such a good kitty." Kurumi cooed, spoiling her kitten with a chin rub.

Macaron purred at that before walking to his bed and curling for a nap.

Kaguya stuck her tongue out as she reached to the ceiling, Yuzuru holding a ladder for her as Kaguya managed to wrap some yellow and brown streamers around some of the higher shelves of the kitchen in a nest like shape.

"Got it!" Kaguya cheered.

"The Yamai sisters' twin power wings again." Yuzuru replied, her eyes sparkling briefly as she gave a thumb's up.

Miku took a look at the checklist as she crossed off some completed tasks while looking at the table supplies.

"50 of each utensil, 80 plates in case spares are needed, 100 napkins..." Miku noted as she checked off more.

"Here's the paprika you needed Tohka." Mana said, handing it to her as she passed by.

"Thank you!" Tohka smiled.

Reine soon walked into the room bringing in some folding chairs before laying them against a wall with a few others, wiping her forehead as she took a moment to rest against the wall.

"So how are we with setting up right now?"
"Not sure of the best word, but it's at least workable. Especially thanks to Natsumi using her powers to shrink the furniture so we could move it easier." Kotori answered as she grabbed some table clothes.

The green haired spirit flash a smiled and peace sign as Kotori said this.

A knocking sound was heard on the door, and soon it opened as a familiar pink haired duo popped into view.

"Hey everyone, we're back!" Rinne smiled.

"Mama and Rio have returned." Rio giggled.

"Yes, you made it! We were worried you'd be too late in coming back for Thanksgiving." Mana cheered, running to give her mom and little sister a hug.

"Are you kidding? I said we'd make it back in time, did you actually doubt me Mana?" Rinne joked.

The two soon laughed, with Rinne ruffling daughter's hair.

"And the good news is not a single Qlipha Crystal was found, so no there should be no worries about a Choronzon 2.0 being born. Though I should give the info I found to Maria so she can double check and remove any lingering doubts."

Upon hearing Rinne say that, everyone suddenly stopped moving and went silent, confusing Rio while Rinne looked and suddenly recalled the bad feeling she got a month ago... her eyes widened before looking at Reine.

"Reine, why's everyone going silent... what happened to Maria?" Rinne asked.

"...I'm sorry Rinne, but Maria is dead." Reine answered.

Rinne's eyes widened in horror at that revelation. Maria was dead? Then the bad feeling she got last month, it must have been her sensing Maria's spirit power vanished, in other words... sensing the moment she had died.

Rio looked at her mother worriedly, grabbing one of her hands with both of hers, causing Rinne to regain her focus.

"No, that... that can't... what happened?" Rinne asked.

"Tohka and Kotori's parents made a virtual realm as a new training arena for us. However, we found out Westcott did survive as Marina got in and tried to kill us in it, things got hectic and Westcott tried to sacrifice her to take us all out. In the end... Maria saved us, but she decided to kick Westcott out of Ratatoskr's systems for good and died alongside Marina so she wouldn't disappear alone. We checked everywhere, but Maria's data was completely purged... we lost her... and she's not coming back." Mayuri answered, tearing up slightly.

"Maria... I'm sorry, if I hadn't left when I did..." Rinne whispered, too quietly for anyone to hear.

Anyone but Rio, who gave a scared look as she saw Rinne's sad face.

"Mama?" Rio asked.

"Huh? Oh, it's nothing Rio, I just feel guilty... I know you can't change what happened but that doesn't mean you won't feel like you could have done something different. Don't worry, mama's OK,
we'll get through this somehow." Rinne replied.

Rio still looked a bit sad, but nodding lightly as Rinne kissed her forehead.

"Hey everyone, I've got something great to put out on the tables!" Sakura exclaimed as she walked in, though soon she noticed everyone's looks.

"Oh... uh, is this a bad time? I'll just come back later then." Sakura chuckled nervously before slowly closing the door.

The hours flew by, and before anyone realized it, the night sky had replaced the day. Everyone sat down and took a break from all the work they had done for the day as Tohka brought tea over to the couch table.

"So, what's the holiday of Thanksgiving about exactly?" Rinne asked.

"Dad never told you?" Mana said in surprise.

"No, he never really mentioned about any of Earth's Holidays because he felt I should see it first. Not to mention with the Spacequakes... well, anything he told me I'm guessing isn't really the same now, right?" Rinne explained.

"Yeah, you're right about that. How it generally started still confuses most of us in Japan, but... I think Thanksgiving's most accepted origin comes from America where it was started by the Pilgrims and their events in meeting the Indians in the area of Plymouth. Ever since it was to celebrate family and blessings, and the harvests we make every year. However, after the Spacequakes came and it became more global, it became a celebration of Humanity's survival over what nearly brought us extinct and for everyone still alive." Shido explained.

Rinne soon blushed a bit and chuckled.

"So... I basically made the current version of Thanksgiving? Kinda... sorta... maybe?" Rinne laughed in embarrassment.

"And Halloween." Natsumi smirked.

Rinne hung her head down and sighed, Miku rubbing her back.

"We really need to stop referencing that or she's gonna end up in therapy." Kurumi said with a sweat drop.

"No, don't worry Kurumi. I'm fine... plus I'm basically a god by your world's standards so I'd like make the therapist need a therapist." Rinne replied.

Everyone laughs at that joke.

"You know, Thanksgiving is special to me for another reason, my birthday's coming up." Mana noted.

"Really? You're about to turn 15 soon?" Natsumi asked.

Mana nods.

"Yeah, December 5th to be exact, and for the first time I get to spend it with my mom." Mana smiled.
Rinne blushes and smiles at that, and soon notices the time on the nearby clock.

"OK everyone, I think it's time for bed. Goodnight." Rinne said as she stretched, soon teleporting into her room.

"I'll see you all tomorrow, bye everyone." Reine waved as she walked outside to head home.

Soon everyone else went to their rooms, soon falling asleep. While Rio was with Rinne hugging her, the young Spirit unable fall asleep as she kept thinking... thinking about the face she had made, and emotions hidden under it. She shook a bit, remembering what happened to her mother, and what they had learned happened to Maria and Marina, all three Spirits who weren't Sephira Spirits, and what could happen to Mayuri... and herself.

"Rio... could disappear?" Rio said to herself.

At that moment, Rio suddenly felt her face get flushed as her pink spirit power appeared, shaking like a TV's screen static, and she noticed this herself. After seeing it, Rio soon slipped out of her mother's embrace, soon walking near the window. She turned to her mother with a sad look, noticing her happy face as she slept, and soon she manifested her Astral Dress as she opened the window.

She crawled up to it before jumping out and closing the windows quietly, teleporting away after she had finished. All of this happened without Rinne even noticing her youngest daughter had disappeared, having simply shifted to grab a pillow unconsciously.

"Rio doesn't want to disappear, but if Rio does... then Rio won't disappear in front of... mama... Rio will try to find a way to... not disappear..." Rio said sadly.

The following morning, Tohka and Shido were already awake and working, Mana was too, but... she looked to be in a bad mood because she had seen a certain image of a certain Spirit and saw a certain feature of hers.

"Uh... Mana?" Tohka asked nervously.

"NOT! FAAAAAAAIR!" Mana screamed loudly, waking up most of the others.

Tohka hugged Shido close as she shook in fear.

"Damn it! Why... a Spirit at 98cm... that's almost as bad as Tohka being in the triple digits! Even worse, two of the only three who were smaller than me are dead! It isn't fair, either I get compensation or I'm gonna use my birthday wish to wish bad luck on every Spirit's next dates!" Mana roared, crying slightly.

Mana soon cried into a pillow, Shido came over and patted her back. After a while... everyone heard Rinne scream in a way worse than Mana. That got everyone's attentions as they peeked out of their rooms. Rinne panicked as she came out, looking around and panting in fear as she tried to find something.

"Mom? What's wrong, why are you freaking out?" Shido asked worriedly.

"She's gone... RIO'S GONE!" Rinne cried out.

Tohka dropped the plate she was holding, making it land on her feet before it bounced and clattered to the floor.
"...WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!?” Everyone screamed in a panic.

"She's gone!?” Mana asked worriedly, wondering if her words jinxed something.

"Rio always sleeps with me, but she wasn't there when I woke up! I don't even see any signs of how she left! My baby girl... please tell me someone saw her in the house, please!” Rinne asked.

Everyone looked at each other and shook her head, and soon Mayuri's eyes widened as she pale.

"Wait... doesn't Rio have teleportation that fools every scanner? What if she teleported out of the house!?” Mayuri suggested.

"What!? No, that... Rio, what's going on? I don't understand this! I... I... I...” Rinne stuttered.

The stress finally became too much for Rinne, and she promptly fainted onto the ground.

"Quick, someone call Reine! We have to find Rio before she gets hurt!” Shido exclaimed.

"Right!” Everyone exclaimed, quickly heading back in their rooms to get dressed.

Tohka soon started dialing Reine's number Mana was seen fanning Rinne while poking her cheek, hoping to wake her so she could join the search.

"Please Rio... please be OK, I don't any of us could take it if something happened to you.” Mana breathed.

Tohka was seen running across the streets of the shopping district.

"Rio? Rio, where are you!?” Tohka called out.

Soon the smell of food wafted by Tohka's nose, distracting her a bit. She soon noticed a McDonalds.

"Ooh, I want a Hamburger!” Tohka stated as she rushed over to buy one.

Origami looked left and right near part of town where a lot of restaurants were present.

"Rio? Oh man, I'm too nervous to shout... wait, I have an idea!” Origami gasped.

Origami turned, and soon did backflips across the area, surprising some people who were watching as Origami used her flips to look from the sky, she didn't even realize Mildred and Mikie saw it as she landed.

Origami soon sighed, having not seen any sight of her.

"She isn't here." Origami said worriedly before running off.

"...Do you think we should tell her that was odd to do in public?” Mikie asked Mildred.

"I doubt we'd match a Spirit's running speed.” Mildred replied, giving a nervous sweat drop.

Yoshino was looking around the shrine she and Tohka first encountered each other, trying to see if Rio hid in a secluded spot where her small size may be an advantage.

"No signs yet, though maybe she's hiding because she noticed me?” Yoshino wondered.
Yoshino looked around, having no luck. Soon she found the prayer box, and thinking she might get some luck, went to it and rung the bell before clapping twice.

"Please, give me even a small bit of luck of finding Rio. So he and his family won't be sad." Yoshino prayed, bowing a bit.

Yoshino soon resumed her search.

Kotori exited the shopping center, a Chupa Chups lollipop in her mouth as she started looking around the area.

"Where could one little kid go?" Kotori wondered.

As Kotori began walking down the street area looking for signs, she suddenly stopped as she went fully white, just realizing a thought.

"Wait... is she even in Tenguu City anymore." Kotori realized in worry.

"...Crap!"

Kurumi walked through the park area, looking through the forest of trees for any sign of Rio. She heard a meow as she saw Macaron come back from looking through another area of the forest.

"Any sign of her Macaron?" Kurumi asked.

Macaron shook his head, causing Kurumi to sigh and make a sad face. The young kitten purred and rubbed against Kurumi's leg to try and cheer her up, making her smile lightly as she picked Macaron up.

"Come on, we're not giving up on finding her. She's gotta be out here somewhere." Kurumi smiled.

Natsumi popped up inside the amusement park area.

"Rio? Where are you Rio!?" Natsumi called out.

Natsumi sighed, soon walking into view as tried to search the ground.

"This is annoying. Why is it that searching for someone is as hard in real life as it is anime?" Natsumi asked herself.

[I know, you'd think anime would exaggerate the real-life level of the issue, but this time they got it right.]

Natsumi groaned as she walked to an ice cream stand.

"Give me a chocolate mint please" Natsumi requested.

Kaguya was looking at notes she wrote as she tried to search for Rio, the problem however?

"...I don't know where I am! How'd I get so lost!?" Kaguya exclaimed.

Kaguya slumped to her feet, soon fidgeting a bit.
"And why'd they convince me to separate from Yuzuru, I need Yuzuru. Yuzuru?" Kaguya called out meekly.

Yuzuru was soon shown equally lost in another area of town.

"I'm lost, and now I'm uneasy." Yuzuru said a little fidgety.

Yuzuru shook a bit, looking around.

"...Kaguya, are you nearby?" Yuzuru asked nearly tearing up.

Miku was on the phone with the manager of the agency she worked under.

"Sorry Miku, none of us have seen any signs of her. We'll keep looking but no luck for now."
Miku's manager replied.

"OK, I understand." Miku answered.

Miku hung up, sighing as she looked around a bit.

"Poor Rio, where did you go? Actually... now that I think about it, why did you even leave?" Miku wondered.

Mayuri was walking around the neighborhood.

"Maybe she didn't get too far." Mayuri thought aloud.

Soon enough, Mayuri went white eyed as she saw herself in front of the Takamiya household.

"Huh!? What the... how'd I get back here!?!" Mayuri panicked.

Mayuri hung her head down in defeat.

Hours passed until afternoon started to roll in, and near the edge of the city, the sight of a panicky Rinne breathing into a paper bag was seen as Shido and Mana were walking around with her trying to keep her calm the best they could. Shido was on the phone with the others.

"No luck from you either?" Shido replied to Tohka.

"No, sorry Shido..." Tohka answered sadly.

"It's alright, maybe we didn't have any luck today, but we're not giving up. We'll meet you back home later." Shido replied, soon hanging up the phone.

Shido sighed.

"I don't get it, why would Rio run off like that? There wasn't even any warning." Mana wondered.

"I know, nothing showed any signs of her running off! Wait... mom, did you see anything?" Shido asked.

"...Shido, if I knew I would have said that when I realized she ran away." Rinne said, briefly stopping her paper bag breathing.
"...Good point." Shido nodded.

The Takamiya siblings and Rinne all sighed, wondering what they should do. Then suddenly a shift is heard nearby the bushes.

"Shido, Mana, Rinne. Why are you all giving such sad faces right now?"

The three suddenly shot up as the sound of a voice they had last heard a month ago reached their ears, making them all gasp.

"No way..." Shido breathed.

"...It can't be!" Mana exclaimed.

In moments, they all turned and saw the face of none other than... Maria Arusu! Well and alive, making Shido stare in shock.

"M-Maria... is that... is that really you?" Shido asked, unsure if this was real.

"Your eyes are working fine Shido, I'm really here. I'm alive." Maria smiled, Shido was about to tear up and cry... but it didn't happen because a certain sister of his had an expected reaction that caused him and Rinne to move away.

"NO! Not you too, my god! Why universe... why did you revive her AND make her breasts grow to 89cm! Why won't you give me boobs too!?" Mana screamed before she cried loudly, sobbing on her knees.

Maria sweat dropped and then chuckled.

"S-Sorry Mana, if it helps I didn't ask for it. I don't exactly get what-" Maria replied.

"Oh, just shut up, yeah it's upsetting but I'm just happy you're alive!" Mana cried loudly, soon wrapping her in a hug.

However, the moment she did... the moment Mana noticed her skin wasn't cold.

"Wait, you don't feel cold... no way, Maria... are you-" Mana gasped, making her brother and mother go wide eyed as Maria smiled.

"Yep, I'm the genuine article now. So is Marina." Maria smiled.

"Wait, Marina's alive too? Where is she?" Shido asked.

Maria giggled to their confusion, soon looking to see the sun fully set over the horizon.

"Why don't you ask her yourself?" Maria smirked as she started to glow magenta.

In moments, a magenta flash went off as Maria was replaced by Marina, surprising the trio as Marina gave a toothy smirk at them.

"Hey there, what's with those dumb faces? Don't remember what I look like? Oh wait, guess you're upset you failed to get rid of one of your pesky enemies?" Marina said bluntly, not dropping her smirk... until Shido suddenly gave her a surprise hug.

"Don't say that! After we heard what Maria told you, it hurt us to lose you too! Thank goodness you're-" Shido replied.
Marina hit Shido in the stomach, making him cough a bit as he let go.

"Stop that! That part of you pisses me off! Sheesh, just cause I'm a good guy now doesn't mean I like your mushy touchy feelings crap! My god!" Marina exclaimed.

"Sorry... but you know, it wouldn't be you otherwise." Shido replied, smiling a bit despite the pain of the blow.

Marina blushed at that slightly.

"S-Shut up you stupid gigolo!" Marina replied, surprising Shido slightly.

"Wait... I'm confused, Maria was and then you and her... wait, are you guys stuck in a single body now?" Rinne asked surprised.

"Well... yes and no, I was heavily damaged when the virtual realm rebooted. We're not sure, but our electrical signals and spirit power reacted with something outside, and that lead to us being reborn. Though due to said damage, I needed to recover, so I got stuck to Maria's body to regenerate in a sense. It's been that way for a month, but we notice our spirit powers splitting off, any day now we should separate from each other permanently. Looks like mother nature seems to love us Spirits." Marina joked.

Shido and Mana stare at her in shock.

"The rotation between our bodies isn't controlled though. After the sun sets, I come out, but when the sun rises, Maria takes over. How odd our hair represents when we're awake and asleep, it's quite the laugh." Marina chuckled.

"Uh... right." Mana replied with a sweat drop.

"So why are you all out here, you don't seem all chipper happy zoned like usual, I noticed it even before Maria and I switched places." Marina asked.

"Oh, uh... you remember Rio, or I guess you'd known her better as [Phantom], she... she ran away and we don't know why." Shido answered.

"The kid high tailed? Damn, just what did you do for that to happen? Well whatever, I doubt you'll get much results if you pass out on the streets now." Marina bluntly replied.

The trio all sweat dropped at Marina's extreme bluntness.

"Yeah, I hate to say it but we need to call it a night. Why don't you come back with us? Maybe everyone seeing you guys are alive will give us some good luck?" Shido offered.

"Where do you think Maria and I have been trying to get the last month? If I have to walk for almost an entire day even one more time I'm gonna to break or kill something!" Marina exclaimed, and looking serious about it.

"...Don't worry, that'll end quickly. Let's go guys." Mana said, sweating in fear.

"Y-yeah, agreed!" Shido and Rinne both nod.

Tohka and the others were all waiting at home tiredly, and soon heard the door unlock as Shido and the others returned.
"Hey Shido, welcome..." Tohka greeted, soon trailing off as the fourth member of the group came into view.

"Oh..." Origami began.

"...My..." Kotori continued.

"...God!" Kurumi finished.

"MARINA!?" Everyone exclaimed loudly.

Marina chuckled a bit.

"Surprised to see me?" Marina replied.

"It isn't just here, she and Maria are sharing a body right now! She's alive too... and they're not even machines anymore, they're actual Spirits!" Mana added.

"Really?" Yoshino gasped.

"Yeah, yeah. I'm flesh and blood, not metal and wires, blah and blah. Yeesh, don't get so sentimental on me." Marina replied.

Marina soon went silent, giving a worried look.

"...I guess I shouldn't expect you to accept me like my sister does though. After all, you clearly didn't trust me, and all I've done is put you all in danger as a member of DEM only to be treated like garbage by Westclot the same way he treats you as such. Feel free to hate me if you want." Marina stated.

"...Marina, what are you talking about us? You're one of us." Kurumi answered,

Marina showed surprise at that.

"Huh?" Marina blinked.

"Well yeah, you were our enemy, but... Maria trusted you and in the end Westcott used you too. Something I'm all too familiar with. In the end, Maria was right, she knew you more than you realized you knew yourself. Deep down, you were good, you just started off on the wrong foot." Kurumi smiled.

"...S-Shut up! I'm not all sentimental and mushy, don't give me that kind of crap and expect me to... to..." Marina replied, literally forcing her eyes not to shed tears. She was only barely succeeding.

Everyone soon smiled and giggled a bit.

"Hey, stop laughing!" Marina demanded.

"You try to act tough, but you're a softy deep down in there." Rinne smiled.

Marina however simply glared at Rinne, almost like something about her made her feel angry. Rinne noticed this and sweat slightly.

"Uh... Marina, is something wrong?" Rinne asked worriedly.

"Don't just say whatever comes to your mind, do you think you can get away with anything just by
"putting on that face?" Marina stated, giving off a light scowl as she glared at Rinne directly.

"W-what? What are you talking? I never intend to-" Rinne said in shock.

"Hey Marina, what are you-" Shido asked.

"Shut up!" Marina quickly replied.

Shido went silent at that, Marina's eyes scaring him too much to say anymore.

"Then again, it's probably the best thing for you to do. Just keeping up that face, saying a couple of thoughtful words, and avoiding offending anyone at all costs!" Marina exclaimed bluntly, almost as if trying to tear into Rinne.

"B-but I... I'm not... I'm not doing that." Rinne replied, looking a bit scared.

"Hey, Marina, why are being-" Tohka asked.

"Wait, Tohka... look at Rinne's expression." Origami interjected, pointing at her.

That's when everyone noticed... a single trickle of sweat, Rinne was nervous... no, afraid. Though not for the reasons one would think, it was as if Rinne was saying something and she was trying to deny it not because it was wrong, but the opposite.

"...Origami, are you saying we should let Marina keep going?" Tohka asked.

"It might seem cruel, but yeah. I get the feeling Marina's seen something we've all been blind to. Considering what happened today, maybe we need to learn just what it is. I hate myself for it, but..." Origami answered.

Tohka looked at Origami, and soon silenced her words, as did the others.

"You're thinking 'I don't mind things are like this.', 'I just got to agree with what I see around me.', and 'I just need to be kind to everyone.' right now, aren't you? Just how much do you intend to look down on other people and everyone here!? Or is it your way of repentance, maybe even how you keep doing the worst face you could and have hidden it from even your own children?" Marina asked, not letting her blunt words getting any less sharp.

Rinne's eyes widened slightly, and everyone showed surprise to that reaction.

'Mom?' Shido wondered, now confused to what Marina was verbally striking her about. Whatever it was, it was clear... Rinne had been hiding something.

"N-No... you're wrong." Rinne denied.

"I'm wrong? Then why even say I am, simple... because I'm not. You're afraid, mortified, terrified and outright horrified... all over the same thing. You're afraid of disappearing again, form this world and even more, it happened to you in two forms, and even now you don't believe you're here to stay. Not just that, you're afraid and worried how your children and everyone close to you will be, the despair you'll bring them if that happens. In fact, you were scared the moment you learned me and Maria apparently 'died' the month prior." Marina continued, every word hammering harder onto Rinne's psyche.

Rinne couldn't even find words this time, and everyone stared in shock at that. The fact Rinne didn't deny it... that meant it had to be the truth.
"That's why you've done your best every day to turn a blind eye to anything you find suspicious, and hoping to stay in this everyday life, not even getting close to your own children who spent years without you and a father that's deader than dead and may never come back and have only you left! You're so convinced you will vanish again, you don't have the heart to actually be their mother like you should! That's just stupid, twisted and crooked! You call yourself their mother? You should be ashamed you bastard, right now the only thing that makes you their mom is your blood because you sure don't damn act like one!" Marina shouted angrily.

"You're wrong... you're wrong..." Rinne denied over and over.

"Worst of all, you don't even get it... I thought it didn't make sense that little Spirit ran away, but now it's perfectly clear. That girl's powers, I've been around long enough to know her element is Heart, meaning she can read it. Now who's heart would she read most? The one who created her, the one she's most often around... that's you. You don't get it, you were so insistent that you would disappear you convinced her that it was inevitable unless you were a Sephira Spirit! The reason she ran away was you, and deep down you know it because you refused to consider the consequences of your thoughts and actions! Just. Ad-mit. It." Marina exclaimed furious.

"Shut up... Shut up! Shut up! Shut up! I never had those kinds of thoughts, you're wrong... everything you're saying is wrong! You don't know me, heck you weren't even on our side last time I saw you! I don't have anything to worry about!" Rinne screamed.

Shido and Mana stared in horror, Rinne's words didn't do anything but confirm what they were hearing.

Guilt flooded into them, all because they felt horrified how they didn't notice their mother hiding all these feelings.

"You do. All of what I said is what you worry about, having Rio call you mama... getting along with everyone in Ratatoskr... having your existence deemed as 'normal'... you only thought that you were perfectly fine having things stay like this!" Marina countered.

"Stop it... stop it... stop it, stop it, stop it!" Rinne begged.

"All those thoughts are flooding your mind right now, crossing over and over like looping lyrics to a song. You can't stop thinking about it and you don't try to stop the words either. How do I know this? It's simple... because I disappeared from the world for a how week, by all means I truly did see what it was like to die, just like you. That's where things get different... I felt that way, but Maria comforted me, and I accepted my fate, I took my death as a way of redemption, and when I came back, I intended to keep atoning and redeeming myself. I didn't get stuck to the past like you!" Marina continued.

Rinne finally had enough, and screamed as she slapped Marina in the face to everyone's surprise.

"Don't talk like you know all the answers! What makes you think you do!?!" Rinne exclaimed angrily.

"...I never said I did, so why are you claiming I know?" Marina asked.

Rinne's eyes widen, gasping slightly at Marina's reply.

"I... you... everyone... this is... no one... you can't... the world... Rio-" Rinne stuttered.

"Mother, stop hurting yourself! Stop lying to yourself! Stop... stop taking everything on by yourself alright, OK?!" Mana cried out, finally having enough.
"M-Mana?" Rinne gasped.

Marina gives a silent stare, though now her eyes looked sad.

"Don't you get it mom... Marina's crying just as much as you are! She's changed, all she did, the person she used to be... she cares about it now, and every moment of her sins hurt her because she can't change the past!" Mana sniffled.

Rinne gasped again, and soon looked into Marina's eyes, it was clear now... as much as it seemed like she was enjoying what she said to Rinne, she hated every second.

The only reason she even had the guts to push so deep into Rinne's psyche was because she knew the only one who could say what needed to be said was her, the only one who could be blunt without any restraint. However, unlike the her that worked with the DEM... she had morality, and the guilt that came from having to say it.

"I was so horrible, and now I feel every moment of it... I have a new chance of life now, but I've also been burdened with realizing everything I did in the life I had before. I've forgiven myself, but do you think that means I can just forget it all and push it aside? If I can't face the past, I can't move forward, so... I can't ever forget it, that pain is something that must remind me every moment of my life to not change back into the horrible person I was." Marina said, finally shedding tears.

Shido sniffled a bit before rubbing your eyes.

"It's hard to admit or accept you're weak, isn't it?" Shido replied.

"Damn it Shido, you always make something sound mushy and sappy somehow." Marina chuckled, even if it was faked to lighten the mood.

Rinne stared at everyone, and soon she broke down in tears as the walls of her strong facade finally crumbled apart.

"I'm so sorry everyone... Marina, she's completely right." Rinne cried.

"Mom..." Shido whispered.

"I was too naive, I was trying not to think about it, keep it all in... figured if I brushed it aside I'd be going against it. Rio knew it all along, she knew me better than anyone, and... I kept letting my feelings be sensed by her, never considering she'd take it seriously. I forgot she's spent 30 years alone, just to have the chance to see me again, she grew so wise without me realizing it." Rinne continued, sniffling more.

"Now I get it... this is no way to live, if I don't reach out, nothing's going to change. I can't leave it all to others anymore, I have to pick up the key of truth again and see what lies behind the door I've refused to open all this time. I just... I just hope you can all forgive me for how stupid I've been!" Rinne sobbed.

Shido and Mana hug Rinne as she kept sobbing, and soon the others all smile at the sight.

"I'm confused, what did you do Marina?" Kaguya asked.

"Something I learned from Maria after she beat me to the ground in the virtual realm, sometimes to be kind, you must be cruel. There are some words that won't sound kind when spoken... and that's cause what someone wants to hear and need to hear can be different things." Marina answered, smiling a bit.
Origami smiled a bit, remembering when Shido and Tohka saved her.

'Yeah, sometimes you need to let people know how stupid they've been for them to finally move forward again.' Origami thought as she held a hand near her heart.

"You know what... I think I know where to find Rio, but we need the sun to rise before I can find her. For now, let's get our rest, it's... been a long day for all of us."

"Alright, let's get some rest then." Shido nodded.

Rinne got into bed by herself, prepared to go to sleep alone when...

"Hey mom." Mana called out.

Rinne looked to see Shido and Mana at the door.

"Shido? Mana? Why are you two here?" Rinne asked.

"Well, we talked it over, and we figured after what Marina told you... that for just one night we should stay together. Just like when we were younger." Shido explained.

"B-But you two were kids back then! The two of you are teenagers now, heck I look like one, isn't that weird!? Rinne asked surprised, sweating a bit.

Shido chuckled at that.

"Not when the girls occasionally crawl into my bed, especially Tohka." Shido replied embarrassingly.

He recalled when Tohka first did it, he didn't know she was there and accidentally squeezed her breast while trying to reach for his alarm clock, the two screamed in surprise when they had realized what had happened.

Rinne blinked as she saw Shido sweat drop.

"...Well, I guess one night is fine?" Rinne shrugged slightly.

"Yes!" Mana cheered.

Soon the three were all in bed together, and they all blinked.

"OK, I guess this feels a little weird." Mana chuckled.

"Yeah, but... I feel at ease, I think you made the right call Mana. It's like I finally see how little I had to worry, sorry your mom's such an idiot." Rinne smiled.

"Hey, don't say that, you're not an idiot. You're just a little... jumpy?" Shido replied.

"Shido, you are a terrible liar, you know that?" Rinne giggled.

Shido scratched his head and sweat dropped a bit.

"Hey... Shido, Mana, you remember Rio's Angel, right? Eden?" Rinne suddenly asked.

"Yeah, it's what let her masquerade as Phantom, right?" Mana replied.
"Yeah, well... I guess you could say that was once my Angel, back before I had Uriel and things changed for the Spirits that remain now. The aura was only meant for creating illusions I tried using it to try and bring smiles to the people of my homeland, and your father helped me learn how to truly make it magical, just by a single question." Rinne continued.

"Really, what was it?" Shido asked.

Rinne smiled.

"He asked me 'Rinne, who is that happiness for?', I didn't get it at first. I just thought happiness was happiness. However, I learned from Seigo that real happiness is something you work for, I tried making myself as happy as the people I tried to bring smiles to... and that made my efforts not only better, but made me feel happy to. That's when I understood, to give happiness, you need give it back. I think that's what made me realize I fell in love with him. I nearly forgot that, and I scared Rio because of it." Rinne explained.

"Don't worry, we'll find her... I promise." Mana said, taking her hand as she finally drifted off.

"Yeah... don't worry." Shido replied, drifting off himself.

Rinne smiles and rubbed Shido's hand while taking Mana's hand closer, soon drifting off herself.

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Soon, an alarm went off as sunrise started to near, and Rinne woke up as she heard it go off. She looked to see Shido and Mana weren't in the bed any longer, having probably gotten up in advance for some reason, she stretched and stood up.

"Rio, hang on... mama's coming." Rinne said with determination

Rinne walked outside, noticing everyone else was awake as well, or attempting to stay awake as most of them were still in their pajamas and a bit tired. Shido and Mana were a bit more awake, Shido make breakfast while Mana helped to a degree, as they were just making sandwiches to carry around so they could find Rio quickly. Marina was wide awake compared to everyone though.

"Marina, did you not sleep?" Rinne asked surprise.

"I sleep when Maria swaps places with me, which should begin right about... now." Marina replied as the sun finally peaked from the horizon.

A magenta flash went off, waking everyone up as they saw Maria appear in her older sister's place.

"Hey everyone, I hope Marina didn't cause too much trouble." Maria smiled.

"Maria!" Kotori exclaimed, diving to hug her.

"Oof! T-thanks Kotori, but a little warning next time? And maybe less jumping too?" Maria chuckled.

Everyone laughs a bit, and soon Shido and Mana give everyone a sandwich.

"So, we ready to find Rio?" Shido asked.

"Yep, and you might be surprised where I'm sure she'll be." Rinne replied.

Soon Rinne focuses her powers, teleporting everyone somewhere.
After a while, everyone appears at the spot that had pretty much become the signature for all of them, the viewpoint. Rinne looked around and saw to her joy, Rio was indeed here, the young spirit showed surprised at seeing them.

"Mama... everyone?" Rio said surprised.

"Rio... thank goodness, I was so scared." Rinne stated, sniffing a bit as tears flooded her eyes.

"...Mama, don't come close. Rio doesn't want you to get sad."

Rinne however didn't listen, and soon hugged Rio close.

"Mama?" Rio replied confused.

"Oh Rio, can you ever forgive your mama for being so stupid?" Rinne asked.

"Mama... stupid? What does mama mean?" Rio inquired.

- (*Date A Live - Maria*) -

"Rio, your mama worried so much about possibly disappearing, never considering that worry was unfounded. I forgot how much you understood, and how much you read my heart with your powers... I ended up making you feel the same fear as me. I caused you to run away, I'm your mother but I wasn't acting like it as I should have. I'm so sorry, I hope you can forgive me." Rinne apologized, hugging Rio closer.

"...But Rio is disappearing!" Rio cried out, surprising Rinne slightly.

"Rio noticed it when Mama and Rio came how, Rio's powers... they've been getting funny! Rio feels it getting worse, Rio doesn't wanna go... but Rio doesn't want everyone to cry if they see Rio disappear... Mama... Rio is scared!" Rio cried.

Rinne stares at Rio, and soon suddenly starts laughing, her eyes watering a bit as everyone stares at her confused.

Shido and Mana stare at each other, the two giving confused reactions.

"Rio, is that funny thing of your powers your aura getting all wiggly?" Rinne asked.

"Yes, that's what Rio's powers are mama, they're-" Rio answered.

"-the sight you're finally growing up." Rinne finished.

Rio blinks surprised.

"Huh?" Rio wondered.

"Rio, you aren't disappearing. For all these years you've taken the form of a child, never aging, maybe my absence had a hand, but now... you're finally about to grow, it's been making your powers unstable. When a Spirit reaches a certain age, they need their parent to help them stabilize and regulate that power so they can enter their next stage. You never had anything to worry about, you'll be OK Rio." Rinne explained.

"Then... Rio gets to stay with mama? With Shido? With Mana? With... everyone?" Rio asked, crying a bit.
"Yes Rio, you're not leaving us." Rinne smiled.

Rio sniffs a bit, and soon hugs Rinne, a huge relief finally washing over her fears and melting them away. Soon Rio's body glows a bright pink.

"Rio?" Shido asked surprised.

"Mama, Rio feels sleepy. Can Rio rest with mama for a while?" Rio asked.

"Yes, I'll wake up only when you're ready. Just tell me all the good dreams you had once you do.

Rio's power fades into Rinne, surprising everyone.

"Don't worry everyone, Rio's still here. She's just sleeping inside of me. When she wakes up, you'll see a big surprise. Until then... know it's all OK, she's finally home." Rinne smiled, crying happy tears as she eased everyone's worries.

"So... it's all over?" Shido asked.

Rinne nodded, making Shido and Mana smile.

- (*insert song end*) -

Maria sighs, almost as if giving it in Maria's place.

"Looks like everything turned out OK in the end, I'm glad." Maria smiled.

"Now come on everyone, we have a Thanksgiving Feast to prepare for." Rinne stated.

"Right!" Everyone agreed.

---

~The Next Day

"Shido, come on! Hurry up!"

"Yeah, we'll be late for the assembly at this rate!"

Shido sweat drops a bit, soon chuckling as he finished tying his shoes.

[After that messiness with Rio running away finally got cleared up, a lot happened and everything's fairly back to normal now. It isn't the same anymore, but... well considering my life since I reunited with Tohka, when does it ever stay the same? So, what are the changes this time? How should I start things off here... I guess the first would be this.]

"Coming!" Shido called out.

Shido soon walked outside, with Maria and Marina were seen waiting for him in Raizen High uniforms, Maria with a smile and Marina with a partially annoyed look.

[The following afternoon after finding Rio, Maria and Marina's shared body status finally ended, with Marina not swapping places with Maria but ejecting out of her... Marina claims it was painful, not sure how but considering it may have been like cell division and she was inside her little sister, that could be why. Either way, they were assigned to the Ratatoskr Classroom, and they still seem to have connections to the machines they had while AIs. Regardless of why or how, everyone was happy Maria was back and welcomed Marina into Ratatoskr, each of them got their own Spirit code]
"Alright you two, let's go." Shido stated, the two both nod.

Soon at the Ratatoskr Classroom, everyone got seated as Tamae cleared her throat.

"Everyone, I've got an announcement to make. We have a new member to the Ratatoskr Classroom, or more accurately, an old member who due to recent events has a new role as a student." Tamae explained.

"Come on in and say hi to everyone." Rinne smiled.

Soon the door opened, and the sight of what looked to be Rinne's human form came in, surprising some of the students. Mana slammed her head down, commenting about her being 84cm and 'I give up' after seeing her. However, because Rinne in her Spirit form was already present, that meant this was...

"Hello everyone, I'm Rio Sonogami. Glad to meet all of you." Rio smiled.

[When mom said Rio was growing up, she wasn't kidding. My adorable little sister's gone from a biologically 5 year old to a biologically 13-14 year old, at least Mana still can say she's older when her birthday makes her 15. I don't know why she took my mom's human form as her older form, and either my mom's playing a small prank on me and mana, or she honestly has no idea. Mana still thinks it was on purpose for... well the usual reasons, she can't catch a break.]

Rio giggled, Hiroto faint from the cuteness.

"...Is he still alive?" Ai asked.

As the day went buy, everyone was soon gathered in the Takamiya household for Thanksgiving dinner, once everyone was gathered, Shido tapped a glass as he prepared to make a toast to everyone, getting their attention.

"Everyone, it's been only a little more than half a year since we began this adventure together, and it's still far from other. Nia and the final Spirit are still out there, and Westcott's up to something wherever he is... you can tell us about that part tomorrow Marina." Shido announced.

Marina points at Shido while nodding.

"Regardless of what comes next, know we're all in this together. To family." Shido finished.

"To family." Everyone repeated.

And soon they spent the rest of the day enjoying the Thanksgiving feast, knowing tomorrow things would resume, but for today they had this moment. Everyone gave a smile of laughter as cherry blossom petals blew outside.

Walking near, Nia looked at the Takamiya Household and smiled, resuming her stroll and knowing she was the next Spirit Shido would try to seal, and Mukuro up in space looked down on Earth for no reason other than a subconscious respect to the holiday.

"We'll protect this world from Westcott, so these days never end."
Well, there you go, the Rio Reincarnation movie in one go. Maria and Marina have finally gotten back to the others, Rio's gotten a bit older and the DEM wasn't involved in any manner, unless you count Marina being this indirectly until she actually officially joins Ratatoskr around the last few scenes. I'd have added more, but Rio Reincarnation didn't have a real antagonist, so this movie arc is mainly a breather before we start Season 3.

Now the reason I had a focus on Thanksgiving? Aside from it fitting the family theme I had here, it's because Season 3's first arc starts early in December, I think that can give you a clue what I may start it with because there's two arcs that happen during that month. *giggles* Aside from that, Season 2 has officially ended with this movie's ending.

Also, hooray for Kurumi's cat Macaron getting some more screen time finally ^^ *giggles* Finally, I'll say this now, the running gag with Mana and her A-Cup angst is finally over, there's no more Spirits that could induce it on her at this point. *chuckles* Sorry for tormenting you for a while Mana, but what I do with you in Season 3 will probably make you happier.

For those who thought Marina was a bit harsh and haven't seen the game, know this... she was exactly as harsh there as she was here. I did make her more admitting to why she called out Rinne. Also, in regards to Rinne's reaction, there have been hints she's been masking excitement and joy to hide her hidden feelings, especially in regards to her possibly disappearing again, after all... Rio and Mayuri working together was the only reason she cheated death back in her movie arc.

Well then, that's all for now, see you all in the first leg of Season 3. Until next time everyone... and stay awesome! ^^

-Rio Sonogami, Code Name: [Phantom]-

Angel: Eden - Eden is an Angel that takes the form of a shield based version of Uriel that lacks the gems representing the Sephira, originally being Rinne's in the form of a special aura she used before passing it to Rio after obtaining Uriel. Due to being a shield, Eden's effects don't possess any offensive nature unless she's being attacked, but the spiritual power and defense it has is incredibly near-impregnable as a result.

- Powers: Rio's element as a Spirit is Heart, making her very emphatic. Her powers are like her mother's, but weaker and mostly defensive based, having only little offense due to the brief period she and her mom fought a copy of her together during the Choronzon incident. Her abilities are also mostly support and disruption based to aid allies and harm enemies.

Risk Factors: AA

Spacequake: AA

Spirit's Astral Dress: B

Angel Rank: S

Strength: 86
Consistency: 70
Spiritual Power: 230
Agility: 102
Intelligence: 93

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-
Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)
Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)
Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)
Kotori - 97% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)
Kurumi - 96% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)
Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)
Natsumi - 95% (Transform into Shiori)
Kaguya - 93% (Flight)
Yuzuru - 93% (Weight Manipulation)
Miku - 85% (Pain Reliever)
María - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)
Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)
Río - (Creates a soothing aura of spirit power to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)
Chapter 51

Before we start everyone, I have some great news for anyone who hasn't heard yet, but... the other day, Volume 17 and Date A Bullet's second volume just got announced for an August 19th release! Oh, and even better? Dragon Magazine's publishing timing means we'll likely see the cover in July rather than early August! No one knows the volume's name yet, or who will be on the cover, but high chances for the fan awaited Inverse Kurumi and slight changes for Reine or Mio.

We'll see soon enough, but WOW did that excite me for writing this chapter! Only reason I didn't make one yesterday was because at the time I was making the next chapter for A Dragon's Heavenly Bonds, so I had to finish that first. Also, since the announcement came, time for me to throw in my own surprise announcement :3 *giggles* When I finally finish with this story, the Date A Re:Live II project that I mentioned a while back? (It's been a while, I won't be surprised if no one remembers)

I've decided to do it, but it isn't gonna replace this story's canon, if anything it's like another version that has a major difference. This story was made before Vol 16' released, so the reveals aside from anything in Kurumi's backstory were excluded? This version on the other hand will apply everything up to Volume 17, so that means a few changes will apply depending on what we learn. Not just that, but once the last DAL volume finishes I'll even consider trying my hands at a Date A Re:Live that applies everything in canon into one story.

That's a long ways ahead so... not so important right now. So, what does that mean in regards to a potential remastering of this fanfic? I'll probably still do that to clean up and improve on some things, but I'll probably be giving it a different name. For now, the ideas are set, but naming schemes and such might be subject to change. Like I said, the Vol 16 announcement has got me all excited so I might be a bit hyper and not fully thinking on future/potential ideas as much as I should just yet ^^-;

Anyways, for the actual story related info, the first Season 3 arc isn't Nia's second round just yet, oh no... we're adapting Volume 12! So, say hello to the Shido Countdown, and this arc's emotion? This time it's "Anxiety", and you'll be surprised how it applies here, much less how Shido's gonna go enter his overheated state when he's half-Spirit and can handle it. *shivers excitedly* Oh boy, this is the season where Nia and Mukuro are finally gonna be sealed, I can't wait to get to their arcs! *squees*

With all of that out of the way, and most of my adrenaline used up, let us begin ^^

Chapter 51, S3: Shido Countdown, Part 1

The scene began over 50 years ago, the sight of a boy with short blue hair and brown eyes, with a beauty mark under the right eye wearing a ragged cyan T-Shirt, black shorts and brown shoes was staring at a group of bullies while a girl with light silver hair and blue eyes wearing a pink dress with black shoes was standing behind him, crying as he stood against a group of four bullies.

"Who do you think you are? You think you can talk back to us just cause you're trying to look tough!" A scruffy hair boy stated.
“We're bigger than you! Since you're small, we're the ones who get to tell you what to do!” A boy with glasses and a bowl cut hairstyle nodded.

The blue haired boy just kept staring with his expression unyielding.

“Are you listening?” A wearing a hat in the back growled, soon grabbing the blue haired boy's shirt.

“Because you're tall? More like because your brats, but you made the mistake of picking on my little sister!” The boy said as he glared at them, revealing himself as Seigo.

“Stop Seigo, please don't do this! I don't want you go get hurt!” Reine cried, shivering behind her big brother.

The tallest of the boys walked forward, soon taking a drink bottle out.

“Oh, then here's my treat-" The boy smirked.

Seigo grabbed his arm before he could do anything, soon throwing him at the others.

"See, where does being tall get you now you big bullies!?” Seigo exclaimed.

The boys growled angrily, and soon a fight broke out, but in the end, Seigo walked out of it with only a few scrapes.

Soon, Seigo took Reine's hand as they began walking back home.

"Reine, you can stop crying now. Those scary guys won't bother us now." Seigo said softly.

"B-but big brother, you... you got-" Reine cried.

Seigo smiled at her, showing a toothy smile, which ended up a bit funny because he recently lost a baby tooth.

"What? I'm fine, see?" Seigo smiled.

Reine stared before her cries devolved into sniffles, she wiped her eyes before she nodded slightly, even though she knew her brother was fibbing a bit to make her feel better and not worry about him.

[My brother, Seigo Takamiya... he was the best big brother anyone could have. He would always stand up for those who couldn't defend themselves, even if it got him hurt or in trouble, and in the end... he'd always smile just like that. A smile that always made you believe everything would be fine. I wanted to be like him, someone to inspire others and to view as their hero. That's probably why the day he went on his one adventure, I cried more than ever.]

Ten years later, Reine was seen crying outside of a gym as her side ponytail slowly undid itself, holding her phone and showing her recent call had come from her parents... a call where they told her they learned from Seigo's boss that he had gone missing with a trace on his latest exploration.

The sky was gray and it was raining, almost as a reflection of her tears and sorrows at that very moment, and after a bit of time passed , the sight of a boy with blonde hair and pink-purple eyes walked up to her. He lightly tapped his umbrella, making her look up as she saw him, the man known as Seigo's best friend and also the boy who had been the object of her affections since High School.

“Reine, what's wrong? Why are you crying?” Isamu asked.
"Isamu, I... I..." Reine cried, soon jumping up and hugging him.

Isamu who was still confused to the source of her tears simply held the umbrella over them as he hugged her back, letting her cry.

[And yet, that's probably how I ended up marrying the love of my life, Isamu Murasame. Thinking we had lost Seigo... it brought us closer together, and the feelings we had for each other just came out as we comforted each other. We were happy, even though I could never have a child, and then... a miracle came as we learned Seigo was alive and a way could bring him back home. But...]

Reine stood before two tombstones, wearing her wedding ring on a necklace as she placed a bouquet by a pair of tombstones that said [Seigo Takamiya - A Loving Husband and Wonderful Father], and [Isamu Murasame - A Loving Husband and a Brave Soul], she looked at them before taking out a picture showing herself and Seigo during their wedding day... and soon she cried loudly as she broke down, revealing the dark spots her constant tears had left.

Reine began walking through the area that became Tenguu City after the Spacequakes, soon time accelerated around her as she began wearing a lab coat that held the stitched-up teddy bear belonging to Mana, and having the sight of a base built around her as she eventually took a seat on the Fraxinus.

[I made mistakes that caused them to die, and left my niece and nephew without someone who should have been there to take care of them. Now however... I may have a chance to bring them back, and at the very least stop the man who made the mistakes that lead to the suffering in my life. I began on my own, but now... I'm not longer alone on this journey. We will fight, and we... will... win!]

Reine soon got up, and turned to see Shido, Mana and the Spirits smiling at her. The Ratatoskr staff giving her looks to show their confidence and positive beliefs, and most of all... she looked at Mayuri, the Spirit who looked like the child she and Seigo could never have.

She soon walked up to Rinne, the wife in all by legal records of her older brother, and gave her a smile before Rinne returned it. They both stared forward, waiting the challenges that would come ahead, challenges that took the form of two silhouettes that represented two familiar figures.

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*Date A Live: Mayuri Judgment - Invisible Date plays*

(*soft piano key playing*) The scene shows Tohka watching the sunrise from the viewpoint from behind, the screen then turning to show her from the front as she held a hand to hair as it blew from the wind, smiling brightly.

[30 years ago, the world of beings known as Spirits and all its people died from a single man's twist world views, scarring the Earth forever as a single survivor carried over the treasures of her world to name 10 worthy successors and make them Spirits, soon having five more join them in their cause. As of today, only two more Spirits roam out there waiting to be saved and sealed before Humanity can finally counterattack their near destroyed, but in the midst of it all, he has begun forming his own plan that only the unity of all the Spirits and their allies can silence before it brings ruin to all. This story is the story known as...]

Tohka's backside is shown as a single foot steps into view, making Tohka slowly turn to smile at him.

[...Date A Live!]
The sight of Shido entering her view, with Mana and every Spirit including Nia and Mukuro being seen alongside him as the wind blows through their hair as the words "デート・ア・ライブ - DATE A RE:LIVE" appear on a blackened screen, a brief pause came up before the colors invert showing a white screen with the now blackened text. Shortly after, two silver lines form horizontally by the last E’s top and bottom, followed by three gold vertical lines forming between, changing the title to "デート・ア・ライブ - DATE A RE:LIVE III" as a result.

(The affection, friendship and desire that we formed together! It has merged together into a balance that has been harmonized forever!) Shido and a now 15-year old Mana were seen both holding a plate of flapjacks as [Shido/Shiori Takamiya] & [Mana Takamiya] appeared besides them in cyan text. The Spirits waited excitedly at the table as they brought them over, with Shido also making sure to slide over various syrups, toppings and butter to top them.

(And without even realizing it, we had established unspoken rules like birds of a feather!) As they began eating, text showing [Tohka Yatogami - Spirit No. 10], [Origami Tobiichi - Spirit No. 1], [Yoshino Mizui - Spirit No. 4], [Kotori Itsuka - Spirit No. 5], [Kurumi Tokisaki - Spirit No. 3], [Natsumi Itsuwari - Spirit No. 7], [Kaguya & Yuzuru Yamai - Spirit No. 8-A and 8-B], [Miki Izayoi - Spirit No. 9], [Maria Arusu - Spirit No. 13], [Marina Arusu - Spirit No. 12], [Mayuri Seraphina - Spirit No. 14], [Rio Sonogami - Spirit No. 11], and [Rinne Sonogami - Spirit No. 0] in their respective colors as they enjoyed the meal made by the Takamiya siblings.

(I don't know why, but I can't put it into words. Why are these feelings so elusive?) Nia was seen outside reading Raziel as silver-gray text reading [Nia Honjou - Spirit No. 2] appeared beside her, smiling forward as she did. Meanwhile in space, Mukuro was seen floating around as usual, and golden-yellow text saying [Mukuro Honjou - Spirit No. 6] formed by her as her eyes opened and gave her usual emotionless stare. Behind each of them, silhouettes of their Inverse Forms appeared.

(And without even realizing it, we had established unspoken rules like birds of a feather!) As they began eating, text showing [Tohka Yatogami - Spirit No. 10], [Origami Tobiichi - Spirit No. 1], [Yoshino Mizui - Spirit No. 4], [Kotori Itsuka - Spirit No. 5], [Kurumi Tokisaki - Spirit No. 3], [Natsumi Itsuwari - Spirit No. 7], [Kaguya & Yuzuru Yamai - Spirit No. 8-A and 8-B], [Miki Izayoi - Spirit No. 9], [Maria Arusu - Spirit No. 13], [Marina Arusu - Spirit No. 12], [Mayuri Seraphina - Spirit No. 14], [Rio Sonogami - Spirit No. 11], and [Rinne Sonogami - Spirit No. 0] in their respective colors as they enjoyed the meal made by the Takamiya siblings.

(So I began to wonder, what exactly this unseen perception was. Could there be such a thing as an invisible date?) An upgraded Fraxinus Ex-Celsior zips through the sky, now with advanced defensive features and true offensive features as the sight of a cloaked Arbitel Neo, also having been upgraded but also becoming darker and more mutated in appearance, appeared as it dropped its Invisible and fired at the new Fraxinus before the ship returned fire.

(Whatever the answer is, all I know is... I just want you to grasp the hand I've reached out to you!) Shido stood in the winter snow, alone, soon turning as he gave a fierce stare and his Spirit aura flared out. The others all staring worriedly as a beam from outer space was fired at him, causing the silhouette of a cursed sword within the beam as if to represent the nature of the beam.

(*slow and simple guitar playing*) Each of the Spirits quickly summons their Limited Astral Dress and Angel, soon standing together in a group before a flash goes off and their Limited Astral Dresses transform into each of their full Astral Dresses.

(This is... what I want, and... what I truly desire!) The sight of the Spirit Void holding a DEM base and lights showing Westcott's new Automaton forces, his allies' new CR-Units, the upgraded Arbitel Neo... all while his hand emits a dark aura. These forces all rush through the skies of space, focused towards Mukuro who summoned her Angel, creating a large golden flash explosions went off and a storm of debris fell to Earth like a weak meteor shower.

(Se come along and join the story of-) In a repetitive flash of black and white, the silhouettes of the faces for Reine, Kannazuki, Elliot, Karen, Artemisia, Ellen, Jessica, Chinami, James all flash by before Westcott's appears with a dark smirk, only to be shattered apart like glass as Seigo and Isamu replace it, each giving a friendly smile to the side before looking at the screen together.

DATE A LIVE!
Every Ratatoskr and DEM force all rushed off, as did Nia and Mukuro, as a large-scale conflict between the three opposing forces began. Shido giving a strong look in his Over-Limit Spirit Ascension as Mana in an upgraded Murakumo stood by his side giving the same.

(When I'm standing by you, there's this feeling I can't put into words!) Yoshino, Natsumi, the Yamai twins, Miku, Maria and Marina all face off against Nia who dodged their attacks and formed her Kirigami army. Soon she spun and changed into her Inverse Form, activating her Demon King to create a world of stories that transformed and trapped everyone was the characters inside. Tohka, Origami, Kurumi, Kotori, Rio, Rinne and Mayuri all fight against Mukuro who simply warped and locked their attacks, soon releasing her full power and spinning to change into her Inverse Form. She slams her Demon King down, causing the Earth to shake a sits rotation began slow down, threatening to stop.

(Does this mean I'm satisfied with where I am now, or do I want something more with you!?) A dark flash goes off before Shido and Mana both stand defensively and look up in the sky, the sight of familiar faces in their Inverse Forms were all scene, Inverse Tohka in front as she stared before raising Nahemah prepared to attack. Meanwhile inside Tohka's mind, she stares at her Inverse Form, reaching out to it before it slowly does the same and grasps her hand.

(This mystery in my heart, it burns like a volcano and has gone out of control! However, the passion and desire burning in my heart... I will... let it grow... into a new hope! Because this light in my heart is-) The dark flash is replaced as Ethereal Tohka takes her Inversion's place, rushing ahead and preparing Shekhinah for a major attack as a swarm of attacks launched by the DEM fly out her. She flew forward, followed by Shido, Mana and everyone as their Spirit mana swirls into a single rainbow strike. After it ends, Rinne in her Astral Dress slowly opens her eyes and holds out her hands before stretching them to the sides.

DATE A LIVE!

The date was December 4th of 2051, and currently the entirety of Tenguu City was blanketed by gentle white snow, children were seen playing outside while others began early preparations for the holiday of Christmas, the Takamiya household was no exception as the Nibellcole clones were seen getting things ready outside, while indoors the others were putting some Yuletide cheer into their home. Luckily, unlike with Thanksgiving preparations, they were taking their time.

"Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, jingle all the way!" Kurumi hummed as she started placed some red, green and white tinsel around.

"Meow, meow!" Macaron meowed, jingle the bells Kurumi added to his collar.
Kurumi giggled as she picked him up.

"You are just too adorable sometimes my little Macaron!" Kurumi squeed.

Natsumi soon walked into the room, carrying a miniaturized version of the Christmas Tree in her hands, and once she reached the corner she placed it down, using her powers to revert it back to its original size.

"There we go, the easiest way to transport a Christmas Tree." Natsumi smiled.

"Efficient as always, aren't we Natsumi?" Miku giggled, hugging the green haired Spirit from behind.

Natsumi blushed a bit.

"M-Miku!" Natsumi complained.

Marina soon came into the room with a snow globe, and revealing she had her hair tied with a white ribbon close to its bottom area. Taking a look at the Christmas decor, she decided to ask a question she probably should have a while back.

"Say... what is this Christmas holiday all about exactly?" Marina asked.

"Huh, you don't know? I thought being a former AI meant you had tons of info." Kotori asked surprised.

"I did... but I was also formerly an evil AI created by a mad man who wants to become the Devil as he defined it, so while I knew about a lot of things I never had the care to do any personal reading. I know the holiday's name, but that's all I know. While I am still connected to Ratatoskr's mainframe like an AI, I still haven't gotten use to how different it is from the DEM's mainframe just yet." Marina answered.

"True... alright, shouldn't be too hard. It began as a celebration of the religious figure in Christianity, Jesus Christ, and over time it's become a celebration of family and giving gifts to our loved ones. In some countries, there's a figure called Santa Claus that people use to convince their children to be good when he brings presents, Japan isn't one of them though. Did that help?" Kotori explained.

Marina thought on that for a bit.

"Yeah, I think I got the general idea. It's about family, spending time, and showing you appreciation to love ones by giving them presents. Did I get that right?" Marina asked.

"Yep, speaking of which, might wanna get Maria a gift." Natsumi replied.

"No worries, Rinne helped me out with that yesterday, though now I get what it was for." Marina said embarrassingly.

The others all giggle at that while Macaron just meows.

"I'm still surprised by how much you guys don't seem to worry about upcoming dangers. I mean... I told you about what happened with Boycott and you don't seem on edge in the slightest." Marina replied.

"Boycott, that insult will never got old." Natsumi chuckled.

"I guess we're too used to danger at this point." Kurumi shrugged as she wrapped some tinsel around
Marina looked at everyone before looking up, recalling when she told everyone.

Marina sat down in Ratatoskr, taking a large gulp of warm black tea, sighing happily from the refreshing taste that filled her mouth.

“This consuming thing isn’t half bad.” Marina said in an elated tone.

“So, I’m guessing you guys all want to know what happened after Choronzon’s black hole ate me and the other DEM elites around three months ago?” Marina asked, placing the cup down as she gave a serious look.

“Yes, the fact you made it means you all had to have survived it, not to mention Westcott's hologram appeared in our systems when you entered the virtual realm.” Reine nodded, seated closest to Marina.

Marina breathed out a bit, soon clasping her hands as she used them to support her chin.

“Well, truth be told, our survival hinged on a mere gamble that I had made. You all remember when I was aiding you during the Choronzon assault, but... I had a hidden motive then, and what I didn’t tell you is I hit each of you except Miku, but including Nia and the current [Zodiac] included, with an energy dart. These darts allowed me to gain samples from your Inversions. I had already taken some of Miku’s, and by the time Tohka had her...” Maria explained, trailing off for someone to fill in the blank.

“Tohka named it an Ethereal Shift, and her form the Ethereal Form.” Rinne answered.

“Thank you. By that time, I got everyone except Nia and [Zodiac]’s since neither of them have had an Inversion yet. After you somehow managed to destroy Choronzon’s Qlipha Crystal, which I’ll admit now was impressive, and the black hole sucked us inside... the only thing left was to jam all the Dark Spirit Power into the Arbitel Neo’s systems and hope we survived due to it. We did, and that’s when the most shocking thing happened, we ended up... in the Spiritual Void, or more accurately... the remains of the Spirit Dimension.” Marina continued explaining.

Rinne’s eyes widened at that.

“No way, that’s... that can’t be possible, Spacequakes that happen unwillingly are caused by the gate ejecting a Spirit back at high speeds if they get near the void! How did you get through it!?” Rinne asked.

“Honestly, I don’t know how. If I had to guess, considering what Maria told me about what you learned of the Inversion’s taint, maybe the problem was the lack of dark spirit power. The reason Tohka and Origami never made it there was likely because they just didn’t have the right amount. Either way, we were there, and the dark spirit power samples I had got larger. Boycott-” Maria answered as she continued.

Natsumi suddenly started laughing, causing everyone to look at her while Marina blinked at her giggle fit.

After a bit, Natsumi managed to stop.

"I'm sorry, but... insulting Westcott by calling him Boycott? It's too funny!" Natsumi chuckled.
"...Right. Anyways, Boycott decided to make a new DEM HQ there, but we needed a way to get back and recover the few loyalists to our cause. Luckily, I had a spare body sealed in a chamber from a protect chunk of land on Europe's remains. That let me get back here, and I was gaining data to help make that gate, and I hate to say it... but I succeeded. He'll be back, I can assure you of that." Marina finished as she sighed.

Maria, who had her hair now tied like her sister's, but split into two with black ribbons tying the two different bunches of hair.

"I see, thank you for sharing this Marina. I have to say Westcott made the mistake of throwing you away. Now we're aware of what he's planning and what we should try to be ready for. Admittedly it'll be tough, fighting forces powered by the dark spirit power of inversions, but if we can seal Nia and Zodiac before he gets back, we should be able to take him. Not to mention, if we can everyone to access an Ethereal Form..." Reine replied.

"Yeah, we're still got a chance... even though I still haven't learned how to pull an Ethereal Shift again." Tohka replied, chuckling embarrassingly as she said the last part of her sentence. Shido pet her head in response.

Marina was surprised, she expected them to be terrified, but they weren't. Not in the slightest.

That included her younger sister.

'They're not afraid? Why? Where does that confidence come from, is this why they've always manage to find a way under the worst of odds?' Marina thought.

Marina soon looked forward at them again, Natsumi spitting slightly as Macaron licked her mouth, making Kurumi try and fail to stifle her laughter at the sight of her kitten's adorable yet hilarious little act. Natsumi pouted a bit at her laughter.

'Well... I guess I'll start experience their confidence soon enough.' Marina thought, heading to the kitchen to get a cup of black tea. It took a few minutes to finally realize she had seen Macaron once before.

"Hey wait, isn't that the cat from the time you still had the Cassiopeia attached to you?" Marina asked.

"Yep, Shido gave him to me as a moving in present." Kurumi smiled, snuggling Macaron close.

Marina chuckles a bit, giving a sweat drop at the sight.

'She really does love cats.' Marina thought.

Meanwhile at the Ratatoskr classroom, everyone not at the house was helping out the school a bit for Winter errands, and soon enough Shido saw his youngest sister Rio rush up to him with an excited face.

"Alright, what's the good news?" Shido asked with a smile.

"Look, now that I'm finally old enough, I got a cell phone!" Rio exclaimed, her eyes closed as she held it out like she was holding a badge.

Rio spun happily.
"Isn't it super neat!?" Rio asked.

"Super neat." Shido repeated.

"Do you mind if I call you first!?" Rio asked, her eyes sparkling like stars.

"Sure, go ahead-wait, where are you going!?" Shido replied for noticing Rio run off.

"Far away to properly call you!" Rio shouted from afar.

Shido chuckled a bit, soon turning around, only to be surprised by Marina as she stood in front of him.

"Oh dear god, I gotta be more careful there." Shido breathed.

"Shido, it'll be Mana's birthday tomorrow and your mom's trying to plan a surprise party for her. Think you can distract your sister and keep her out of the house until 7pm?" Maria asked.

"Yeah, I can... wait, why 7pm? Shouldn't I keep her out of the house period?" Shido wondered.

"Don't tell her, but I used my powers to grow plants for a remedy that'll make her fall asleep by then. She'll stay asleep and wake up first thing, that'll make a real surprise party. You can't really expect to wake up to one after all." Maria answered.

Shido blinked in shock at that.

"Wow, you thought of all that?" Shido replied in shock.

"No, Origami did. That super genius title can really come in handy sometimes." Maria explained.

"Oh, that makes sense." Shido chuckled.

"Good luck Shido, Rinne really wants this to work so don't let Mana know a thing." Maria said before walking off to find the said Spirit.

As Shido sighed, he was unaware of a certain younger sister rushing behind him.

"Shido! I forgot I don't know how to make a call, what do I do!?" Rio shouted sadly... but accidentally stopped with the phone held out, whacking him in the back of his noggin with it as a result.

"Ah, whoops!" Rio panicked, sweating as she went to get snow as a makeshift ice pack.

Shido groaned as a swell bump was seen steaming on his head.

Soon enough, Mana was with Shido, the two in their winter clothing. For Shido, he had a black coat similar to his school uniform over a brown scarf, and had an added layer of padding that was able to attach to his pants through zipping. Mana on the other hand wore a duffel coat, had a plaid muffler wrapped around her neck, and mittens on her hands. Incidentally, she was wearing mitten type gloves, and I think the shoe she was wearing was somewhat thick. Her outfit definitely works in the winter.

Luckily, Shido was able to easily convince Mana to follow him by saying they should get their Christmas shopping done now, they did have about a dozen people to buy gifts for and a cat out of courtesy to Macaron. As they came out, Mana noticed some light snow fall.
"Look Shido, it's snowing." Mana smiled.

"Even after all these years you never get tired of it." Shido smiled.

"Of course, this my birth month, I'm a part of winter as much as you're part of Spring." Mana giggled happily.

Shido chuckled a bit, he couldn't argue much there since he fell in love with Tohka long before the other Spirits, and she had a Spring birthday as well. Heck her name was inspired by her birth date. It was as ironic as the fact his birth date, the 5th of March, ended up being part of Kotori's last name.

As they walked, they saw a familiar silver-gray haired manga artist in her disguised form while holding a hot chocolate and sighing happily from the taste. It was none other than Nia Honjou, currently using her disguise as Souji Hasegawa for the sake of privacy. Even though Spirits had become public knowledge after the Choronzon incident, Nia preferred people didn't realize she was Silver Bullet's author so she could have some privacy.

"Hey Nia!" Mana waved.

"Ah, if it isn't the boy and his sister? Also, its Souji while I'm using this form in public." Nia replied.

"S-Sorry..." Mana apologized, toning down her fan girl side.

"So why are you out here, are you finally giving me a chance to seal you yet?" Shido asked, remembering how she claimed he wasn't ready last time he tried.

"Nice try boy, but I ain't near considering that yet." Nia chuckled.

Truth is she actually was near considering it, but Nia was a bigger tease than Natsumi was, Shido was still unaware Nia had interrupted a kiss he had with Tohka a few months back and she had no plans to let Shido discover that any time soon if ever.

And speaking of teasing, Nia got in the unfortunate teaser mood.

"So, what brings you out here and keeping you from puckering with your harem boy?" Nia asked playfully.

"N-Nia! That isn't funny, we're just doing some Christmas shopping in advanced!" Shido replied, blushing heavily from Nia's teasing.

"And tomorrow's my birthday!" Mana cheered.

"Oh, well then happy b-day in advance girl. So you'll be 15, right? Wait, don't answer, I can just ask Raziel about that." Nia replied, making the Takamiya's sweat drop.

"...Say Nia, before we go, I have a question to ask." Shido wondered.

"Go ahead, I may not answer or only give you half of one." Nia replied.

"If I do ever seal you, will you finally tell us who the last Spirit is? I ask because... a friend of ours thinks she may be her little sister who ran away 5 years ago." Shido asked.

That surprised Nia a bit, she never thought Mukuro might have a family... then again, Mukuro locked away her emotions so knowing if she was longing for anyone wasn't gonna happen. Considering Mukuro was the most powerful Spirit...
"...Tell you what, I'll think about it. Maybe that might motivate you to actually give you the chance to try sealing me?" Nia replied half joking, half serious.

"Thank you, see you later." Shido smiled in gratitude.

Right after that, Shido and Mana both headed towards the mall. Nia quickly took out Raziel at that moment.

[I know that look, what do you have planned?]

"I can't really tell them Mukuro's identity cause of our promise, but she never said I couldn't mention where she's hiding. I think it's time I force a little situation that'll be something to see how strongly and seriously they want to help that friend of theirs." Nia smiled.

She opened up her Angel.

"Alright, when does girl's birthday celebration end?" Nia asked.

[At around 2pm, I believe your request will initiate after that time?]

"Yeah, it will." Nia smirked, soon forming the pen that was part of her Astral Dress as she prepared to write the reminder for the plans she had tomorrow.

After their shopping trip, and having the Fraxinus pick them up after Maria's sleeping remedy put Mana into slumber land, everyone went to sleep and the rest of the day quickly flew by until it became a certain bluenette's birthday. Mana soon shifted in her sleep, and yawned as she woke up and stretched, soon scratching herself in a few itchy spots she got while in her sleep.

"Good morning me, happy birthday." Mana said, still half asleep.

As she kept scratching, her hand moved to her chest... however she felt a squish as her hand hit something soft, and reached her chest sooner than she expected-

"Huh?" Mana blinked, soon realizing her last two thoughts and physical feeling.

Mana pushed her hand forward a bit just to double check, and soon felt the squishy feeling the next three times she moved it. She quickly had her eyes shift downwards, realizing the only possible explanation, and she gaped. Instead of her flat 78cm chest she had been complaining about since Kotori had her sudden growth spurt... she had two 91cm sized breasts in their place.

Mana's mouth mutter near silent gibberish for a moment, and once she could finally find her voice...Mana screamed loudly in joy, this caused everyone briefly wake up, recognizing that was Mana's voice.

Being the worrisome mother that she was, Rinne quickly grabbed a robe and rushed over to her middle child's room, slamming it open with a panicked look as she expected the possible dangers that didn't actually exist.

"Mana, what happened!?" Rinne exclaimed worriedly.

"Mom... it finally happened, it finally freaking happened!?!" Mana cried happily.

Rinne blinked before turning the lights on, and soon realizing what Mana's hands were holding, and her eyes widening a bit as she saw it.
"It... it finally... was the problem you just needed your birthday after fully awakening your powers?" Rinne wondered confused.

"Mom, what happened?" Shido called from his room.

"Uh... best way to say it, Mana's not flat anymore!" Rinne replied.

"WHAT!?" Everyone exclaimed at once.

"Meow?" Macaron meowed in confusion.

Rinne chuckled nervously at that, a sweat drop going down her face.

"Uh... just go meet us in the living room in advance, alright? We'll be right there!" Rinne called out.

"OK!" Shido replied.

Rinne giggled a bit, and soon hoisted Mana onto her feet.

"Mana, let's get some breakfast now." Rinne smiled.

"Yeah, sure thing." Mana said, still a bit distracted by her happy tears.

Rinne chuckled at that.

Soon enough, Rinne and Mana soon reached the living room which had the lights off, and right as they did... the lights turned on as Mana covered herself from what ended up being confetti cannons firing.

"Surprise! Happy birthday Mana!" Everyone exclaimed.

"W-what... when did you all? Wait, all this while I was asleep?" Mana gasped.

"Sorry about that, I had you take a drink to knock you out early enough." Maria apologized, Origami chuckling embarrassingly in reply.

"It's fine, I've never had such a big surprise party, thank you! It's already like one big gift." Mana sniffled happily.

Everyone smiled in their own ways, though Rio had to elbow Marina before she forced one out.

"Come on, let's get this party started!" Rio cheered.

"You're speaking my language!" Kotori cheered in agreement.

"Mine too!" Kaguya cheered in response.

After everyone changed out of their pajamas, and Yuzuru lending Mana a shirt because she had outgrown them all due to her little growth spurt, the party got started as everyone enjoyed the cake, played a few games and had some random laughs and giggles over everything.

'I don't think I'll understand this anytime soon.' Marina thought, realizing how disconnected from everyday life she was.

"How come there aren't any presents? I mean, it is your birthday after all." Kaguya asked.
"Since Mana's birthday and Christmas are 20 days apart, and she doesn't want the excitement to fade because of that, whenever her birthday comes, we keep them with her Christmas presents so she can open them all in one go until next year restarts the cycle." Kotori explained.

"Makes sense, Christmas is always on the same day unlike Easter, I wouldn't be surprised if most December birthdays are that way." Origami claimed.

Mana giggled a bit, soon burping loudly before covering her mouth and blushing.

"Sorry, I think the cake did that." Mana chuckled in embarrassment.

"The cake of your two new chest mounds shaking you like a soda?" Marina stated, making Mana blush a bit.

"Well, at least we don't have to worry about having a chest insecurity anymore." Natsumi chuckled.

"Was that your birthday wish Mana?" Yoshino asked.

"Well... maybe a little bit?" Mana admitted, twiddling her fingers a bit.

Shido chuckled a little at that, followed by everyone including Mana, even Marina despite she didn't get the joke.

"Well, that was a fun party, so what do we do for the rest of the day?" Kurumi asked, petting Macaron.

"Guess we continue decorating. Though since this is the first time with more than me, Mana and Kotori, I guess I need to buy us all signature ornaments for the tree." Shido suggested as he stood up.

"Signature ornaments?" Yoshino asked.

"Darling likely means a special ornament that represents him." Miku smiled.

"Yeah, it's like that." Shido replied, soon going through the ornament box to find them.

He showed a small phoenix ornament that was Kotori's, a robot ornament that was Mana's, and a ten-pointed star ornament that was his own.

"They fit you three quite well." Yuzuru replied.

"I agree, so we can get some too?" Mayuri asked.

"Of course, how about you guys right a list and I'll head out to buy them? I need to get some groceries anyways so I'll kill two birds with one stone." Shido reasoned.

"OK!" Everyone cheered, raising a hand.

Shido chuckled at their enthusiasm, soon taking the small note of paper after everyone had written something down.

He soon grabbed his coat and scarf before he headed out, as he did, he was unaware of Nia who was looking from afar in his true form as her glasses were off. She soon looked at Raziel glow to alert her what time it was.

"Hope you don't mind Shido, but as I said the day before, I need to see your resolve." Nia replied, soon writing down what she had Raziel constantly remind her until now.
What she wrote was {Disrupt Shido's powers shortly after this is written, and do so in a manner the sealed and allied Spirits will all need to unite to save him.}, and soon enough... the words faded as the future event was set...

...And things were about to get crazy for the Takamiya household.

---

Oh Nia, you sneak... you're the one who did it, or I guess is doing it since it hasn't actually happened yet. Looks like the countdown to chaos has begun and Nia started up the clock, though as she said it wasn't out of malice, but because she wants to see how serious they are, all because Shido mentioned that Mukuro might be the sister of their friend Mildred.

Nia's still got her canon self's inability to fully trust right now, so she wants to see if they're truly doing to his help her, or if it's just because of convenience, if the other Spirits prove that it's their latter in their efforts to help Shido's powers regulate then she's got the answer she's looking for. Also, this is why I said the running gag with Mana's chest insecurities ended with the Rio Reincarnation movie, she finally got what she wanted. Sorry I made you wait so long Mana ^^;

See you all next time when everyone learns what's happened to Shido and they pull out all the stops to save him. Until then, stay awesome everyone! ^^

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-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 98% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 96% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 96% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 90% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Creates a soothing aura of spirit power to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)
Chapter 52

First off, I need to apologize over a slight detail I forgot to mention in last chapter's end notes. That first scene showcasing Seigo, Reine and Isamu? I put that in because Seigo's presence, as well as the actions he and Isamu made in the past, are going to be a bit more prominent during this season. I was too tired to notice I forgot after submitting the previous chapter, and I figured since it'd be pointless to edit it in after most of you already read it, so... my bad there everyone ^^-;

Also, I should say now that in this chapter just to avoid a misunderstanding, anything that happens with Shido and the non-Sephira Spirits while he's in his... Casanova state I guess we'll call it, in this chapter? Don't take it seriously! It's only for the arc, and because Nia made the mistake of not having Raziel be specific to only the Sephira Spirits for Shido's meltdown, I swear.

It's the result of an extension to a consequence that came from Rinne's actions in her arc, and to explain why Shido has passive abilities for the Arusu sisters and Rio. Likewise, this also means Mayuri's the only one who doesn't have to do anything except help the others because I don't plan on letting Shido get her passive ability until her movie arc, as that's how the others have gotten theirs so far.

Here's an answer to guest review I got: "No, Rinne isn't related to Shido at all, and in the games' canon at least is a love interest of his. You could even call her the game's equivalent to Tohka due to Rio Reincarnation. As for Seigo? I created him, so he doesn't exist in Date A Live's canon at all unless Tachibana somehow uses the name, has blue hair and brown eyes, and a beauty mark... but then that would be a scary coincidence I don't want 0_0"

That's all I've got for the start notes, so enjoy today's chapter ^^

Chapter 52, S3: Shido Countdown, Part 2

"Of course, how about you guys write a list and I'll head out to buy them? I need to get some groceries anyways so I'll kill two birds with one stone." Shido reasoned.

"OK!" Everyone cheered, raising a hand.

Shido chuckled at their enthusiasm, soon taking the small note of paper after everyone had written something down.

He soon grabbed his coat and scarf before he headed out, as he did, he was unaware of Nia who was looking from afar in his true form as her glasses were off. She soon looked at Raziel glow to alert her what time it was.

"Hope you don't mind Shido, but as I said the day before, I need to see your resolve." Nia replied, soon writing down what she had Raziel constantly remind her until now.

And what she wrote was... {Disrupt Shido's powers shortly after this is written, and do so in a manner the sealed and allied Spirits will all need to unite to save him. }, and soon enough... the words faded as the future event was set.
A while after walking, Shido suddenly felt a pang in his head, and put a hand to it as he felt something burning.

"What? What's going on, why... am... I..."

Shido began wobbling his head around as if his consciousness was blank before, and he suddenly collapsed on the ground. His cyan spirit power spazzing out before he suddenly disappeared to... somewhere.

Rio hummed happily and giggled a bit.

"I wonder what everyone's signature ornaments will be?" Rio wondered happily.

"I dunno, but I've got a good feeling that Tohka's is a butterfly." Marina joked.

"How'd you know!?" Tohka gasped in shock.

Everyone briefly went silent at that, with Marina giving an awkward blink before moving her eyes to each side and looking back.

"I... didn't?" Marina answered.

"You kinda walked right into that one Tohka." Origami chuckled.

"Mu..." Tohka pouted.

Rinne chuckled a little as she grabbed some non-alcoholic eggnog in the fridge, though as she began to drink it... the house's warning alarm went off, causing her to spit take from the timing and cough slightly.

The others all notice the alarm in shock, wondering if this meant what they thought it did.

"The Spirit alarm? Nia's still not ready to have us seal her yet, so... no way, did [Zodiac] finally show up!?!" Mana gasped.

"Come on, let's get to Ratatoskr's base and find out!" Maria declared.

Everyone quickly rushed to the secret entrance sand entered them, Rinne following after putting the eggnog back in the fridge.

Soon enough, everyone made it to Ratatoskr where Reine was quickly typing on the screen's keyboard in worry, trying to figure out what was going on. She saw them arrive and turned around.

"Glad you made it so fast. Give me a hand Maria, Marina? The readings we're getting are so erratic and large I can't properly get a lock on them." Reine explained.

"Got it." Both Arusu siblings replied.

They manifested their Angels before hovering them over Ratatoskr's mainframe, and soon their pupils taking loading circle shapes as they connect to the system through doing so. Various readings soon gathered together to clear up a result...

...However, they didn't see Nia or Mukuro, the one registered on the screen was-

"SHIDO!?!" Everyone exclaimed.
"This is... something's not right, I've monitored Shido every time he's sealed a Spirit out of safety so we could detect abnormal readings like these, but this is... wait a second... one of you except Rinne try manifesting your powers, and only for a few seconds!" Reine begged.

"Uh... OK, I'll try?" Mayuri replied worriedly.

Mayuri breathed and focused, manifesting her Astral Dress and then dispelling it.

"Hmm... I need another example." Reine asked.

"My turn!" Rio smiled.

Rio tried to manifest her Astral Dress, but it was a bit harder, and when she did it was only a Limited Astral Dress. Rio blinked confused before dispelling it.

"Huh? Why'd I only get a Limited one?" Rio wondered.

"Just as I feared, this abnormal level of power... everyone, listen to me real quick. I should explain something about sealing the Spirits I never did before now because I didn't think it would be a problem after Shido managed to contain Rinne's power." Reine sighed.

Everyone looked at her.

"Take a seat, this will take a while and yet I need to say everything I need to as fast as I can." Reine continued.

---

In the underground meeting room owned by Ratatoskr, Elliot was facing the dolls placed on a round table. These dolls had speakers inside of them, each of them connected to the highest leaders of Ratatoskr in each continent of the world aside from himself and Reine.

"Chairman Woodman, what is the meaning of this? Wasn't Shido Takamiya going out of control a very low to non-existent possibility?" The crying mouse doll asked.

"...the data is correct. This case should not have happened, every responsibility goes to me." Elliot sighed, a doll of a happy squirrel eating an acorn representing himself to the others like their dolls did.

A growl was heard from the drooling bulldog doll.

"This isn't something we can settle with you taking responsibility! He has the Reiryoku of 8 spirits stored in his body right now! If he loses control of them... just how much damage do you think would happen!" The drooling dog shouted angrily

"Calm down, we prepared the [Dáinsleif] for this right?" The ugly cat doll said softly.

Elliot's eyes made a silent gasp at that.

'No, they didn't... I specifically forbid the completion of weapon's development!' Elliot thought worriedly.

The Dáinsleif... a satellite weapon that was blueprints for a weapon meant for a worst-case scenario. It was named after a cursed sword, which fit its sole purpose, to fire a beam meant specifically to annihilate Shido in the event he goes out of control from the spirit power he's sealed by a laser specifically aimed for his cellular make up and self-update itself to account for each additional spirit
he's sealed.

However, after sealing Kurumi and therefore having half of the ten Spirits' powers within him, as well as the reveal he was Half-Spirit and could use Rinne's power, Elliot demanded that the project be scrapped because of the overwhelming evidence that they were simply worrying over nothing. Unfortunately, it looked like the Round Table of Ratatoskr had their own ideas and still made it behind his back.

"What? Are you stupid!? The Spirits all hold Shido as a dear existence to them. If we kill him now, all eight Spirits will go berserk and undergo an Inversion, and they'll attack the one who did it, with the DEM's actions in the Void still unknown... and if not that you know the worst scenario, don't you!? We could kill end up killing all of them!" The crying mouse doll shouted.

"Ah, that might be so in normal circumstances. But, it's a different story now right?" The ugly cat doll replied.

"That's... but no matter which it may be, we will be losing all the Spirit powers we gathered if that happens, am I right?" The drooling bulldog asked.

"I know, but it's much better than the worst scenario, right?" The ugly cat countered.

Elliot gritted his teeth, all of them were pissing him off, especially because they had still created the Dáinsleif against his orders.

The speaker in the ugly cat continued its words towards Elliot soon after.

"With that said, Chairman Woodman. We will be counting on you for his disposal, if anything happens, that is your role. Don't misunderstand your duty." The ugly cat replied.

Soon the meeting ended, and Elliot sighed.

Karen walked into the room, giving a worried look towards Elliot as she saw his hands shaking.

"Both you and I know these fools don't realize everyone's deaths or an Inversion are guaranteed if we let Shido die. Considering the circumstances, their bonds have become too strong. So Elliot, tell me... how should we proceed?" Karen asked.

"I'll avoid pushing the trigger, the only thing we can do... is hope the others are able to act fast enough to stop it. The Dáinsleif was made without my orders, meaning... they might be able to activate it on their own if I don't." Elliot replied.

Karen's eyes widened.

The cruel reality revealed itself right then and there... they had a time limit, and this time it was unseen to everyone against the Dáinsleif's intended use.

Meanwhile, back at the [Inverse Void] as Westcott had decided to call it due to the dark spirit power samples having grown upon arriving in it, the sight of the DEM's new HQ was being built, with the Arbitel undergoing some upgrades as Westcott say in his new office.

At that moment, Jessica walked into his office, getting his attention.

"Ah, Jessica. I've been meaning to ask how you're upgraded CR-Unit has been working?" Westcott asked.
"It's fine, no problems at all." Jessica answered.

She slid a few documents to him.

"This is our current status in trying to gather up all our loyalist forces. So far, we've recovered a good deal that are awaiting transport when we can do it away from the Earth's public eyes." Jessica added.

"Very good, plans are going along nicely. What of the remaining Spirits?" Westcott added.

Jessica brought a tablet into view.

"So far, [Sister]'s movements seem stationed in a similar area, her mental state seems to be questioning something, so we might be able to expect an Inversion from her. However, in [Zodiac]'s case... we have a problem." Jessica sighed.

"A problem? Like what?" Westcott asked curiously.

"Inversions only occur to a Spirit who falls into despair, but despair is also an emotion, correct? So, let me ask you this... how do you inflict despair when a Spirit lacks any emotions?" Jessica asked, showing Mukuro's charts were a complete flat line for emotional fluctuation.

Reine downs her entire coffee in seconds, soon typing on the screen to animated chibi drawings of Shido and the Spirits.

"First off, let me ask you this. How exactly do you see Shido's sealing powers working in your point of view?" Reine asked everyone.

"He kisses a Spirit and drains our power out like a mosquito drinking blood!" Tohka exclaimed as she raised her hand.

Marina goes red at that.

"That's how it works!?" Marina panicked.

"Uh... unique choice of words there Tohka." Reine chuckled nervously.

Reine cleared her voice and she brought up arrows circling around the chibis of Shido and Tohka, the arrows glowing from bottom to top with her spirit power.

"Anyways, Tohka has the general idea. When Shido kisses a Spirit whose affection for him falls into the range of love, he takes their power and it becomes stored in them, while the action may look parasitic it is actually more mutualistic. The power stored in Shido makes detecting the Spirit no longer possible, and even if as Shiori, being born make means Shido isn't noticing having it either. While the bond between Shido and that Spirit depends on how much of their power they can use, they no longer have to worry about most of the issues regarding their powers."

"How this works though? The reason why your powers still are usable and able to be simultaneously used by Shido and yourselves without any loss of power or complications is because there's a path between you, a cycle that channels the powers, I would even say it's kinda like how Maria and Marina shared a body for a month, but without actually sharing the body." Reine explained.

"Ugh... don't remind me, that still feels weird." Maria shivered.

"I'm confused, why does their need to be a path? Why not just take it and give it back when needed?" Marina asked.
Reine typed on the keyboard a bit more.

"I believe you're aware how a Sephira Crystal only leaves its host upon their death, why is this again Rinne, Rio?" Reine requested.

"A Sephira Crystal bonds with you on an advanced level, it's kinda like evolution, homo sapiens to... uh, super homo sapiens?" Rinne answered.

"The Sephira Crystals also can feel like having a second heart born in you, because they overlay with your heart. They're too bonded for a Spirit to revert back to being a normal Human." Rio continued.

"And that's why if we did what you suggest Marina... this is what would happen." Reine answered.

The screen shows chibi Shido pulling all of Tohka's power out overall, making chibi Tohka fall over with X eyes to signify she was dead.

"Oh... OK, that's bad, and suddenly makes a lot of sense." Marina answered.

"And that's where the problem is, look here." Reine continued.

Soon the screen went back, and the sight of the arrow point and end by Tohka shrunk while the ones by Shido began to grow larger.

"There's an instability that's caused the paths to tighten near you, so Shido can't properly process it back. The side effect of this is overheating him, and your narrow path gives you little power. That's why I wanted you to use your Astral Dresses only for a moment, right now... I'd say you all have 5 minutes before you can't use your powers anymore, not without fixing this." Reine answered.

"Then why am I still alright?" Mayuri asked.

"Because you're the only one who's powers are connected to Shido. Everyone else is, hence the passive powers Shido has shown to be able to use at times. He basically has no narrow path between you to limit the power you're receiving." Reine answered.

Reine saw her coffee machine make more coffee and gulped this whole cup down, showing the list of Spirits that have given Shido passive powers. Everyone but Mayuri, and the unsealed Nia and [Zodiac], were shown on it.

"There's only one way I think we can fix this, for every Spirit that has their powers connected to Shido at some level... you'll all need to kiss him to restore the paths. To put it lightly, everyone but Mayuri has to kiss him." Reine answered.

"WHAT!?" Marina exclaimed.

"Hey, hold on here, I never kissed him! How the hell am I on this too!?" Marina demanded.

Reine looked to Maria, causing the older Arusu sibling to look at her younger sister and stare in horror.

"...Maria, what did you do?" Marina asked.

"Well, early during Shido's Spirit gathering, I was curious about understanding what a kiss meant. So, one time while he was asleep, I may have... snuck into his room and after simulating my android body to have romantic feelings briefly, kissed him to see what would happen? Didn't do anything."
Maria answered.

"Actually, it did. That brief moment however registered as actual feelings to Shido when you gained an organic form, and since you shared a body with Marina for a while..." Reine stated.

Marina went white in shock, soon falling to her side and twitching.

"I have to kiss his because of you? Whatever Gods are tormenting me... better hope I never find you!" Marina screamed.

"What about me though?" Rio asked.

"I think it's a similar thing, but it was that day you spent having your puberty moment of sorts inside your mom, and she indirectly sealed herself when her powers went all crazy before we met Natsumi. While you and Mayuri did kiss Shido earlier than that, you were just joking so it didn't count." Reine replied.

"Oh, so that's explains that. I guess I'm support for this then?" Mayuri asked.

Reine nodded.

"Also, Mana... same unfortunately applies to you too for some reason, possibly having the same spirit color." Reine chuckled nervously.

"What!? Oh come on, this is like one of those cruel sitcom jokes that aren't funny!" Mana exclaimed.

"Sorry, but... either that, or this power might cause your brother to... explode." Reine replied.

Everyone gasps and goes white at that.

Reine stares a bit turning to the screen, looking for Shido's location.

"The sooner we do this, the sooner we can we can all act like it never happened. Agreed?" Reine reasoned.

"Agreed." Everyone answered.

Reine sighed, glad they got past that point without problems.

"Alright, time to trace Shido's Reiryoku readings." Reine said in relief.

"What's a Reiryoku?" Tohka asked.

"Oh, that's right, guess I should explain that. With the existence of Spirits known now, we've had more studies. The mana you Spirits make and the bit we Humans and the world have gained their own names as such, your mana is called Reiryoku while the rest is called Maryoku." Reine explained.

Everyone went 'oh' and nodded at that, letting Reine resume her typing.

Meanwhile outside, the AST members and Ratatoskr's field agents were all looking for Shido's current location to help speed up Reine's search in case they saw him before she traced him, he was way too volatile right now to waste any time.

Unknown to them, Nia watched from afar and viewed their progress.
"Hmph... fair enough, better I know where he is so I know where to focus that explosion if it all goes wrong." Nia sighed, opening Raziel and writing in it.

"Dang it, how hard is it to find a blue haired teenager?" Ai sighed.

Soon enough, Shido came into view, making her eyes widen at the sight of his sudden appearance.

"All it took was me saying that?!" Ai exclaimed in surprise.

"Hey Shido!" Mai called out.

Soon Shido looked at the three of them, a feverish look on his face.

Though in Shido's mind, something else rang through, a certain instinctive thought of sorts.

**Once he meets a girl, Shido has to make her fall for him.**

"Ai, Mai, Mii... now that I take a good look at you girls, you're all cute." Shido said suddenly.

"Eh!?" Mii gasped.

The three all suddenly sweated as Shido neared them.

"Shido, what are you trying to do?" Mai asked.

"What I need to do for every girl." Shido smiled in an unnatural manner.

Suddenly the three paled as it registered to them.

Shido was acting like he had found three Spirits and had to seal them.

"W-Wait Shido, we're not Spirits! You don't need to do it with us!" Ai said in a panic.

"Nonsense, I have to do my job no matter what." Shido replied.

"RUN AWAY!" Mii exclaimed.

The three ran away as Shido quickly followed, making Nia blink as she watched.

"Uh..." Nia mumbled at the sight.

[...Oops]

As the three ran, they saw Hiroto and Ai quickly dialed his number.

"Hmm? Ai, what's up?" Hiroto asked.

"We found Shido, but he's acting like every girl's a Spirit! Quick, run in front of him to keep him in place so we can tell the others about him!" Ai panicked.

Hiroto froze for a moment, paling as he remembered the one time with Inverse Natsumi posing as Shido.

...He didn't wanna go through that again.
"I'm sorry-KSSH-Ai, but I think-KSSH-that I have a bad sig-KSSH-nal, what did you say!" Hiroto said, making fake static and closing the phone.

"Hey, I know that's fake, what are-Hiroto? What the... the bastard hung up on me!" Ai screamed in anger.

The three kept running as Shido's hair went orange in response to an instant Spirit Ascension, now using the Yamai twins' powers to make himself way less and run faster and begin catching up to the three who split up once they noticed.

Chinami, who was currently incognito in the city, stared from afar and suddenly the sight of blood leaking out of her nose was seen.

"I should really report this to Sir Westcott, but this is too hot to stop... maybe I can just lie about it?" Chinami wondered aloud, showing one of her unusual habits.

Reine soon heard from Mii on the phone as Shido had chosen to follow her.

"Alright, thank you Mii. They'll head over right now." Reine answered, hanging up the phone.

"They're by the third district. Rio, use your teleporting to bring everyone there but if only this once. We need to save every bit we can in case something happens and we need your powers." Reine stated.

"Right! Hang on everyone!" Rio smiled, grabbing them in a group hug of sorts.

Everyone was teleported into the area, and the sight of Mii nearly being caught by a currently orange haired Shido was seen, Rinne soon breathed in and then...

"SHIIIIIIIDOOOOOO!

Shido suddenly stopped, letting Mii get away as he turned to all of them.

Luckily, even in this state, Shido had one weakness... the wrath of his mother upon him.

"Ah, hello everyone too. What's wrong? You all looked like you're rushing" Shido asked in his usual gentle tone.

"Don't give me that! What were you doing to Ai, Mai and Mii!?" Rinne asked angrily.

"Ah, so sorry about that. I was just doing what Ratatoskr needed me to. I guess I just went a little overboard about it, forgive me." Shido answered.

Rinne gave a weird look at that answer and sighed.

Suddenly Shido disappeared and reappeared in front of Rinne with his hair now white, freaking her out a bit.

"My body feels like its brimming with power! With this, I will be able to finally fight with everyone. Everyone going through danger won't-" Shido said with smile.

"Shido, you'll explode! Don't be a dumb ass!" Marina exclaimed angrily.

Shido blinked at that.
"Ah, a dangerous situation then? What will you cure me with?" Shido asked.

"Everyone but me kissing you." Mayuri answered.

"Dear god, why'd you say it like that?" Marina whispered to herself.

"Really? Isn't that just a lie you made so you can all kiss me?" Shido smirked playfully.

"NO!" Everyone exclaimed.

Shido giggled at that, Maria rubbing Marina's back as she tried not to punch Shido out of anger.

"Relax, it was a joke. There's no way my cute harem and good friends would lie for their own benefit." Shido smiled with a cheerful look.

"...I'm confused now." Maria said with a sweat drop.

"But, it's kind of regretful to lose all the power I gained, more importantly, it feels wasteful to kiss everyone with a working kind of feel to it. Since we have a chance like this. Why don't we make some wonderful memories? Until now, it's been myself making everyone fall for me to seal their powers, as a result of that... now it should be everyone's turn to make me fall for you." Shido declared with a grin.

All the Spirits' eyes widen at that.

"Eh!?" Everyone exclaimed.

"Well, in a more accurate sense, I already love everyone in my harem. Saying {make me fall for you} might have not been the right term for it. You just have to get me in the loving mood. Any way is allowed, gotta make it so I just can't resist you." Shido explained.

"...Oh my god, my son's turned into a Casanova!" Rinne screamed as she freaked out.

Marina finally yelled as the stress got to her.

"We don't have time for this, hold him down and force the kisses right now!" Marina shouted.

"I hate to say it, but she's right. We don't have time to handle this!" Mayuri agreed.

Before anyone could react though, Shido's hair and eye colors switch to Kurumi's as multiple clones using each of Shido's Spirit Ascension colors appear, suddenly surprising everyone before they shuffled and swapped colors as they did.

Oh, and just for added kicks, they all transformed into Shiroi while doing this.

"Don't have the time? Hmm, are you sure? I could easily give you no time if you don't wanna have fun with me your meanies." Every Shiori said with cute pouts on their faces.

"Too adorable!" Miku exclaimed as she blushed with a large smile, her brain going into overload.

"Well, are you going to try my little game, or do I have to use my transforming powers and my voice and turn the entire town into Shiori and have them aid my deception in trying to find the real me?" Shiori asked.

"W-wait, she can't do that, can she!?!" Mana asked worriedly.
"I hate to say it, but if she's got most of our power then she might actually be able to do it. I hate to say it guys, but... we've gotta play into Shiori's hands or we're in some deep trouble here!" Rinne gulped.

Shiori giggled before dispelling the clones and reverting to Shido.

"You have 30 minutes to set up what you'd like, after that I'll pop back in and we'll begin." Shido giggled before teleporting off.

"...What just happened!?" Marina screamed in confusion.

After Shido had left, the girls gathered in Ratatoskr's briefing room with the rest of the organization's members with them. While surrounding a round table, everyone was making difficult expressions, and soon Ren slid into the room with a black board.

"OK, start talking everyone. We need ideas here!" Ren exclaimed trying to get vigor in the room.

"Mu... what should we do?" Tohka wondered as she placed her elbow on the table.

"Was that really Shido in the first place? I mean, it was him for sure, but... he didn't sound like himself." Kaguya added.

"I believe the Casanova comment that Rinne used is quite accurate here, true he's got a lot of woman in a harem, but that's not how he acts. He's a normal gentleman and not such a... whatever he was." Yuzuru nodded.

"My theory is that due to the mass amount of overheating power in Shido's body, it's begun affecting Shido mentally, it's kinda like having a hallucinogen but this also seems to add doping based on his heightened powers." Reine explained.

Rene rushed to write the info they were mentioning on the board.

"I agree, sure Shido's not too averse into transforming into Shiori, but he's always embarrassed when he has to do it in front of people." Saya said as she threw in her two cents.

"He was too confident, like his doubts didn't exist." Katie nodded.

"Or in short, he's got no self-restraint anymore." Ryouko sighed.

"Wait, so he gets the urge to turn into a-" Matthew asked.

"Personal info bud!" Natsumi shouted.

Matthew instantly shuts up and holds up his hands defensively.

"No matter what the reasons, problems or issues behind it is... that doesn't change the fact that this is an annoying situation." Kotori sighed as she finished her current Chupa Chups and swapped to another.

"Stupid brother, getting carried away like that. Does he even know how dangerous his condition is!?" Mana exclaimed as she flailed her arms around.

Origami on the other hand was busy calculating in her head.

"OK, I think I can generalize this. Shido said he would accept our kisses if we can woo him. If that's
the case, we just have to use all the features of Ratatoskr to seduce him enough for him to count it as a successful wooing." Origami reasoned.

"...That's true. So, I guess then we just need the right things to woo the guy instead of the girl. Alright then girls, what do you tend to see a girl ogling at you over?" Mildred asked, feeling weird over saying it.

Everyone began thinking.

"Definitely swimsuits, they even say the wrong one can be a big turn off to guys. Teasing and either showing a lot or leaving some to the imagination can be a surprise." Miku suggested.

"I've seen fancy dresses catch some eyes. Especially when it comes to fancy clothes, like at a formal event, or even a festival." Shiizaki mentioned.

"There's also dancing, that often brings two together physically through hand contact and a spiritual bond of the mood! Oh, but I think the biggest shocker actually comes from trying to fool a guy with something sexy!" Minowa replied as she went into her fantasies, scaring everyone.

Ren writes those suggestions down, sweating a bit about what the girls were gonna think of next.

"I'm glad Sakura just wanted me to be direct and simple with her, these strange ideas are hurting my brain." Rene whispered to himself.

Meanwhile while everyone was focusing on their work, Nia was in her Astral Dress and outside of her disguise as she sat on Ratatoskr's roof, kicking her feet playfully as she had Raziel open to see what they were preparing inside.

[It looks like they've got their strategy to reach Shido, so what do you think so far?]

"Honestly, nothing special so far. In fact, I don't see anything that's proving anything different. After all... Humanity's always the same, men like that bastard Westcott and stupidity like this? I see it everywhere, I lost my hope in mankind long ago and that still hasn't changed." Nia stated, a cold look in her eyes yet still smiling.

Raziel looked at Nia, being completely silent at the sight its master's face and the paradoxical look she had.

Nia gave an odd chuckle as she noticed Shido teleport near Ratatoskr's base and start heading int.

"Oh look, it's about to begin... let's see how things end up here." Nia said as she slightly smirked.

The moment Shido entered the door, Minowa noticed his arrival and sounded off the signal with an air horn.

"Target has entered the dome!" Minowa declared.

In moments, a giant monitor installed in the wall showed Shido's appearance, alongside numbers signifying his mental state and affection values.

Shido soon saw arrows on the wall with the Spirits' faces on them.

"Ah, they have something planned this way then. I wonder what they decided on?" Shido wondered, walking through to the doorway.
After a glaring light flashed into his view, a scene that looked like a beach from southern countries expanded out-and the sight of Mana and the Spirits wearing colorful swimsuit were there welcoming Shido.

'I feel self-conscious right now, does suddenly having boobs and looking older do this to you?' Mana wondered as she bashfully held her left arm in front of her chest, currently wearing a cyan bathing suit with aqua spiked markings everywhere.

The Spirits up to the Yamai twins being sealed all wore their usual swim suits, while Miku was seen wearing a frilly blue and pink striped swimsuit. Rio had the same swimsuit she once wore in her child body, but in a two-piece form. Maria had a magenta one piece with blue squares and Maria had the same but her squares were yellow and in a diamond position.

"Alright everyone, this is an extremely important mission. All members be prepared!" Kannazuki exclaimed.

"Right!" They all declared.

"Operation: Splash and Blast, the green light is a go!" Nakatsugawa shouted.

"Alright, who's going first? Did you set up an order?" Reine asked.

Natsumi smirked as she flaunted her figure.

"I've got a surefire method to make Shido drop to the ground begging for a kiss. I'm the Spirit of Mimicry, and I've already read Shido like a book!" Natsumi exclaimed smugly as she flaunted again, her breasts bouncing.

'She's confident, so that makes me wonder... wait, could she have... it may have wasted a bit but let's see how much it works out." Reine thought.

Natsumi soon neared Shido, soon giving a flirty look while bending to dangle her assets and give a full view of her cleavage towards Shido, giggling as she looked right at him (while also sneaking a peak at some of Shido's muscles) before rubbing a finger against his chin.

"Shido, tell me, do you like what you see on my swimsuit?" Natsumi asked in a seductive tone before sticking her chest tout pridefully, flipping her hair with her hands.

"Hmm... seems a bit expected, especially with your powers Natsumi." Shido said, slightly yawning a bit.

Natsumi soon saw her chance, and her acting skills activated as she suddenly began crying, getting Shido's attention before her eyes sparkle with her tears.

"Are you serious Shido, I thought you were the one who taught me looks don't matter, are you saying how I act right now is the complete reverse of that? So not only am I not beautiful in this form but you don't think I can be pretty at all!?" Natsumi asked as she faked her sob convincingly.

Soon, Natsumi poofed into her younger appearance, her green swimsuit not changing with her as it covered her a similar way to Yoshino's attempt to put on a swimsuit with only one hand due to having Yoshinon on the other. Shido's face suddenly went red.

"Shido's emotional level is starting to spike!" Kawagoe announced.

"Oh Shido, how could you be such a bully. You think I'm ugly in both this AND my true form! It's
OK, I'll just give up, goodbye Shido." Natsumi said as she continued her fake tears and tried to walk away.

"N-No, I never said you weren't pretty, I'm sorry. Not to mention that was so adorable what you just did." Shido replied.

Natsumi smirked without Shido seeing it and changed back to normal.

"Aw, you little sneak. Don't toy with a young maiden's heart." Natsumi smiled as she got close and rubbed Shido's chest.

"R-Right, I'll remember-" Shido replied.

Natsumi soon grabbed his face, pulling him close before forcing about 20 seconds of making out with Shido, causing everyone to blush heavily and making Miku's eyes slightly sparkle with excitement at the sight. Soon Shido wobbled a bit as Natsumi flashed a peace sign in victory.

"And Natsumi's cleared her round, nice trick of psychological deception there. Oh, and just so you know that was a whole minute of your power you used, be weary if we need you to use it later." Reine revealed.

"Right, I'll keep watch over my Reiryoku." Natsumi replied.

Reine typed on the keyboard, showing Natsumi's name in green to mark her as being successful in wooing Shido.

"Alright, who's next then?" Reine asked.

"That would be me. Oh god, this feels so weird..." Mana sighed.

"You feel weird about this? What about me!?!" Marina complained as she jumped into the camera's view.

Maria pulled Marina away moments after, making Mana sweat drop a bit. She soon breathed and gulped as she tried to keep her mind from the fact she was being forced to kiss her older brother for the sake of saving his life.

"Alright Mana, let's see you try to woo me." Shido said with a smirk.

"Get ready big brother... because I'm not holding anything back!" Mana declared.

Shido's on the fritz and now all suave Casanova *snorts briefly* as a result, Nia's showing her true feelings and why she pulled this mess off, everyone's either excited to be trying this (aka the Sephira Spirits) or feeling a little weird (the other Spirits) and most of all... Ratatoskr's Round Table has made a weapon to murder Shido if he goes crazy. Wow, aren't they forgetting who his mom is? They're so dead when she finds out 0_0

Oh, if anyone's wondering why I'm suddenly using the terms Reiryoku and Maryoku now, I didn't realize there was a different term between the mana used by Spirits and other people, I completely missed Maryoku all this time. I wasn't sure how to initially add that in, but luckily, I remembered the Choronzon arc gave me the perfect set up for it. So, from now on in any of my future DAL stories, I'll apply these terms from the start.
Natsumi's finally gotten the first strike, and now Mana has to regretfully go next (they chose the order in the same method used in Mayuri Judgment) in this whole event, after she's done... well, let's just say due to Shido being the indirect/unwilling antagonist for this arc, Mana's the hero today. Good luck birthday girl, some of what happens next will be in your hands, no pressure there... Oops.

Alright, that's it for today's chapter. See you all next time when the fight to stop Shido's meltdown resumes. Until then, stay awesome everyone ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 96% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 96% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 90% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Creates a soothing aura of spirit power to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)
Here we go everyone, things are about to heat up! Mana's starting us off on the attempts to woo Shido (I apologize for making you do it Mana, forgive me ^_^; *chuckles*) while on this beach setting, while at the same time we've got Nia and the Round Table of Ratatoskr up to their own agendas... and Chinami gawking over the situation that the DEM could have used to their advantage if she wasn't too into it.

Oh, and I've gotten a few people who've liked the story idea I mentioned last chapter, so for the few who told me that... thank you for the encouragement ^_^ *smiles brightly* Even a small bit of support goes a long way, and you gave me a bit.

I don't think it'll be any surprise when I say this, but... we're at the moment where the heroes are gonna be screwed as a sudden unforeseen event ruins their original plan and forces them to start fighting... *eyes widen* and I just suddenly realized Tohka's arc is the only one where an actual date would have worked if Origami hadn't tried to shoot her, is this how the series plays the "ruining the moment" card to represent the dating aspect?

Oh yeah, I'll say right here I won't be showing everyone's attempts at wooing him, considering the timing they had to prepare compared to Mayuri Judgment where they have plenty of time to prepare their dates and a lot more choices overall, their short time limit and shared space means I wasn't able to think of a scenario for everyone without feeling I used the same one twice which would lessen how it works on Shido.

Don't worry, I'll still mention them, just know if I use line break, some Spirits will be mentioned to have already wooed him in-between. Anyways, let's get this chapter started!

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Chapter 53, S3: Shido Countdown, Part 3

A young Mana cried as a bunch of bullies held up her backpack out of reach, and she could only reach up in vain, unable to use her enhanced physical skills because of their current location being somewhere where it was too dangerous for those who had mana cores to use them.

"What's wrong? Can't grab it, I thought we saw you jumping 20 feet into the air earlier!" The leader bully laughed as he waved it higher.

"Give it back, please!" Mana cried, trying to reach it.

"If you can jump that high then you just need to grab it, come on! You have a mana core right, it's even part of your name!" A lanky bully snickered.

"Yeah, do it cry baby, show us!" A fat bully laughed.

Mana cried more, and stopped jumping to wipe her eyes with her hands, and suddenly the lead bully feels himself lifted into the air, causing him and the other two to see Shido holding him up with an angry look.

"H-Hey, what are you doing-" The lead bully asked before Shido grabbed his arm, twisting it slightly to make him drop Mana's backpack as he screamed in pain.
There's more to having a Mana core than just athletics, I'd be happy to show you if you wanna keep bullying my sister. Well!?" Shido said with an intense glare.

He dropped the lead bully on the ground, shaking a bit.

"R-Run away, this freak's crazy!" The lead bully whimpered, running off.

"Wait boss!" The fat and lanky bullies shout as they rush after him.

Shido grabs Mana's backpack, and soon walks to her, lightly tapping her forehead with his own. She looks at him, sniffling slightly as his eyes met hers.

"Everything's OK now Mana, those jerks won't bother you anymore." Shido smiled.

Mana however only cried more, surprising her older brother.

"Mana, what's wrong?" Shido asked worriedly.

"I hate this, I'm weak! You're always saving me... I don't want that! I wanna be strong, I wanna get even stronger, I wanna rise up where no one can look down on me! I don't want... to be so pathetic!" Mana screamed as she cried.

Shido looked at Mana sadly.

"Mana..." Shido breathed.

[I wonder how long it was since I said that, and even then... I never became strong like I wanted, my brother was always there to save me. I could never stand up for myself... or even save him. That's still the case even now, it doesn't count when you do it as a team. I want to be able to do it alone, if I alone was the only one who could do it, I want... to stand up tall and proud like my brother, and our father!]

Mana ran off somewhere, and soon found herself by the park area as it began raining, she wiped her eyes and looked up at the raining clouds, a determined expression on her angry looking face... her vow to be strong for the sake of her loved ones.

Shido and Mana looked at each other face to face, the latter ready to start her attempt to woo Shido.

"Alright Mana, let's see you try to woo me." Shido said with a smirk.

"Get ready big brother... because I'm not holding anything back!" Mana declared, giving a serious and focused look on her face as she did.

Mana walks closer to Shido breathing as she readied herself, she still had her arms crossed over her chest, making herself look like she was still self-conscious... however everyone noticed her one hand was by her bikini string.

"No way, she wouldn't." Kotori asked with a gasp.

"I think she is." Rinne answered with wide eyes.

"Hey big brother?" Mana asked.

"Yeah?" Shido asked.
Mana soon pretended to wobble, and after managing to lean forward and get herself 'stable' again... Shido saw her bikini top loosen a bit before it came off, Mana barely covering herself in time.

"EEEH!" Shido exclaimed surprised, his face burning red.

"She flashed him!" Most the guys cheered excitedly.

Mana inhaled and closed her eyes, quickly kissing Shido before turning away, looking blue as she felt mortified by the experience.

She quickly tied her bikini top back on.

'I know I had to... but I can't believe I just kissed my older brother!' Mana thought in horror.

"Someone get me mouth wash!" Mana exclaimed.

Reine marked Mana as succeeding in wooing Shido before she went to get the said mouthwash.

Nia and Raziel both saw the event through the latter's pages, and they both tried to hold back their laughter.

[Not gonna laugh... not gonna laugh... n-not gonna... l-laugh... DANG IT I CAN'T HOLD IT!]

"Me either!" Nia said, her cheeks puffed up.

The two suddenly began laughing heavily.

"It was like one of those odd shipping manga, those things are priceless! I mean priceless!" Nia laughed.

[And that one line, 'someone give me some mouth wash!', I wish we had a camera for that one!]

Nia soon wiped her eyes, managing to relax her laughter a bit.

"Hmm... now that I think of it, they seem to be going really fast? Why is that... something feels off." Nia wondered.

"Why would... wait, could it be? Raziel, show me variables related to the meltdown, and show me all of them. I'll look for the specific details myself." Nia asked.

[Got it.]

Nia soon opened Raziel and got all the details, reading a bit she noticed the Ratatoskr's Round Table and sighed at it. The info on them... it wasn't anything unfamiliar with, and she gripped Raziel tightly as she kept reading.

Soon she found the information on the Dáinsleif.

"Hmm? What's this thing?" Nia wondered aloud.

Kurumi was rubbing Marina's back, the older Arusu sibling starting to dry heave after having just kissed him.

"Just breathe slowly, it should fade soon enough." Kurumi comforted, having just finished her own
woosing with Shido.

"That... proves one thing..." Marina replied.

She briefly stopped as she dry heaved again, Maria bringing over some water for her to guzzle down. Marina did so, and breathed a bit.

"Not... every Spirit will... be part of his harem." Marina groaned.

"You want me to put you on one of the beach chairs?" Maria asked.

"Yes please." Marina shakily nodded.

Maria picked Marina up and moved her over to a chair, and soon the Kaguya gave a smirk as her and Yuzuru's turn came up next.

"Be ready Shido, we shall conquer you with our twin team techniques!" Kaguya declared with a toothy grin.

"I normally hate to brag, but... we shall woo you with little effort.” Yuzuru claimed, smirking lightly.

Shido chuckled a bit.

"Alright then, let's see you hit me with a double wooing Kaguya, Yuzuru. Show me how true your titles as the Hurricane Children are.” Shido smiled.

"Oh, you will! Yuzuru, deploy the ice cream!" Kaguya exclaimed.

Yuzuru nodded and moved the ice cream cone she was hiding behind her all this time.

At that moment, the twins both get near the ice cream cone, and Mayuri went red as she realized what they were gonna do.

"Whoa, you two are bold." Mayuri whispered to herself.

"Prepare yourself, the reverse brain staring the Yamai twins!" Kannazuki exclaimed from the speakers.

Reine looked at Kannazuki oddly when he said that.

"What? We can't name some of their plans?" Kannazuki asked.

"...Never mind." Reine sighed, face palming a bit.

After the initial shock wore off, Kaguya and Yuzuru began licking the ice cream cone at the same time, and Shido tried to look normal at first... but the clear sign of sweat came into everyone's view.

The two noticed this and a glint entered the twins' eyes, they got closer to Shido, almost asking for him to start licking the ice cream as well. Shido suddenly went red, and soon enough, he began to step back.

"OK! You can stop, that was more than wooing, way more than wooing!” Shido said as his face steamed slightly.

"We have succeeded, now to seal the deal.” Yuzuru smiled.
The two kissed Shido at the same time, causing steam to leave Shido's ears all at once. Marina who was watching from afar began laughing at him.

"Oh my god Shido, do you see the look on your face!?” Marina laughed, kicking her feet in the air.

Eventually during her laughing fit, Marina soon caused herself to cough, and without anyone noticing it... coughed up poison towards part of the ceiling, hitting the metal beams on part of the roof.

The poison eats away at the one section of support beams, slowly loosening as Yoshino's turn to woo Shido was next, causing the Water Spirit to walk closer to him.

Yoshino made a nervious look as she slightly chewed on part of her hair.

"Is she gonna be OK? No offense, but she looks like she's gonna pass out any second now.” Marina asked.

"Yoshino's a little shy and timid, but she's made a lot of progress since we've met her. When we first met her, she was too afraid to talk with people." Maria answered.

"Alright, if you say so." Maria replied.

Yoshino breathed and gets closer to Shido, soon holding out a bottle of sun block.

"Shido... will you please put some sun block on me?” Yoshino said, giving a cute looking face.

Everyone blushed at the sight, while Miku outright squealed from her cuteness.

However, before Shido did anything to agree or disagree to her request... everyone heard the sound of loud creaking.

"Did you all hear that?” Mayuri asked.

"Yeah, something's making that sound.” Mana replied.

The creaking continued, and everyone looked confused at where the sound was coming from.

Soon the creaking got worse as everyone looked up... and saw a support beam about to fall.

"What the, that wasn't there a second ago!?” Kotori panicked.

"...Uh oh!” Marina paled.

"Uh oh?” Origami sweated.

"Marina, what happened.” Tohka gulped.

"Remember when I coughed? I think I accidentally shot out some of my poison without realizing it, and... well, I think we can guess where it hit?” Marina answered nervously.

Everyone paled at that, and Mayuri assumed her Astral Dress as she tried to use her powers to hold the structure up.

"I've got it! I'll hold it up, just keep watch on-” Mayuri shouted.

Suddenly part of the building's ceiling broke off, and everyone panicked as it headed towards them.
"It's coming too fast!" Shiizaki called out.

"They won't get away fast enough with their current Reiryoku levels!" Minowa added.

"Watch out!" Kannazuki shouted.

At that moment, Shido moved right into the center of the blast area, and put the bottom of his palms together, holding out his hands and pulling back his arms.

The sight of a cyan sphere of Reiryoku formed between them, becoming like a miniature star that began discharging and sparking out as his hands struggled to contain the powerful sphere he was holding.

"[ROARING FLASH BLAST WAAAAAAAVE!]

Shido extended his arms out, and thrust the strong wave beam of Reiryoku towards the falling debris.

The sight of the attack when compared to attacks like the slash waves of Tohka's Sandalphon and the Artelif of Origami's Metatron, this condensed maelstrom of power wasn't inferior in the slightest. It completely pierced through the collapsing debris and the ceiling, lightning up the area for a few moments.

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Nia who was on the ceiling panted heavily, glad that she saw it coming before it hit her.

[Oh... my god! Did we nearly just die!?

Nia took a moment to find her voice.

"...Yes, I think we just did." Nia breathed, slumping onto her knees.

Meanwhile from afar, Chinami's eyes twitched at the sight.

"...Yeah, I'm totally not gonna bother with this today. I'm just gonna keep finding the remaining DEM loyalists." Chinami chuckled in fear before she ran off screaming.

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"Holy shit!" Miku exclaimed.

"...I-I think my mind just broke." Kotori's stuttered, shaking in amazement and fear.

"It was like a small-scale version of my Harmonic Convergence attack!" Rinne exclaimed.

Kurumi soon noticed something by Yoshino, making her eyes widen in worry.

"Uh... Yoshino?" Kurumi stated while pointing at her stomach, hoping the Water Spirit would catch what she just noticed.

Yoshino blinked her eyes several times before looking down, showing the stomach part of her one piece had been torn, leaving her cute belly button to be exposed to the world. Shido sweat dropped a bit.

"Oops, guess some of the debris cut it our my Reiryoku burnt it away, you should change that real quick." Shido apologized.

"No need." Yoshino answered.
Everyone was confused, and soon they saw Yoshino grab her swimsuit, and then start to rip it.

"W-what the!! Yoshino, what are you doing? Please don't say this is going commando!" Rinne screamed.

"I can't look!" Natsumi shouted.

At that moment, Yoshino stripped off her swimsuit completely, but rather than only Yoshino's white skin being exposed to the air... she had a two-piece tube top bikini she had been wearing underneath reveal itself.

Everyone stared in shock while Shido went red and had a light nosebleed.

"You had two on?" Rio asked amazed.

"Yes... it was my back up plan in case the sun block failed." Yoshino admitted, blushing a bit.

Shido mumbled some gibberish.

"Yoshino, I think you did it." Reine said through the speakers.

Yoshino soon walked over, and gave Shido a quick peck before he fell over, giggling like an idiot from the sight and kiss.

"...Yoshino, I think you're more dangerous than you even realize. You're like a Mermaid, no... a Yuki-Onna!" Origami stated.

"Huh?" Yoshino blinked in confusion.

Reine's voice cleared itself from the loud speaker, getting everyone's attention.

"Everyone, it might not be safe to stay in this room anymore. Time for us to switch to the backup room for the remaining seven of you. So, the rest of you go get changed into the outfits we set out for you, and Shido? You go and meet them all there. It's room 7-BXX, you should see it if you keep going right." Reine replied.

"Understood." Everyone said.

After calming themselves down a bit, Raziel brought up the information from where Nia had to suddenly stop and Nia continued reading, soon learning exactly what the Dáinsleif was and its purpose. Making her eyes widen.

"A weapon made to kill a single boy just because he could go berserk? Even more, its production was requested to be cancelled after evidence proved the contrary of him going out of control... those corrupt bastards!" Nia growled.

[They claim to fight for Humanity and yet they'd sacrifice its greatest hope without question? Those hypocrites! I don't like what they're planning either... Nia, how about we mess things up for them?]

Nia already had her pen in hand.

"Oh no need to ask, karma is going to own them because I'll make it so." Nia said with a dark glare.

She wrote in Raziel, and soon enough... the stage was set.
Up in outer space, Mukuro was curled up and floating without doing anything like she usually did, only to suddenly feel something hit her as she turned to see the black and blue satellite that was none other than the Dáinsleif itself.

"...How annoying." Mukuro stated before raising her hand.

Mukuro manifested Michael, and the Dáinsleif was suddenly struck by a dimensional fluctuation that took the shape of spiraling white energy with a keyhole in the middle.

The Dáinsleif's systems suddenly short circuited, and its whole programming was altered, with Michael's power causing the damage to be made in a way that the systems connected to the anti-Shido satellite were locked out of noticing the changes.

Back on Earth, Nia smirked at her handy work.

"Sorry Round Table, but I'm the Imagination Spirit... and you're going to follow how I've imagined my story, not yours." Nia said with her dark look still on her face, chuckling at the thought of the Round Table getting what they deserved.

Back inside the Ratatoskr sub-base, Shido walked into a room with a red carpet that had cream colored walls. There were various lights deployed, tables strewn across the ground, and luxurious ornaments were scattered everywhere. There were also some extras dressed in tuxedos and night dresses scattered about, some playing instruments, serving tables, and flourishing the place with high-social topics. It was basically a giant refined party hall.

"Huh, impressive. Guess I better suit up." Shido chuckled.

Shido channeled Natsumi's powers, changing into Shiori briefly, soon he laughed as his joke to himself before actually getting himself into a tuxedo. After he had done that, a familiar voice called out.

"Shido!" Tohka exclaimed cheerfully.

Shido turned and soon saw the remaining seven Spirits all wearing beautiful formal wear.

Tohka's was a dark purple dress having a ribbon wrapped in the center, with frilly purple sleeves that didn't cover her shoulders and a few white sequins at the bottom, topped with a necklace with white pearls and pink butterfly shaped gems, all with gold lining.

Origami's was a beautiful ivory color with a white rose on her dress' right strap and an ivory one with a very light pink ribbon the left side of her hair which she put into an up-do for the occasion. A necklace of white diamonds around her neck.

Miku had an indigo dress lined with yellow frills, with a white veil wrapped around her below her shoulders. Her usual hair ornament had a huge white lily and yellow ribbon placed in front of it. She had a necklace of pink rose charms with tear shaped gems underneath them.

Kotori had a sleeveless and strapless red dress with black around the top end, multiple layers of frills acting like a skirt near the bottom. Around her neck was a necklace full of red rubies and silver chains linking them. Her usual black ribbon was still wrapped around her hand, but in the shape of a bow.

Rinne's dress was a simply hot pink dress with a pink tank top underneath and pink rose on near her left sleeve, for jewelry she had a pearl necklace and a pair of small oval shaped golden clip on
earrings.

Rio's dress was like her mother's, but three layers of triangle flaps and a double layered bottom, a hot pink rose on the right side of her hair and a pink one on her dress' middle right section, a small silver charm around her left wrist.

And finally, Maria had a black dress similar to Rinne's, but without the V-neck opening hers had and a second lighter black layer of sleeves underneath it and a ribbon like Tohka's wrapped around her. It was topped off with a black hairband with crystal sequins lining the middle of it.

Shido whistled at the sights.

"If you had introduced those all at once with a special light show, you might have gotten pretty close to wooing me. An impressive display regardless." Shido replied honestly, kneeling as she took Tohka's hand like a princess.

"U-uh... thank you Shido." Tohka said with a blush.

"Tohka, you're not supposed to let him woo you." Origami reminded her, a sweat drop going down her face.

Tohka blushed in embarrassment, soon backing away slowly.

Origami sighed and grabbed some Coca Cola soda, Kotori walking ahead first as she held out a hand towards Shido.

"Care to offer a beautiful lady a dance?" Kotori asked smoothly.

"Bold declaration Kotori, let's see how you skate across the dance floor." Shido replied, taking her hand.

Kotori snapped with her free hand, and spun around with Shido as the musicians matched her movements with an appropriate song, the music becoming graceful to fit the moment. Shido's eyes widened in surprise as Kotori managed to pull him into a movie-like dance scene.

Kotori was blushing heavily as she danced with Shido, feeling like she was living a fantasy.

"W-well, I'd say I'm impressed Kotori. You've quite a natural at setting the mood." Shido chuckled with a blush.

"A girl's got some secrets to keep after all." Kotori giggled.

Kotori soon closed in and kissed him as the music ended, and she walked back over, glowing a bit as she smiled brightly.

"Way to go girl, you seem pretty happy." Miku giggled.

"Why wouldn't I be?" Kotori giggled.

Origami's face scrunched as she felt the after taste of her soda.

"This soda's a kinda sour... eh, I'll still drink it." Origami shrugged as she took another sip.

Nia suddenly noticed what Origami was drinking, and after looking a bit closer...
"Wait a second, Raziel?" Nia asked.

[Yeah?]

"What the white-haired girl's drinking... that's soda isn't it?" Nia asked worriedly.

[It is, caffeinated soda no less. Though I don't see why you're asking me about... wait, is that soda a caffeinated soda!? Uh oh.]

Nia's face went flat as she stared back at the sight of Origami drinking the soda before looking at Raziel.

"...Raziel, what exactly do you mean by uh oh?" Nia said with sweat trickling down her face.

Maria, Rio and Rinne all give tired looks after having just finished up there turns, and now Miku was up next in their attempts to woo Shido.

"You three doing OK?" Kotori asked.

"Kotori, I think we just discovered why it wasn't the most comfortable thing for Marina to do this. Tell her I owe her whatever her favorite dessert it later on." Rinne said tiredly.

"...Mayuri, get them some punch and stat!" Kotori called out.

Mayuri rushed in with some.

"Here you go." Mayuri said as she handed them each a cup.

"Thank you." Marina thanked.

They all drink it as Miku went up to Shido, soon smiling brightly and blushing as she got near Shido.

"Oh Shido, this is so wonderful. Though it would be more fun if I could do this while you were Shiori. Ooh, no, if you were Shiori in a daring night dress like mine! The thought consumes me so much!" Miku said blushing brighter.

"Well, I think I could do it, but should I really transform? If Shiori wears that, I think Miku will get a nosebleed fountain, right?" Shido asked worriedly.

Miku giggled as she twisted her body in a flirty manner.

"Of course, but even If I am close to death from blood loss, I will not regret anything if that was my last moment! Especially if your dress has a lot of back exposure!" Miku squeed as the thought entered her mind.

Shido imagined the thought, and soon... decided that was a big no-go.

While Miku's eyes were still glowing after having made her passionate speech while her eyes were glowing, Shido pat her head to calm her down.

"Miku, regardless of your reason, even if you have no regrets... I will regret having brought the demise of such a wonderful woman. If Miku really died from something like that, or any of the others did, I might have no choice to follow you while crying." Shido said as he expressed himself with hand movements.
Miku's hands moved to her mouth as she gasped, tearing up slightly.

"Darling... you thought so far for me!" Miku sniffled as one of her tears shined in the light.

'If not a little cheesy...' Mayuri thought.

Miku soon turned to the musicians and held an upside-down pointer finger to them while giving a wink.

"Back me up everyone, I am counting on you all!" Miku said.

The musicians all go gaga at the motions, and responding to Miku's order, the musicians began to play their instruments as females in glamorous outfits who had been standing at the corner of the hall appeared as a stage formed from the wall. A glowing silver stand mike was quickly slid onto the middle of the stage.

After Miku confirmed she had everything she needed, she went up the stage before standing in front of the mike. Instantly, the lights in the hall dim down and a spot light was set on Miku as the jazz music picked up.

"What's she doing?" Tohka asked confused.

"I have... no idea... at all..." Origami said somewhat tiredly.

"Hey, you alright?" Kotori asked.

"Yeah, I... think this jazz music... is just making me sleepy." Origami replied.

Miku moved her body according to the music's rhythm and with the stand mike in her hands-she started singing an instrumental with her sweet voice.

- (*Seiken Tsukai No World Break - Dragon Heart*)-

The tone of music that Miku sang was quite intriguing, no one had heard Miku sing without lyrics before, so this song was totally different from the songs everyone had heard Miku sing as an idol, but the feelings put into it were no different.

Miku soon took the mike off the stand and strode about the stage with a captivating walk style, walking over to a female danger before stroking her. She looked towards Shido as a spot light hit.

"What the!!" Shido said, blushing a bit.

Miku smiled charmingly, she got off the stage in tune with the band and walked towards Shido. The spot light pouring onto Miku and the back dancers moved accordingly with her, once Miku reached Shido, she took his hands and leaded him around.

Shido looked a little surprised by the act as Miku spun him around, and soon Mayuri made a hand signal.

"Deploy the couch!" Nakatsugawa declared.

Suddenly from out of nowhere, a grand sofa comes out of the wall prepared for them. After Miku made Shido sat there, she gently sat on his thighs and while performing a princess carry, she continued singing the song.

"...Anyone feeling this song's starting to get a little saucy?" Rinne asked.
"Maybe a little." Maria replied nervously.

"Huh?" Rio asked confused.

Miku soon got close to Shido, soon tracing her hands in a shape just like a heart, and pointing at Shido like a finger gun, making a gesture as if he shot him in his own. All while slowly saying...

"Darling. I... love... YOU!" Miku exclaimed, winking right after.

Shido suddenly stood up, falling over and making a sound as if he had actually been shot.

"Oh my Miku, you didn't just woo me... you shot me right through the heart." Shido said in amazement.

- (*insert song end*) -

Miku smiled before touching Shido's lips with her finger and then leaving a deep kiss, everyone suddenly blinked as she kept going for a bit. Kotori and Tohka both went red and looked away, Origami was red too for... different reasons.

Rinne blinked before clearing her throat loudly and getting everyone's attention.

"OK, moving on. It's Origami and then Tohka for the grand finale, isn't it?" Rinne asked, looking towards the said Light Spirit.

"Y-yesh... ah'm the next one ahp." Origami slurred.

Everyone suddenly looked at her strangely as Origami wobbled a bit towards Shido. Rinne sweated a bit as she looked at the drink she had.

"Uh... hey sis, can we get an analysis on Origami's drink?" Rinne asked worriedly.

Reine soon had the Ratatoskr mainframe scan the saliva from Origami's cup.

"I'm pretty sure that was soda." Reine said to herself.

"Analysis completed, and... it is soda. I don't get it?" Mikimoto stated confused.

Everyone gave an odd looking face at that.

Kannazuki soon thought for a bit, and soon he suddenly paled as he remembered something the one time during a particularly hot day in June when he took Kurumi and Yoshino out to a diner. Kurumi had a cola where Yoshino had a simply Sprite, and something odd happened with the former.

"You look panicked, what's the problem." Kawagoe asked as he saw Kannazuki's face.

"I thought it might have just been dehydration, but remember when I took Yoshino and Kurumi for drinks during that one day back in Summer? Well... Kurumi's drink was a caffeinated Coca Cola. I may be guessing on a limb, but what if to a Spirit, caffeine mixed with fizz is..." Kannazuki trailed off.

Everyone paled at that.

"She's drunk... ON A SODA!?!" Reine exclaimed in shock.
"She's drunk... ON A SODA!?"

Everyone in the room suddenly went white as they saw Origami hiccup after finally reaching Shido. Shido looked just as confused as they did, and tried to hold her steady. Origami giggled a bit before leaning against Shido slightly.

Shido sweated a bit, and soon began walking to the couch with her.

"Maybe you need to sit down for a minute?" Shido suggested.

"Whah do ah need to sit? I... cwant do hwelp it... if I fwailed. Anyway, nwext..." Origami slurred, hiccupping a bit.

Shido looked at Origami worriedly.

Origami blinked a bit, and luckily was still a bit mentally sober to realize something.

"...I think that ah... meeght be... dwunk..." Origami replied in a slurred manner.

"You are drunk!" Rinne shouted.

At that moment, Origami grabbed Shido's face and got close to him.

Shido looked a bit nervous, giving a fearful look, but the moment Origami saw it... she suddenly started crying to everyone's surprise! Her sobbing got worse and worse, making everyone look at her, wondering what being drunk had made her cry over.

"Wha ah you lwooking at me... twhat way Shido? Ah just wanted to hwave a good time with ywou... why ah you lwooking at me like ywou hate me nwow?" Origami sobbed, tears flowing down her cheeks.

"I-I don't hate you Origami, it's just that you're drunk and-" Shido replied.

"Ah'm not dwunk, ha dware you!" Origami screamed while still crying.

"And now she forgot she's drunk..." Tohka said worriedly.

"Oh boy..." Mayuri added.

Origami soon cries again, this time softer. She gives a cute look towards Shido, one that made her eyes sparkle somehow.

Shido saw her make a begging look towards him.

"Uh... what's up Origami, are you-" Shido wondered.

"In the fwirst place... It's also your fwault Shido for being ywoursefl... why are ywou so cwool? This just... this is..." Origami sniffled.

Shido felt himself blush a bit.

"Origami?" Shido asked.

"...whenever I twink of Shido, it just feels fwuffy inside of me... but it feels a little painful at the same time... all because..."
Origami soon snuggled up against Shido.

"Shwido... I love... I really love you. I love ywou so much... that I am hwelpless against it!" Origami cried loudly.

Shido blushed a bit before Origami hiccuped and fell forwards, kissing him by complete accident as she fell unconscious on the floor. Rinne walks over to pick her up, soon leaning a cup of water to her mouth.

"Poor girl, who knew soda would do this to her?" Rinne wondered.

"Let's check for caffeine in the future." Mayuri replied.

Nia soon grabbed her pen as she wrote in Raziel.

[Oh boy, what are you thinking of now Nia? I know that face of yours all too well... and it means you've got a crazy idea.]

"Oh, I'm just making sure they have a proving ground. After all... it isn't really proving anything to me if they just breeze through this. So, as a result..." Nia answered.

Soon the pages of Raziel show her words, {Right before Tohka kisses him, change Shido's meltdown being averted by everyone having kissed him into needing to-}

Unfortunately, whatever words were left never got the chance to be red before they vanished.

"My fellow Spirits, show me... show me what you can do with the limited strength you have right now and the ultimate problem against you." Nia smirked darkly.

Raziel gave off unseen worry at what Nia just chose to do.

Tohka grabbed a whole plate of food and ate it in an instant, soon wiping her face with a napkin before giving a determined look.

"OK! Time to bring this to an end, it's my turn now!" Tohka cheered.

"Good luck Tohka, it's all up to you now." Rinne smiled, waving a fan over Origami.

"My head... never touching... cola again..." Origami groaned.

Rinne pats her head.

"Tohka, we've wooed him in a lot of ways, you think you've got something original that will do the trick?" Kotori asked.

"Of course, it's quite simple... Shido and I fell in love when we first met, that's all I need to do!" Tohka smiled.

Everyone blinked at that.

Rinne chuckled a bit, a sweat drop trickling down her face.

"Well... she's not exactly wrong on that." Rinne admitted.
"Tohka, please have another plan just to be safe." Kotori requested.

"OK, OK. I'll make a backup plan." Tohka chuckled nervously.

Tohka grabbed a notebook, and began thinking while making brief pause expressions as she thought, making Rio giggle a bit.

Soon she smiled as she thought up her spare plans.

"Done!" Tohka smiled cheerfully.

"Okay, are you ready Tohka?" Reine asked.

"I'm ready! Leave it to me!" Tohka cheered.

Tohka energetically jogged over to the sofa Shido was sitting on.

...Unfortunately, since she was wearing a dress and shoes that she wasn't used to, her legs got tangled up half-way and caused her fall flat on her face. Everyone sweat dropped at the sight.

"Ow..." Tohka groaned.

"Tohka! Are you okay!?!" Origami exclaimed, soon holding her head as her hangover hit her

"Y-yeah... no problem!" Tohka said, shakily getting back on her feet

Tohka soon stood up and got back on her feet, rubbing her face and fixing herself up before she began walking to Shido.

However, Tohka got a waft of a food's aroma in her nose and suddenly looked at the mountain sized feast in the room.

"Ah! Quick, move the food towards Shido, move it!" Kotori exclaimed.

Everyone quickly ran over and tried to get all the food they could, getting Tohka confused as her eyes spun like spirals. She bopped herself in the head before blinking and regaining her senses, all the food moved over near Shido.

Reine face palmed from her location, looking at some of the Fraxinus crew members. Everyone began whistling.

"Seriously, what made any of you think that was a good idea?" Reine sighed.

Tohka soon sat by Shido, and soon used her fork to make a huge ball of spaghetti.

"Open wide Shido." Tohka smiled.

"W-wait... all of that? Tohka, I don't think I can-" Shido answered.

Tohka put the spaghetti in Shido's mouth, who somehow managed to swallow all of it at once without any issues.

Everyone sweat dropped at that.

"I hope that plan isn't win his heart through his stomach." Maria said worried.

"Me too." Mayuri nodded.
"That was really good Tohka." Shido replied, hoping she wouldn't shovel another big bite in.

"Here's another bite Shido, you haven't had much other than a slice of Mana's cake today haven't you?" Tohka asked, smiling as she held a piece of steak to him.

Shido suddenly had his eye twitch.

'I should have eaten more!' Shido said worriedly.

Soon enough, Shido's stomach grumbled loudly, making Tohka giggle a bit as Shido blushed in surprise.

Shido sighed and just let Tohka feed him the food she gathered.

Soon enough, Tohka's stomach growled as well.

"...Oh dear, I should eat too. Wait, that give me an idea!" Tohka asked, soon holding out a piece of bread.

Everyone widened their eyes, smirking a bit as they realized where this was going.

Shido blushed, and Tohka motioned the bread near him, and soon he sighed.

"Alright, looks like you've got me Tohka, you've wooed me in the one way I couldn't guard it from." Shido admitted.

"Yay!" Tohka cheered.

"YES!" Everyone exclaimed.

Tohka put the end of bread in Shido's mouth, and soon quickly devoured it before giving him a kiss. Making Shido blush more before he wobbled a bit... however, something odd happened after.

Or rather, what was odd as nothing happened. Reine looked at the spirit paths and saw no changed.

"...Something's wrong, the paths are changing back to normal. Why? Everyone kissed him, so why wouldn't they-"

Suddenly alarms went off, and everyone looked at them in alarm.

At worse, at that moment... Shido suddenly screamed in pain, feeling his head flare in agony before his cyan Reiryoku manifested as a shaky aura, and then the Reiryoku colors of the Spirits he's sealed flashed alongside them.

S-Shido! Are you okay! What's going on!" Tohka asked worriedly.

"The pain... it's too much!" Shido exclaimed painfully.

Shido soon gave a distorted scream of pain, and his body started glowing-and caused a strong impact wave that knocked everyone in the room to the walls. Tohka turned her head a bit, Shido's eyes soon lost their light, almost like full animal-like instincts had taken him over.

His outfit changed back to normal, and soon enough... Shido broke through the roof of the building and gave a scream like roar into the sky as he jumped down onto the streets. He continued roaring, and soon enough the act reached the Round Table's attention.
Nia smirked as she knew what was coming next.

"You'll see it any second now, karma paying your treachery in the worst way possible." Nia stated as she stood up and looked at the sky.

Nia had just written something new in Raziel's pages, and that writing was...

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Elliot and Karen watched in horror from their location in the base, worried what had just happened.

"No choice, time to pull the trigger." The ugly cat doll replied.

"Wait stop! This just started, you can't." Elliot ordered desperately.

"Sorry Elliot, but you're too soft. Now someone willing to risk sacrifices will do what this world needs." The ugly cat doll replied.

Soon a sound went off as the system for the Dáinsleif started up.

[Dáinsleif system activated, preparing to fire at target Shido Takamiy-mi-mi-m-m-m-m-m-ERROR! ERROR! ERROR!]

Everyone who heard that was confused.

"What's going on here!?" The drooling dog asked confused.

"Why is it malfunctioning?" The crying mouse said worriedly.

[...Correcting data, preparing to fire at the target of Tenguu City, beginning annihilation now. Removing restrictions and cancelling code.]

"What!? No, abort it, emergency override code Balmung!" The ugly cat doll exclaimed.

Unfortunately, the screens beep and show a giant red 'X' symbol... they couldn't stop it, the Dáinsleif was now a weapon that would slowly destroy Tenguu City if Shido's meltdown didn't take it out first.

The only way to stop it now? Nia's recent writing in Raziel had the only answer, and that answer was...

{...Destroy the Dáinsleif and Shido's meltdown will be undone.}

Serves those Round Table jerks right, the very weapon they made against Elliot's wishes to eliminate Shido? Nia's bent all the rules into her favor just by having it 'accidentally' run into Mukuro who messed it up and made it from an anti-Shido weapon to an anti-Tenguu City weapon. Worse, while she can stop it by just writing for it to explode, Nia's truly pushing the Spirits to prove they're not just helping people out of convenience. Don't misunderstand this, I'm not trying to make Nia evil, I'm hinting towards something else... something with a bit more despair? *giggles* :3

And there you have it, Marina confirmed the harem will be limited to the Sephira Spirits. This is because, with the exception of Rio due to her Shido's daughter, I'd rather have every extracanonical Spirit be in the harem rather than some. Since this story's version of Rinne is
Shido and Mana's mom, and Mayuri's planning to be adopted by Reine, the Arusu siblings aren't joining the harem. For an in-story reason, Maria's experiment mentioned in the previous chapter left her seeing him more as part of the Ratatoskr family, while Marina can't see him that way because were once enemies.

Oh, and the scene with Origami getting drunk on caffeinated soda? That's semi-canon (the soda part, not the caffeine), in the Date A Party manga (and luckily the chapter with this is translated so you can see it), Kurumi gets drunk from drinking a bunch of cola. So at least in Date A Party's universe, spirits can't handle fizz, I mainly did this because in canon, Origami puts in some kind of powder in her drink, since that's from Old Timeline Origami though... yeah, had to think of a different way. Thank you for existing Date A Party, you saved me there.

Next chapter, it's time to save Shido and face off against the threat of the Dáinsleif satellite, and if the scene above with Mana doesn't help give you a clue... she's about to experience something big. So, see you all next time everyone, and until then... stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 96% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 96% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 90% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Creates a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)
Here we are everyone, the final chapter of Shido Countdown, and I'll just say this to hint you without directly revealing anything... but the moment we reach the end of this chapter you'll be in for a surprise. *giggles* And that's just one surprise of many this chapter's gonna be revealing hidden within it, I think you already know Mana will have one considering the opening scene from the previous chapter.

For now, the Round Table's got three sides who want them dead because the Dáinsleif's malfunction has put everyone in danger. Elliot's gonna at best simply fire them all for disobeying his order to now have the Dáinsleif finished. Mana, Rinne and Rio are gonna wanna tear them apart for being willing to murder their brother/son without hesitation... and all the Spirits? No need to detail that, we all know what harems do in this situation.

The big question now though? How will everyone save Shido, the spirit paths between them are still all blocked up, none of them will be able to use them for more than 5 minutes, and a few of the Spirits had to waste some of their powers trying to fix Shido up beforehand, the only ones who don't have any lack of Spirit power are Mana and Mayuri, and that's not the best combo to fight Shido.

Oh, and the icing on the cake? Nia isn't gonna help them at all because of her whole "prove yourselves" scenario she's pulled off for this entire thing, mainly because she can just have Raziel blow up the Dáinsleif if things were to get beyond even her ability to stop. The situation's crazy, so let's actually see it happen instead of me simply continuing to talk about here, so now...

Let's see everyone save Shido!

---

Chapter 54, S3: Shido Countdown, Part 4

Elliot and Karen watched in horror from their location in the base, worried what had just happened.

"No choice, time to pull the trigger." The ugly cat doll replied.

"Wait stop! This just started, you can't!" Elliot ordered desperately.

"Sorry Elliot, but you're too soft. Now someone willing to risk sacrifices will do what this world needs." The ugly cat doll replied.

Soon a sound went off as the system for the Dáinsleif started up.

[Dáinsleif system activated, preparing to fire at target Shido Takamiy-mi-mi-m-m-m-m-m-ERROR! ERROR! ERROR!]

Everyone who heard that was confused.

"What's going on here!?" The drooling dog asked confused.

"Why is it malfunctioning?" The crying mouse said worriedly.
"What!? No, abort it, emergency override code Balmung!" The ugly cat doll exclaimed.

Unfortunately, the screens beep and show a giant red 'X' symbol... they couldn't stop it, the ugly cat doll's voice shook in fear as the Dáinsleif began charging and preparing to fire on the city.

Elliot's face was shadowed before turning to the Round Table's dolls with pure rage on his face.

"So, this is how far you'll go? How little you'll damn about the consequences!? Ratatoskr was made to help the Spirits and Humanity... but all I've seen you do is try to throw even a single life away without giving someone the chance to save it! Now look where you've taken us Clayton!" Elliot roared.

The ugly cat doll's voice shook a bit before growling a bit.

"Me!? Don't act like you're a saint who knows everything you old fart, you had a hand in creating the DEM long ago, so don't-" Clayton roared.

"I'm damn well aware of that, the difference is I admitted to that long ago! I even did so when the Spirits' existence was leaked to the world! You think you can lecture me about that when you did the same here, but refused to reveal you still finished the Dáinsleif!? I made a mistake, you broke the law by ignoring your superior!" Elliot countered.

Clayton's voice went silent, having nothing to state against that, only growling angrily and slamming his fist on the table his real body was sitting at.

"You took too big a risk Clayton, only fair you-" The drooling dog replied.

"You're not off the hook either Almsted! You really think I wouldn't notice? In your mind do you think I'm so foolish? Well for your information and misfortune, I'm not. Clayton alone wouldn't have had the authority or means to make the Dáinsleif behind my back on his own." Elliot stated.

Almsted's voice gasped.

Soon Elliot looked at the crying mouse doll, a squeak of fear coming from it.

"And you're not an exception Teshirogi. Only the three of you made this happen, and right now... willingly or being forced to cooperate means nothing to me. I can't believe you brats pulled off this shit! I did not tell you to follow my lead, but at least you should comply with the agreement. If you want to violate the agreement, then I also have my intentions... Karen?" Elliot said in a commanding tone?

"I've already made the call. I hope you feel proud of yourselves Round Table, for the violations you've made, you'd be lucky for a sentence that's lower than double digits. Pack your things... you won't be keeping your jobs anyways, so all of you are fired!" Karen declared.

"You can't be serious! A punishment, just for this? I only did all of this for Ratatoskr sake!" Clayton roared in anger.

"I don't care why you did, just because of why you did an action doesn't mean it can be excused. Even those who commit crimes for good reasons still had to take responsibility, lighter sentence or simple service, but they did it because it was the only way for good... the Dáinsleif was not such a case." Elliot said coldly.
The dolls soon all short circuited as Elliot cut their connections, also locking the areas the three were in as the police all headed over to arrest the trio.

Elliot sighed, looking at the screen with the Dáinsleif.

"Elliot... what are we going to do? That weapon's gonna destroy the city at this rate." Karen asked.

"I don't know... for once I don't know. We can only do our best to protect the citizens. Karen, deploy the AST now, tell all of them focus on the safety of the citizens and initiate the warning alarm." Elliot replied.

"...Understood." Karen nodded, her worry slipping out slightly.

Suddenly everyone in the city heard the alarms go off, indicating Ratatoskr had alerted trouble, the DEM was present for an attack, or an unsealed Spirit was on a rampage. Luckily, the constant years of Spacequake kept a panic from happening, and the AST soon began flying overhead to assist them.

"Keep calm everyone, head for the shelters ASAP! We'll keep you safe!" Artemisia stated, flying over overhead of some people as she and the other AST members kept watch around them.

"We have an unidentified threat, go as fast as you can without causing chaos or disorder!" Ryouko ordered.

The Dáinsleif began its rain of fire from midair, hitting one of the nearby buildings. Debris flung out towards the evacuees and caused some of them to cry out in fear and horror. Artemisia's eyes widened as she deployed her territory, moving it piece by piece to take the pelt of broken buildings.

Another beam shot fired towards them, and Artemisia yelled loudly before flying at it and cutting it apart with little effort. A lot of children watching smiled at the sight of her, causing Artemisia to turn and smile at them.

"Get going, you'll be OK." Artemisia assured.

The kids nodded as they and their families started going into shelters, a few AST members forming territories around the citizens as they waited for the shelter transports to take in the next wave.

"Anyone know what's happening?" Cecile asked worriedly, using her CR-Unit's wings to cut some debris away.

"No, Karen only said there was no time. Either they don't know what's happening or..." Leonora answered.

"The threat was just too fast there was no time to define it, and her voice sounded like the latter to me." Ashley finished.

Mikie helped someone who had degree catch their legs, soon looking around.

'Mana's not here, nor are Shido and the Spirits... I bet they're involved in what just happened. All of you, please... be safe.' Mikie thought as she helped the injured evacuee to the shelter.

Everyone saw the whole in the ceiling that Shido had just flown out of, all shocked by the sight. Their frozen looks all ended when a sudden shake from another shot of the Dáinsleif struck nearby, making the building rumble.
"Whoa!" Rinne shouted as she fell over.

"What just happened? Not to mention that blast, was that big brother?" Rio asked.

The speaker Reine and the others used sounded static before readjusting itself.

"No, it's worse... much worse." Reine answered.

"What do you mean?" Tohka asked.

"Aside from people like me, there's another group of higher ups that only Elliot has higher authority than... they're called Ratatoskr's Round Table. They've done something they weren't supposed to... begged not to do, and now we could all pay the price for it." Kannazuki answered.

Rinne started to go blue in the face.

"STOP DELAYING AND START EXPLAINING!" Rinne screamed in a panic.

"Whoa! OK, OK, we'll explain... but please don't get mad at us, this comes from a time we didn't know Shido was a Half-Spirit and we worried over nothing." Kannazuki said fearfully.

"That weapon is... the Dáinsleif, a satellite weapon named after a cursed sword." Reine explained.

"Dáinsleif? What is it meant to do?" Origami asked.

"...It has a single purpose, one that was meant to only be use as a last resort if nothing else worked. Nothing else could stop Shido, or save him. The weapon's sole purpose, is to essentially be the blade that would kill Shido." Reine admitted.

"What the hell!? Are you serious, you made something to kill my own son? Is this really what Ratatoskr practices-" Rinne screamed angrily.

"We never planned to finish it!" Reine screamed back.

Rinne suddenly showed a surprised face.

"Let me explain, when we had the plans for this weapon... it was when we didn't know Shido was Half-Spirit. Having all that Reiryoku in a human body that hadn't evolved into a Spirit? Elliot knew nothing good could come from that, but Shido had already sealed Tohka's powers by then, we were too late to try another road. Tohka, Origami, remember when Shido's anger after seeing you frozen nearly caused a large-scale Spacequake?" Reine asked.

"Yeah, it sounded bad, but considering how big one-" Origami answered.

"It would have destroyed the entire region of Japan you were in, and that was when he only had sealed two Spirits' Reiryoku." Reine stated, emphasizing the last part.

Everyone showed shock at that, while Rinne sweated remembering what her Spacequake a few months back had nearly caused.

"Shido wouldn't want that, I know him... like Seigo, he'd sacrifice his life to save thousands more!" Rinne said shakily, the realization hitting her heavily.

"Exactly, if that were to happen with more Spirits, even the original Spacequake would be nothing. A fear everyone had of an even larger quake? Shido could have made it a reality, and not because he got angry, but the powers became too much for him, at least... that's what we thought at first. Rinne,
when you appeared, we realized Shido was Half-Spirit, that he could control it, we just needed to keep his emotions in check." Reine explained.

"Originally, the plan was for Shido to seal all the Spirits and then remove the power as a single Sephira Crystal we'd safely store away. That way he wouldn't risk exploding from the combined Reiryoku. However, moment we learned of his Spirit heritage and due to Shido having sealed half of the Spirits, the Dáinsleif had its development cancelled." Kannazuki added almost instantly.

"You mean it shouldn't even be here now? Wait... are you saying this Round Table group finished it against his orders?" Kotori gasped.

Reine sighed at that.

Everyone made a look of horror, showing it was clear that was exactly what happened.

"I'm not sure why Shido's actually like this, it may be an outside force or a side effect of his time trapped in Choronzon, but... they decided to fire it the moment he left through the roof... and the satellite's malfunctioned entirely. It's not trying to kill Shido anymore, the whole city's a target! The AST is barely managing to prevent casualties and getting everyone to shelter." Reine continued instantly, not wanting to waste time.

"Is there a way to stop this, please tell me we can save Shido!" Rinne begged.

"Not to worry, one of our theories is that the malfunction in the Dáinsleif is connected to Shido, maybe if we can stop one of them we can stop the other. Though with your limited time with your powers we'll need to think smart here." Kannazuki explained.

Everyone nodded at that.

For everyone still in a dress, they quickly rushed to change clothes that would be more fitting to face off against Shido.

"Mayuri, you and Mana try to subdue Shido, right now the two of you are the only ones who don't have to worry about a time limit. We need to buy time so we can examine the situation and figure out how to use their 5 minutes of power to help them." Reine ordered.

"Understood!" Mayuri nodded.

Mayuri threw her dress shoes off and grabbed some slippers, and Mana quickly followed her outside.

In the sky, a flash of light came from Shido as he rampaged in his Over-Limit Spirit Ascension state, his fake Uriel and Rinne's actual Uriel shaking heavily in each of his hands as his power flooded out of them, he roared as he attacked the area, causing Reiryoku explosions everywhere.

Right as he was about to resume, he noticed the sight of Mana and Mayuri running into the area, making him give an angry look as he sensed their Spirit power. He rushed at them, catching their attention.

"Let's go Mana! Astral Dress... equip, come to me Kerubiel!" Mayuri shouted, spinning as lightning discharged from her and formed her Astral Dress. Her Angel formed on her back as she flew at the rampaging Half-Spirit.

"Murakumo!" Mana screamed with determination, her CR-Unit's armor instantly forming on her body. The suit's upgraded form glowed as Mana rushed forward.
The two rushed at Shido's sides, causing him to hold up both Uriel blades and clash with them, roaring loudly before he threw the both of them off, making them smash into the closest buildings which collapsed from the impact.

Mayuri quickly got back up, manipulating all the metal with her electricity before she condensed it all into a large metal spear.

"[GRAND... CHARIOT]"

The spear launched forward at Shido, while Mayuri glows and Kerubiel morphs its shape.

"Alright, here we go! Time to show them your new power Kerubiel!" Mayuri declared.

\[Here \text{ we go!}\]

"Drill through the storm, and strike harder than any metal with your lightning... \textbf{[Zeus]}!" Mayuri yelled.

Kerubiel curled up before expanding into a giant drill that Mayuri landed on.

The now giant Angel started to charge lightning at its tip, super heating the metal metallic molecules and electric currents until it formed a plasma. Mayuri screamed as she tapped Kerubiel, making it fire and wrap around the spear as it flew at Shido.

Shido stared at the spear, and levitated his Uriel as he held up a hand, forming Tohka's signature mana barrier to stop and shatter it to pieces. Mayuri looked in shock before he grabbed his Uriel and threw it forward, the blade cutting through Kerubiel's current form and shattering it.

"No!" Mayuri screamed.

Mayuri was launched back, tumbling across the ground in pain as she weakly looked at Shido. Mana finally escaped the debris she was trapped under and saw this happen to her horror. Making a serious face, she looked at her brother and flew up.

"How about you try fighting against me big brother!" Mana shouted as her swords detached from her shoulders.

Mana quickly thrust her blades forward, and Shido barely reclaims his Uriel before countering her with both of his, but to his surprise... Mana was faster at swinging, leaving him no openings to strike back.

With a smirk, Mana's shoulders unleashed their blasters and shot at him point blank, sending him flying while he slid across the ground and regained his footing. Mana rushed ahead and swung while smashing her swords against his mana barrier.

"[Orochi Blade]"

Mana's swords grew in length before expanding to reveal the eight energy daggers within them, cutting through Shido's mana barrier and striking him down before sheathing both in her blasters briefly.

"[Susanoo Bazooka]"

Mana fired the blast at Shido, soon rushing forward and charging a blast as she drew the swords with the blasters attached, slamming an exploding roundhouse slash as she uses her \textbf{Tsukuyomi}
technique.

Shido got up, barely standing before Mana slammed the swords together, combining them as the now singular blade doubled in length.

"[Amaterasu!]

Shido was smashed into the ground by the single sword, and soon enough he roared before swinging both Uriel blades up, shattering the blades and blasters to Mana's horror. She slides back a bit, soon extending her arms out.

"Matthew, I need the White Licorice now!" Mana requested.

"Sending it over now." Matthew answered via the headset.

Mana sees it materialize and backflips to equip it instantly, soon readying all weapons to fire at Shido, Mayuri soon manages to float over and rest on it.

"Mayuri?" Mana said in surprise.

"Matthews upgraded it so my powers could fight the time limit. I need to recover, so let me discharge some of my power so you won't have to worry about a time limit. We can't risk you running out now that you've lost your weapons." Mayuri replied.

"OK, and thanks Matthew." Mana smiled.

"Any time, just make sure that you save your brother." Matthew replied with a grin.

Mana rocketed forward, firing every missile and beam while forming the White Licorice's swords and binding tethers, catching Shido by surprise.

The missiles and other artillery all smash into him, Mana shouting loudly as he slashed and struck against him. Shido was tossed into the air, only for Mana to shoot up and prepare a sneak attack while his guard was down.

Unfortunately, before Mayuri and Mana had any time to react, they were knocked down to the ground again as Shido moved faster than they could make out. Shido soon touched his face with his hand as his aura intensified.

Shido gave a loud and distorted shout as his body began to glow brightly, and each Uriel was bathed in the same glow as they took the form of Rinne’s Uriel, but with cyan accents replacing some of the pink ones like Shido's.

What was more surprising though is that Shido had taken the form of Shiori while still in his Over-Limit Spirit Ascension and her power flared out even more now.

"What the? He became Shiori, but why?" Mana asked confused.

"I think I know... since Spirits are usually female, being in the form of Shiori is letting Shido use more power. She's gotta be stronger now, watch out!" Mayuri warned as her body shook out of pure instinct.

Shiori burst forward at high speed, Mayuri got into a defensive position as Mana readied the White Licorice... but to their surprise, Shiori didn't go after them.

Mayuri felt herself fall backwards as Shiori grabbed onto the White Licorice and ripped it right off of
the Murakumo, surprising the two as Shiori jumped high into the air with it. She grabbed the White Licorice even more tightly, and soon a surge of Reiryoku made it explode.

"No... she destroyed it... so easily." Mana gasped.

"We're not done, if we do nothing that Shido will-" Mayuri exclaimed as she started charging lightning in her hands.

Shiori soon slashed with Uriel blades, sending twin slash waves at the two as Mana quickly shoved Mayuri away, quickly deploying her territory in defense. Mana screamed as she was hit by the attack.

The sound of her territory exploding was heard through the air, and Mana fell back with wide eyes as she saw the one thing she never expected to happen. Her Murakumo CR-Unit, the armor that had been by her side since Shido's journey to save the Spirits?

...It shattered to pieces, completely destroyed beyond repair.

"My... Murakumo, no." Mana gasped in horror.

Mana tumbled across the ground, soon landing on her back, she weakly pushed herself up with her hands as she saw Shiori looking at her. It reminded her of when they were younger, how he could always stand up for himself while she was never able to pick herself off the ground.

Mana soon began to cry, feeling helpless as all her methods to fight except for her inexperienced use of Reiryoku were gone.

"Mana..." Mayuri breathed, looking scared as Shiori turned towards her with both Uriel blades ready.

Reine and the rest of the Fraxinus crew all look in horror as Mana's Murakumo has its readings vanish and list it was destroyed, making them fear the worst.

"No... Mana! Quick, someone try to get through to her, please don't let her be dead!" Reine panicked.

"Commander Murasame, calm down. I can verify from my position that she's still alive. I can't say the same for her CR-Unit, or the White Licorice... Shido became Shiori and now it seems her powers have at least doubled as a result. She's truly using the limit of 8 Spirits' Reiryoku as one right now!" Matthew answered.

Reine bit her lip at that.

Mayuri and Mana alone weren't even close to strong enough to just buy time, forming a plan would take too long.

"Commander, could we assist with the Fraxinus?" Shiizaki asked.

"No, the upgrades from my last status update say the ship can't be used right now. If we did, it would probably be destroyed just for trying to fly." Reine answered while gritting her teeth.

Reine slammed her fist on the console in anger at their current situation.

"Reine, what's wrong?"
Reine turned back to see the other Spirits all arrive in the room, fully dressed in their casual clothing.

"It'd be easier to say what isn't... Mayuri and Mana are getting creamed, and Mana's lost her Murakumo and all her weapons. Mayuri's unable to properly fight because Shido, who became Shiori as a power booster of sorts, could hit Mana if she focuses only on him." Reine answered.

"No way, big brother's that strong now?" Rio gasped.

"I'm afraid so, we'll have to forego planning, everyone... there's no choice but to wing it or we're all dead. Now get out there and help them!" Kannazuki ordered.

"RIGHT!" Everyone exclaimed.

They all rushed outside as fast as they could, about to face one of their hardest battles yet.

Nia sighs a bit at the sight before her, surprised just how easily Shiori managed to overpower Mayuri and Mana.

"I thought it wouldn't be this hard, guess I underestimated this. Even without levels of power possessed by an Inversion, he's just too strong."

[Well, he's pretty much second to the First Spirit in this start... I guess even a Spirit like you can do things recklessly.]

Nia sighs, shrugging a bit at Raziel's comment.

Raziel soon waited a minute before sighing.

[I guess you won't help?]

"Only if it starts nearing a point even I'm threatened, and that hasn't happened... at least not yet." Nia answered.

Mayuri created another electrical field, using it like a shield to try and limit the attacks flying at her and Mana. She began panting heavily as she felt herself weaken.

Shiori rushed forward, readying both Uriel blades to swing down, Mayuri gasped and closed her eyes when...

"[Arcadia Barrier!]

Rio teleported into range, forming a what looked like a shield version of Uriel that emitted a pink mosaic aura, taking Shiori's attack before flinging her back with the same force. Shiori soon looked forward as she sensed the Reiryoku of the other Spirits, all wearing their Limit Astral Dresses.

Mayuri smiled while Mana barely reacted.

"You made it... thank you!" Mayuri sniffled.

"Sorry we kept you, now it's time we do this. We've got less than 5 minutes so let's make this count! Mayuri, we got some idea of how to do this, you ready?" Rinne replied before asking her question.

"Yeah!" Mayuri said with vigor.

At that moment, Maria took the lead as she formed Opheniel and placed her hand on the ground.
"Go Opheniel! Maria declared.

[Yes master]

Vines burst from the ground at Shiori, the overcharged Half-Spirit simply readied the Uriel blades and shot forward to slice them.

"Mayuri, discharge your lightning now!" Rinne ordered.

Mayuri nodded and screamed as she fired it out, the vines suddenly accelerated their speed as the lightning charged them, causing Shiori to be caught off guard and forced to parry the attacks.

Mayuri soon saw Rinne motion to her, Rio and Marina and grinned as she aimed some at them. The three got a bit zapped before they all used the small charge to accelerate towards Shido. Marina took the lead, with Shiori about to strike her, but...

"I gotcha!" Marina smirked.

Marina held out Sarufiel and gassed out a weak cloud of chlorine, making Shiori gasp before she placed a hand on her, with Rinne and Rio doing the same right afterwards. Shiori's eyes widened before tossing them off her. The three slid from the assault, but they did what they needed to, Marina used a venom that wasn't lethal but sapped away most of someone's strength while Rinne and Rio both used some of their abilities to leave a huge shot in Shiori's Reiryoku. She was now at a third of her strength.

"What the? Incredible, did they just use a feint to cut more of her power? I'm impressed." Nia admitted.

[Looks like she's about at 35% strength now. She's still very powerful, but they've likely got a chance to Shiori win against Shiori now.]

"That's it, we've weakened her. Kaguya, Yuzuru! Start us off now!" Rinne exclaimed.

"You've got it!" The Yamai twins said in unison.

The two let wind wrap around their bodies and flew straight into the sky at Shiori, she panted before crashing one of the Uriel blades, using its energy to empower the other as she swung at them. The two smirked before twirling in midair, making Shiori slip by them as both prepared their Raphael bows at her backside.

"If you can make an opening..." Yuzuru began.

"...Then you'd be foolish to waste it!" Kaguya finished.

The two fired their arrows, causing Shiori to be shot at the ground, she got up with an angry look as she turned to the both of them.

Unfortunately, that look soon became one of shock as Kaguya and Yuzuru had morphed their Angels into lance and pendulum forms.

"[El Re'em!]

"[El Na'ash!]

Shiori was flung into a building, the impact immobilizing her briefly, the Yamai twins used the
moment to switch with Yoshino and Natsumi.

"You ready Yoshino?" Natumi asked, looking at her.

"Yeah, I'm ready." Yoshino nodded.

Natumi gave a toothy grin, jumping into the air with Zadkiel while Natumi took out Haniel and spun in place.

"[Siryon!]

Zadkiel shifted into it became armor on Yoshino's body.

"[Kaleidoscope] - Zadkiel!"

Natumi put her hands forward as Haniel became a copy of Zadkiel, but with green eyes instead of red ones. Yoshino lands on the Haniel-Zadkiel as it charges at Shido.

Shiori broke off the wall and prepared to slash Uriel at them, Yoshino expelled an ice cyclone while Natumi's copy of Zadkiel fires off a geyser of water, the two attacks twisted and boosted each other, soon causing Shiori to be slightly frozen as it hit her.

"Miku, now!" Kurumi exclaimed.

"OK!" Miku nodded.

Shiori soon felt the Nibellcole clones bind her arms and legs, and Miku a focused sonic scream at her, turning her eyes fully white as everyone else covered their ears to block it out. Shiori roared in pain as she couldn't block out the sound from her ears.

Kurumi soon grabbed both of Zafkiel's guns, and looked at Shiori apologetically.

"Forgive me in advance Shiori!" Kurumi begged.

Kurumi fired out shadow blasts at Shiori, her barrier formed again, but Kurumi kept hitting the same spot without erring, causing it to eventually shatter before she charged a big shot and released it with a shot. Shiori was hit hard, falling to the ground as the Nibellcole clones vanished.

As Shiori tried to get up, she suddenly noticed a cage of fire around her, gasping as she realized Kotori made it... only to be quickly blinded by Origami shining a bright light.

"[MEGIDDO!]

"[Metatron!]

A blast of fire and beams of light rained down on Shiori, smashing into heavily before she managed to knock it away. Shiori panted heavily before growling, preparing to charge at the Spirits... only for her to suddenly yelp as she stepped on her right leg, feeling pain across it.

That's when she noticed it, a small wound on her right leg that showed signs of her leg swelling, and because it was a blunt injury... Kotori's powers had no way to heal her, making Shiori's eyes shake.

"Yes, she's open! This is your chance Tohka! Get to the Dáinsleif, hurry and destroy it!" Rinne exclaimed.

"Right!" Tohka nodded.
Tohka began flying into the sky... only to narrowly dodge a shot from the Dáinsleif, and she turned to see the resulting explosion make a few buildings collapse, causing her to gasp in horror as a whole group of people were revealed, the shot having breached a shelter's walls!

Nia soon focused on it.

"There it is, this is the moment I expected." Nia stated as if she knew the outcome already.

[Nia...]

Tohka noticed her Limited Astral Dress start to flicker, and looking to where the Dáinsleif was, knew it was about to fire again... she made a determined face and flew back down towards the people.

Nia's face showed shock as she saw Tohka land by everyone, and right as the Dáinsleif aimed another shot at the people, Tohka screamed as she rose Sandalphon up, forming a crystal barrier that blocked the attack.

"...What?" Nia breathed in shock.

"The Dáinsleif can wait, everyone focus on saving everyone in danger!" Rinne ordered.

"Right!" Everyone shouted in agreement.

Nia looked left and right as she saw each of the Spirits give up their chance to reach the Dáinsleif, all in favor... of protecting the people in anger! Her eyes widened, shaking heavily as if she was having a panic attack.

"...this isn't possible" Nia whispered.

[Master, what's wrong? Why are-]

"It isn't... it isn't... it isn't!" Nia whispered over and over, sweating heavily as she her breath became shaky.

The Spirits continued their efforts to protect everyone until they all managed to move out of danger, all of them looking relieved no one got hurt or killed.

However, at that moment... all of them suddenly collapsed as their Astral Dresses and Angels broke away, leaving only Mayuri's left.

"Oh no, we ran out of time!" Mayuri gasped.

Mayuri tried to fly up at the Dáinsleif in their place, but soon felt herself get tired and she sunk back down, slumping on the ground.

Mana looked at the scene in horror, every one of the Spirits... all their Reiryoku gone or out of strength, and Shiori was walking at them slowly with the Dáinsleif prepared to fire again at any moment.

'There's nothing left they can do! Without Reiryoku, they're as vulnerable as everyone in danger... the AST is too focused on helping everyone, no one has time to spare to take it out or someone could die... Nia and the last Spirit probably don't even notice this and... Mayuri's too weak now!' Mana thought, fear overwhelming her mind.

'And I've lost every method I had left to fight, Shiori's gonna destroy them beyond her control and
the Dainsleif will eventually purge the whole city!' Mana mentally screamed as she shed tears.

"I hate this, I'm weak! You're always saving me... I don't want that! I wanna be strong, I wanna get even stronger, I wanna rise up where no one can look down on me! I don't want... to be so pathetic!"

Mana's eyes widened as she remembered the words she spoke when she was young. Looking at the situation... she realized it, she was giving up, and yet even though she had nothing but untrained spirit power... she still had it!

She was still able to fight, and she had to! Mana's crying eyes soon went serious, and she suddenly sprinted as Shiori readied her powers, the area around them suddenly began to burn up from Shiori's Reiryoku before Mana suddenly began to sprint towards her!

"Mana!?” Rinne exclaimed in shock.

'What just happened? What am I doing? Why am I running... and why can't I stop! It's like my legs just started moving on their own!' Mana thought as she ran ahead towards Shiori, preparing a blade of Reiryoku as she prepared to attack.

Shiori prepared to attack with Uriel, but Mana simply slashed against Shiori with her blade quick and fast, it didn't do any damage and simply annoyed Shiori who dispelled Uriel and prepared a familiar cyan sphere in her palms.

"That attack!" Mana gasped.

"Oh no! Big sis, look out!” Rio exclaimed in worry.

Mana was blown back by the force, and the thought of having to have Shido save her again while she was crying and weak, she grunted at that, not wanting to see it again. She growled louder... and suddenly began to glow a bit, her hair flashing various random yet familiar colors.

Everyone's eyes widened at the sight of that, easily realizing what it was, it was something that only Shido had been seen using before.

"That's..." Tohka breathed.

"No... not this time, if I don't do something it's all over! Reine, you said it to me once, I thought it was at Arubi Island... but now I see this is what you meant by when you said there would be a time where I had to become the hero!" Mana exclaimed.

Mana screamed loudly, throwing Shiori off as a burst shot off of Mana's body, creating a veil of dust that slightly blinded the berserk Half-Spirit.

When it cleared up, everyone saw Mana with the same hair and eye color as Kotori and flames burning off her wrists... she had done the one thing no one ever thought anyone but Shido would be able to do.

"Mana just used..." Rinne started.

"...The Spirit Ascension!” Tohka finished.

"No more waiting, and no more excuses, the promise I stated back then... I'm fulfilling it here and now! No matter the cost!” Mana exclaimed with determination.
Mana pulled her arms back, charging a fiery version of Shiori's technique.

Shiori roared before firing the [Roaring Flash Blast Wave] at Mana, and as it neared her... Mana soon focused her sight towards the sky as another beam from the Dáinsleif prepares to fire itself at the area.

"There it is! That satellite, you're curse... will break apart here!" Mana screamed.

"[Roaring Flash Blast Wave - Megiddo Boost!]

A fiery version of Shiori's attack blasts out of her hand, and it collides with Shiori's blast, the two attacks keep colliding with one another, shaking the entire area as the beams collide with incredible power and force that ripped apart sections of the ground.

Eventually, Mana digs her feet into the ground, turning as the sound of her foot joints snapped and she pushed her attack upwards.

"GOOOOOOOO!" Mana screamed.

Both beams shook a bit before bending upwards, causing both of them to shoot upwards into the sky, causing Shiori and everyone else to all stare as the beams head up towards space... right where the Dáinsleif was!

The Dáinsleif begins its next fire, but the satellite's beam soon collides with the twin Reiryoku blast, and the intensity was so powerful, it sliced through the Dáinsleif's before it shot forward and through the satellite. After a few seconds, the satellite caught on fire before it glowed brightly, sending rays of light to mark its explosion.

Back at the Ratatoskr base, everyone stared for a moment, and then...

"...everyone, status update. What happened to the Dáinsleif?" Reine asked, wanting to realize what had happened.

"Analyzing now." Shiizaki replied, typing on her keyboard console.

Soon the results came up, and the Dáinsleif's status was registered as...

...Destroyed

"The Dáinsleif has been... they did it." Shiizaki breathed.

"They did it... they did it!" Reine repeated, soon crying a storm of happy tears at everyone's success.

Meanwhile in another room, Elliot and Karen soon sighed in relief and smiled.

"They've done it again, these children are making us old farts look out of shape." Elliot joked, smiling.

"Though perhaps that shows how likely their chances at beating Westcott are?" Karen smiled.

Elliot smirked back, chuckling a bit.

Mana soon stared at what she had accomplished, panting a bit and smiling as she looked at her hand.
"I did it, I... for the first time, on my own, I managed to stand up for myself." Mana breathed, soon slumping on her knees.

The smile on Mana's face, no one had ever seen it as bright as it was now.

"Huh?" Shiori blinked confused, soon reverting back to Shido as his Over-Limit Spirit Ascension was undone.

"What happened? Where am I, how did I-" Shido wondered, only for his whole harem to glomp him in relief.

"SHIDO!" They all exclaimed happily, all giving off happy tears.

Shido blinked confused, but soon he rubbed everyone's heads one by one, trying to relieve them of their worries despite being lost to the situation before him. The Arusu sisters and Mayuri all gave their own smiles, with Rio hugging them soon after.

Meanwhile with Rinne, she walked up the exhausted Mana before her eldest daughter turned to look at her, Rinne smiled at her.

"Mana, I might not be able to sense emotions like your little sister, but could feel your feelings near the end. The feeling of being powerless compared to others and feeling worthlessness when you lost the Murakumo, White Licorice and your weapons. However, let me tell you something." Rinne said with a smile

"Seigo told me the stories behind heroes, including normal firemen, policemen and more. After looking at them all, there was one thing that I saw in common in them. In fact, it was something Seigo and Shido had done once, and finally you." Rinne explained.

Rinne breathed, a gentle breeze blowing through both Rinne and Mana's hair.

"Their bodies began moving on their own, they didn't need to think, almost like instinct. Today, that's what you did." Rinne answered.

Mana suddenly began to tear up slightly, slightly lowering her head to the ground.

[At that moment, it finally happened... the thing I never realized I wanted someone to say, the words I needed to hear! My mom finally said them to me! And with it, all my regrets blew away with the wind that was blowing my hair.]

Rinne looked at her as the wind got stronger and said...

"Be proud Mana, because you've finally found that strength. Because today... there's no way that anyone can doubt you've become a hero!" Rinne exclaimed, the wind blowing at its highest for a few seconds.

"Mom..." Mana sniffled, soon crying heavily as Rinne hugged her close.

The others all stared, happy how things worked out.

[Turns out, just like my father and my brother, a little courage was all I needed. That courage gave me the strength to Spirit Ascend, I wonder if it was a passive ability I got from... well, that little debacle we all dealt with before fighting Shido's berserk state. Regardless, I didn't care, because even without a CR-Unit... I could fight the same as any other Spirit now, full or half.]
At that moment, Nia suddenly dropped down into view, getting everyone's attention.

- (*Attack on Titan - Vogel im Käfig *) -

The look in the Imagination Spirit's eyes was dull, not a single bit of light was reflecting off of it, though no one had managed to notice it yet due to the distance.

"Oh, hey Nia! If you came to help no need to worry now. We already dealt with the problem-" Tohka said as she waved hi.

"I already know... I knew, because I'm the reason this entire mess even began in the first place," Nia said in a cold and lifeless manner.

"Wait, what!?" Rinne gasped, showing slight anger.

Nia's hands shook, tightly gripping Raziel as she stared deeply at all of them, finally making them notice her eyes.

"Guys... something doesn't feel right, she seems pissed. No, I don't think even that's an accurate way to describe this," Origami breathed, suddenly feeling terrified.

"Why... why did you... help those people? You risked saving them over stopping the Dáinsleif... that isn't right. Why didn't you just try and destroy the satellite? Tell me, why did you actually bother to help them! I've seen enough Humans who've never acted that way, why were you different!?" Nia said, her face showing a cold rage towards everyone.

Everyone was silent as Nia slowly walked towards them.

"Why... why do people like you exist now, instead of back then? Back when you should have 27 years ago!?" Nia screamed in anger, her eyes unchanged but her expression now quite emotional.

A brief flash goes through Nia's head, where a slightly younger version of her was seen holding the concepts for Silver Bullet, but not in her art style or the text in her hand writing. In fact, the one writing it was... her disguised form?

"I'm sorry, but... who are you? I can't remember anything."

Nia's eyes shook as tears shed out.

"It's too late now, damned if I know what's right or wrong anymore, it's time I finally get strict with my story! Everything that's gone wrong, everything that was unfairly taken from me... I have no choice now! I must avenge my predecessor Spirit, my mentor..." Nia shouted angrily.

She removed her glasses, and soon stopped down on them, shattering them apart as the only thing that let her assume her disguise was destroyed, fading into silver Reiryoku... and causing Rio's eyes to widen as she felt a memory itching in her head.

"...I will avenge the only former Spirit who didn't revived, because even if she regained her body... her memories were lost forever, effectively destroying who she was! I must finally avenge her, show this world it's punishment, for what it did... for taking Souji Hasegawa away from me!" Nia exclaimed angrily.

"Souji Hasegawa-" Rio repeated, before suddenly gasping as she fully remembered.

[Nia stop, you don't have to do this! I beg of you... don't-]
"No! Not this time Raziel, I'm finishing this! Right here right now, I'm settling this once and for all!" Nia screamed before writing something in Raziel's pages. What she wrote was...

...it was the worst thing she could have written: **[Force Nia Honjou to undergo an Inversion!]**, causing everyone to gasp in horror as she revealed it to them.

Rinne suddenly rushed ahead and grabbed her, locking her arm and pen from reaching Raziel's pages.

"RIO! LOCK HER POWERS, LOCK THEM RIGHT NOW!" Rinne screamed with a horrified look.

"R-Right!" Rio nodded.

Nia flinched her fingers, moving Raziel near her hand, with Rinne's eyes widening as she managed to draw in its pages. A slab of stone rose from the ground at that moment, knocking Rinne away and blocking off Rio, and that single action marked their efforts in vain.

[Nia, what have you done!??]

"Be ready... because the [Sister] isn't there anymore, the [Prophet] is coming!" Nia said darkly.

Nia's eyes closed before opening as two dark gray pools, and in an instant, dark gray Reiryoku formed around her, forming a hand that grabbed her before it exploded out.

All across the city, the citizens, the AST and the people of Ratatoskr all saw it.

"No... why Nia? Why?" Rio breathed.

Soon enough, the silhouette of Nia's Inverse Form manifested into view. Her outfit was mostly unchanged, now having less cloth to reveal her thong and no sleeves, only a bit of cloth covering her chest from complete exposure. Her Astral Dress had all the white turn black while the rest a ghoulish black to silver gradient. All the crosses on her outfit had even become crosses made of bones with rope holding them, a skull symbol on top and her boots gaining sharp high heels.

The Demon King counterpart of Raziel, the dreaded Beelzebub, formed in her hands. What had formerly been a tome brown tome with gold ornaments was now a silver Grimoire with deathly designs on it, the golden ornaments now black in color and with glowing silver marks on their centers. She opened the Grimoire, revealing the jet-black page inside, and soon said only one word...

"[Ashufiriya]"

Suddenly a dark silver dome of Reiryoku surrounds them, and suddenly everyone feels themselves sink into it.

"What the? Someone, help me!" Yoshino cried out in fear before she was swallowed inside.

"W-what the? Oh no, it's not targeting me directly, my immunity's not working! Everyone, try to-" Rinne said before it swallowed her.

One by one, everyone was swallowed, soon only Shido was left.

As he was about to be swallowed, Nia stared at him coldly.

"This is my story, and I will make it happen the way I've written it, there is... no escape." Nia said,
glaring intensely.

- (*insert song end*) -

Shido soon was fully swallowed, and Nia floated before fading into the darkness.

Everyone on the Fraxinus crew watched as the dome of Reiryoku faded, and everyone had disappeared, including Nia... and they had no idea what had happened.

"No... NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!" Reine screamed in horror.

Yikes... everyone is going great, only for Nia to snap and make everything take a huge turn for the worst, all because she can't fully register that there really are people in this world who would honestly push everything else aside try and help others. The very thing she was trying to prove was the one thing she refused to believe... and now, she's revealed something major, that alias and disguise she always used?

Apparently, both were her predecessor's, and this seems to be what destroyed her faith in Humanity, though we'll wait until the next arc before I reveal the whole story on it. This is one of the surprises, despite the stories of Vol 12-13 not being a pair like Vol 8-9, and Vol 11-11, they were connected by Nia. So, like with Natsumi's two arcs, and the Miku and Choronzon arc from last season, these two arcs are connected with part of Vol 14 mixed in.

Congrats Mana, you've lost the Murakumo, but you've got a better power now! As you'll see below, it is a passive ability between her and Shido, this one is due to them sharing cyan colored Reiryoku, it's similar to how the Yamai twins and Arusu siblings share a color, because their powers are connected to each other through their shared color. As a result, while only the first stage and without the Angels, Mana can now use the Spirit Ascension.

That's it for the Shido Countdown arc, next time... it's Nia's turn again, and this time Shido and her will truly settle things. Until then everyone, stay awesome! ^^

-Inverse Nia, Code Name: [Prophet]-

Demon King: Beelzebub, the "Tome of Divine Corruption" - Raziel's Demon King counterpart, the tome changes into the form of a Grimoire with deathlier looking designs and black pages. Beelzebub keeps Raziel's power of being able to ask any question and get an answer, with the same Spirit language limitation in some cases, but now she doesn't need to ask or open the book... she can just think her question and receive the answer, and share the information by touching someone.

Her event manipulation can now work up to ten minutes, and while she still can't directly affect someone's fate, she can push them into a situation where she can come close to choosing it for them, an example being if she were to manipulate events to trap someone within a fire, the actions of the person that was trapped would decide if they'll make it out alive. Objects she draws now only dispel when she chooses, rather than having a set time limit for how long they can manifest for.

- Alternate Form: Ashufiriya, the "Phantom Library" - The inverse counterpart of Thoth,
and arguably the most dangerous technique in Nia's arsenal for a single reason... Rinne can be affected by it because it doesn't directly target her. Where Thoth manifested a world from its pages, Ashufiriya does the reverse and traps people inside of it, transporting them into a world created by Nia through various scenarios of her dreams and imagination.

The people imprisoned assume the roles of fictional characters of various genres, like fairy tales and manga, in worlds with heavy alterations from the source material. While trapped within the fantasy world, other Spirits including even Rinne who's normally unaffected by such Angel techniques are unable to use their Reiryoku, Angels or Astral Dresses, but they don't lose any powers that are physically part of their bodies, such as Tohka's incredible strength.

- Alternate Form: Raudskinna, the "Daughters of the Demon King" - By manipulating the shadows between the pages of Raziel and imbuing them with her Reiryoku, creating shadow-like creatures that follow her every command, and don't require set commands unlike the Kirigami since they follow what she thinks for them to do. If the normal shadow creatures aren't enough, then she can compress multiple shadows together and form elite soldiers that take the form of the monster mooks used by the antagonist of her Silver Bullet manga.

- Powers: In her Inverse Form, Nia's powers are generally the same in concept, she can still manifest something if she can fantasize it, dream it or invent it. However, the original limitations she possessed for her manifestation have changed, and possibly there's a very small limit if any at all. While she can't still can't force love or death, she can push people close to either where it's up to them to decide what their fates will be, and now anything she manifests only vanishes when she wants to. Her greatest threat comes from her Ashufiriya technique which lets her put people into a world of her own design, where she claims she's in control and no one can change her story.

Risk Factors: AAA

Spacequake: B

Spirit's Astral Dress: B

Demon King Rank: S

Strength: 99

Consistency: 203

Spiritual Power: 158

Agility: 202

Intelligence: 240

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)
Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yōshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 96% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 96% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 90% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)
Man, I'm excited for this, this is the first time I've taken one section of DAL's story and moved it somewhere else in the story. Before anyone mentions me using Vol 16 info for Kurumi's arc, I'm not counting it because I planned this story before it came out... and there's the fact the translation isn't up yet, so I really only applied certain points summarized about it ^^;

Before anything else, I'd like to give a shout out to fellow author Cyrocene, I just learned Cyro’s currently under physical therapy and is currently almost completely unable to do any writing. Let's all wish Cyrocene good luck in recovering.

Anyways, for Nia's second arc, I've moved the events of Volume 14 which were originally part of Mukuro's arc. My reason for this comes from the fact it was caused by Westcott who had gained Beelzebub in the volume prior and used it himself rather than Nia, however I feel he's been way too OP since gaining it so... *hits wrong buzzer* nope, I ain’t letting him have it when he keeps spamming new abilities that Raziel's never had.

OK, ignoring that little canon plot point that steams me a little... at this point of the story, I doubt spoilers matter cause you've already seen them from reading Season 2's first arc, so nothing wrong with explaining things to anyone who doesn't know here. Beelzebub's Ashufiriya technique put everyone in a world that had everyone become a fairy tale character... except Nia, she became her manga's antagonist, and they have to find a way to escape.

Kinda the same general theme here, though there's more characters and Kurumi's actually with them, plus I swapped the Fairy Tale that was Shido's (Three Little Pigs) and added some more, plus the goal is Shido needs to get to Nia and seal her since Nia's not gonna let them leave. What are those Fairy Tales? I'll mention those at the end notes, I can say the additions are mostly Japanese tales.

Now, time for this arc's emotion and it's one I think the ending scene of last chapter helped give you a clue to: "Hatred". Rio's managed to realize the why Nia reacted the way she did, but she didn't have a chance to bring it up because of her and Rinne's failed attempt to stop Nia's inversion. Once the group finds her, you'll finally learn what happened to make her lose her hope in Humanity and react like she did last chapter.

And to answer a guest review from Vol 17: "Oh yeah, it's much worse than it was in canon... or I guess another way to look at it is more like I'm showing what the event was since canon doesn't exactly say what it was, and Rio's already connected the dots and remembered. The moment the group finds her you'll get to hear the story of Souji Hasegawa."

"I actually did consider that, mainly cause a lot of the villains in those stories show up during Vol 14. However, I recalled how Origami is smart with these kinds of things, but Nia is clever and would know if she made the stories like that, then the group would know how to overcome them. Nia said she wouldn't let them change her story, so Nia's gonna do something... more than that."

"I actually saw them already, but thanks for sharing regardless. In fact, I think I'll share that
right now for anyone who hasn't heard it yet."

Everyone, Volume 17 was announced a while back, and its title is... "Kurumi Ragnarok", the fact a Norse term has been used in the name seems to hint something big considering it fits Ratatoskr's naming theme. For the synopsis, it implies the other Spirits are finally going to learn they were once human, the secrets about Spirits will be revealed... and Shido's (maybe even Mana) going to regain his lost memories.

Also, the DEM and Ratatoskr are finally having their full-scale war, unlike their small battle in Vol 15. I don't know where things are going yet, but I recall Tachibana stating that Vol 10 was 'around halfway', based on the heavy Sephirot references... I'd say we'll have 22 volumes overall. My reason for this guess is that's how many lines connect the tree's Sephira, and each Volume cover has that line with a background that fit their directions.

I guess we'll all find out soon enough. So, with all of that out of the way, let's begin the Nia Storybook arc!

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Chapter 55, S3: Nia Storybook, Part 5

-Nia & Souji's Story, Prologue-

Nia stared ahead as she saw her mentor, Souji Hasegawa, on the ground with her body's bleeding form on full display for her to see. Raziel was resting on the ground nearby, some of its pages bloody and the words: {Before my death, allow me to keep-*splat*-of Nia for-*splat*-no matter how much it shortens my remaining time}, the two splats of blood blocking two whole sections of the written sentence.

The whole scene was like a bad dream, Nia had been with Souji at an event when she heard the sounds of something being destroyed, she came out to see people staring at the chaos as something attacked Souji, but she couldn't instantly defend herself since she couldn't let people know of the Spirits.

Eventually she got away, and likely managed to use her Spirit powers without that worry... but apparently it wasn't enough. Whatever was chasing her managed to overpower her, decimate her, leaving her... in the horrible state Nia was staring at firsthand.

"SOUJI!" Nia screamed, running up to her.

Souji coughs a bit, she looked at Nia, her eyes without light as the last of her soul slowly began to leave her body.

"N-Nia...? Is that... is it really you... that I hear?" Souji asked.

"Shut up and stop talking, save your strength! I'm gonna get a doctor and-" Nia screamed in a panic.

Souji grabbed Nia's hand, getting her protege's eyes to widen as she shook her head.

"It's... no good, the... people Phantom warned us about... warned me to be careful of... they came, and... showed they'd do anything for my power. I was too weak, and... now I've... paid the price... I'm not gonna make it Nia. I'm... sorry." Souji smiled, crying as she did.

"No, don't say that! Please don't... please don't die Souji, promise me that!" Nia screamed.
Souji cried a bit, coughing violently, with blood now coming out of her mouth. Nia could only stare as Souji took off her glasses, and put them in Nia's hands.

"You know I can't promise that, Raziel... can't change fate. Writing for me to survive won't... work, that's the rule. That's why, all I... can do is... make sure this power is inherited by someone who knows it and Raziel trusts. I leave... the rule of the Spirit... [Sister]. in... your... hands... now..." Souji breathed.

Souji's hands slowly fall to the ground, and soon gave a loud thud as her face fell with it, her eyes closed with tear streaks and her mouth showing a frown of regret as the silver-gray sphere known as the Raziel Crystal bounced out.

Nia looked as it landed in her hands, soon glowing as it absorbed itself into her body, making Nia cry as Souji's Astral Dress faded and manifested on her. Nia soon hugged her body, and the glasses that were formerly Souji's before wailing loudly.

"WHY!? WHY DAMN IT, I... I saw it, people were there, they saw it happen... they saw you running away, and they didn't do a damn thing! They didn't care about anyone but their own goddamn selves!" Nia screamed, soon holding Raziel close as she cried.

[Nia... I'm so sorry that I failed to protect her, I'll never forgive myself for being unable to save Souji.]

"No, don't Raziel... it isn't your fault... it's theirs, the one who killed her and the ones who refused to help her at all! This is their fault! All of it, why... why did I ever have faith that Humans could be any more than selfish bastards who care for their lives more than the lives of their fellow kinsman?" Nia sobbed, an angry look on her face.

Nia soon flew through the air, getting Phantom's notice as she saw her fly by.

"(Phew... looks like Souji's OK, but next time I feel that ghastly chill I should be weary. Mama was right, the DEM... they're not stopping, the very people I'm entrusting the Sephira Crystals will be killed. I need to be wise who I give them to, that way they'll survive.)" Phantom said to herself.

'Souji, I will keep your legacy alive! I swear it!' Nia thought while crying, holding an unfinished piece of Silver Bullet in her arms.

In some unknown realm, the sight of Inverse Nia's eyes shedding tears was seen, she looked up before turning to look behind her.

"...It is time for my story to begin, and I intend to shape everything the way I know it. This world will showcase the unbreakable reality that it is to them. I'll make them know, I'll make them all know how Humanity truly acts when faced with the world!" Nia screamed.

The scene quickly changes into an area of a bamboo forest, by one particularly large piece of bamboo, the sight of Shido who had taken the form of Shiori was seen. However, instead of his usual outfit, Shiori was wearing a long, elaborate pink, white and red dress that looked like an outfit worn by royalty during the Edo period of Japan. After a few moments, Shiori finally found herself waking up.

"...Hmm?" Shiori mumbled, blinking a bit.

Shiori stretched a bit as she woke up, and quickly noticed her outfit, looking to the side and noticing her long blue hair... she sighed, almost if she gave up or somehow expected the result that had just
"And I'm Shiori again, this doesn't surprise me anymore." Shiori said to herself.

After getting past the stage of her current gender, Shiori actually took the chance to see what outfit she was currently wearing.

She was quickly surprised to realize that it was royal looking kimono, something she didn't expect. She stood up as she noticed the thick forest of bamboo around her, feeling something familiar from the entire scene, yet not sure what it was.

"What... is this place? Where... am I?" Shiori wondered aloud.

Shiori took a moment to recall what had happened before she blacked out. Nia had appeared with a very shaken and scary appearance, got very angry, forced her own Inversion... and then used her Demon King, Beelzebub, to swallow them into a dark pool.

That was when Shiori's eyes widened, Raziel was a tome, which meant that what swallowed them must have...

"This forest... am I inside a story? If I am, which one, just who am I to be dressed like this?" Shiori asked herself.

"KAGUYAHIME!"

Shiori's eyes widened at that shouting, and soon turned to see a bunch of people wearing outfits similar in nature to her own, and a certain symbol of a crescent moon located on part of their outfit's center area.

It all came together now... a bamboo forest, a royal looking dress, the name Kaguyahime and a moon symbol. There was only one Japanese tale that fit that.

'I'm the main character from The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter! That means those are the people of the moon, and since I don't see any of the others... oh crap, I don't like where this is headed!' Shiori mentally gasped.

"Kaguyahime, you've waited long enough. Return to the moon with us." A moon soldier stated, extending a hand.

'I don't think I've got a choice, but I'll have to act like I am Kaguyahime. That doesn't mean I'm following the same story's path. After all, I don't see her parents anywhere, so this can't be exactly same... I just hope that's not or will become a bad thing.' Shiori thought.

"I refuse!" Shiori exclaimed.

The moon people show shock, surprised by Shiori's claim.

"I've lived on Earth for years, and it is my home now, not the moon. I will not abandon it or the family that raised me when I was left here in the first place!" Shiori shouted.

"She's gone mad! Everyone, grab Kaguyahime and force her back to the Moon!" The same soldier declared.

Shiori soon sweated and held out her hand... only for nothing to happen, making her panic as her version of Uriel didn't form.
'Oh no, I can't use my Spirit powers! I don't remember if Kaguyahime had any either! Well, then there's only one solution here... run away!' Shiori thought.

Shiori quickly began running, quickly abandoning the shoes that were slowing down her movement.

She looked back, and noticed all of the moon people catching up to her. Some of them firing blasts of energy to try and disable her or at least block her escape route.

"They're too fast! This is bad, if only I could somehow gain more speed!" Shiori panicked.

As if answering her cue, Shiori's hair and eyes suddenly became the Yamai twins' color, and she felt herself moving at twice her normal speed as the sight of stardust under her feet suddenly propelled her without the need for her to run across the ground.

"Whoa! OK, not sure what happened but I'll take it!" Shiori exclaimed.

"No, Kaguyahime's getting away!" The same soldier screamed.

The moon people tried to chase her even faster. Unfortunately, Shiori was soon too far away and they all became too tired.

Shiori eventually stopped and breathed as she reached a house, putting a hand on it to take a few breaths as her hair reverted back to normal.

"I made it... I was able to get away, oh thank god that was terrifying. Though I guess despite lacking my usual powers I have whatever Kaguyahime can do." Shiori sighed in relief, unaware she had managed her Spirit Ascension, though only in the form of speed.

"Hey, this house looks familiar... wait, if I'm a fairy tale then it must be. Which one though." Shiori wondered.

Shiori took a few steps back, and soon enough the house in question became a lot recognizable to her, it was the grandmother's house from the Little Red Riding Hood story. Realizing she recognized it, Shiori looked for signs of anyone.

"I don't see any of the others, I wonder who could have ended up in this story... hey wait, if the Moon people from the Tale of the Bamboo Cutter were, here, doesn't that mean the-" Shiori wondered.

"The better to... eat you with!" The wolf cackled.

Soon the sound of Yoshino screaming from within the house was heard, catching Shiori's attention.

"That voice... Yoshino? Oh no, then that means she's Little Red Riding Hood!" Shiori gasped.

"Don't worry, I'm coming!" Shiori exclaimed.

With a mighty kick, Shiori smashed down the door to the house, and she covered her mouth at the sight of the marking to the grim fate of the grandmother on parts of the house.

Most kids would never see this part of the story due to it being too mature for a kid, but it was common for fairy tales to have their darker natures removed in some adaptions, not to mention various books told alternate tales and stories. It seems Nia specifically chose a version with the grandma dying to make the wolf more dangerous, in fact, the moon people having soldiers was likely
for the same reasons.

"Crap, I need something... ah!"

Shiori found a broom stick and broke off the brush to turn it into a makeshift staff.

She soon rushed into another room, the wolf jumping at Yoshino who was wearing Little Red Riding Hood’s outfit and holding her basket while ducking. Shiori shouted before slamming the staff forward, causing it to glow and explode with lunar energy against the wolf who crashed into the wall.

"What the hell, how’d you escape your story!?" The wolf demanded.

"Let's go Yoshino!" Shiori shouted, grabbing her hand.

"Shiori?" Yoshino asked surprised, being pulled outside.

"Yeah, it's me. I'll explain after we get away from that hungry wolf." Shiori nodded.

The wolf soon rushed out of the house and chased after them.

"You're not getting away, I'll devour you both right here and now!" The wolf declared as he chased them.

"Shit, that wolf's fast! Hey Yoshino, by chance does the basket have anything in there that could help?" Shiori asked.

Yoshino quickly rummaged through the check, pulling out some fruit, then a few cookies, and then a glass of milk... and that was it.

"Uh... do wolves like milk?" Yoshino asked worriedly.

"I'm afraid not. While I have some abilities, I don't completely know how they work, guess I'll have to gamble on it a bit-Look out!" Shiori yelled.

Yoshino gasped as Shiori pulled them to the ground, the wolf pounced them, only for Shiori's hair to take Origami's colors as she stabbed a point on his chest, briefly making the hungry canine tumble over and miss them.

The wolf quickly got back up, growling at them as Shiori's hair reverted back.

"That trick won't save you again!" The wolf growled.

The wolf lunged itself again, but suddenly a dumpling was thrown from afar, and the wolf suddenly eat it before blinking a few times. After a bit, it yawned before walking towards a tree and curling by it, surprising the two at the wolf's suddenly docile nature.

"What just happened?" Yoshino asked surprised.

"Impressive throw Momotarou, I told you the dumplings would work!"

"Glad you were right Inugami!"

Shiori and Yoshino both recognized the familiar voice, and turned to see none other than Tohka dressed in a female version of the attire of the boy in a story named after himself that was born from a peach and traveled with a dog, monkey and a pheasant... Momotarou!
It wasn't just her, it seemed that being Momotarou caused the same three animals that aided the original character to be by her side, the first fictional characters that were actually on their side and not trying to harm them.

"Tohka!" Shiori and Yoshino claimed.

"Yoshino! Shid-oops, Shiori!" Tohka cheered, hugging them both.

"Now I get it, Momotarou's dumplings are effective against dogs. We're really lucky you showed up when you did." Shiori smiled.

Tohka giggled at that before smiling with her teeth showing.

"I recognized Yoshino's character, but... who are you Shiori?" Tohka asked.

"I would be Kaguyahime... how odd, we're both characters who came out of something you can grow in the wild." Shiori chuckled, recalling how Kaguyahime came from bamboo and Momotarou a peach.

"Are you friends of Momotarou's?" The pheasant, otherwise known as Kijigami, asked.

"Yeah, more or less. I'm Kaguyahime and this is Little Red Riding Hood." Shiori replied.

Shiori winked at Yoshino, telling her to not use her real name when talking with any of the fictional characters on their side.

It made sense since they didn't seem to respond at all when they called Tohka by her real name instead of her character's name, Nia had probably made it that way to limit or even prevent the help any actual story characters would give them.

"We really saved you from a pinch right there, didn't we?" The monkey, better known as Sarugami, chuckled.

"Yeah, that wolf was crazy-" Shiori replied.

Suddenly the sound of rumbling was heard, attracting the two trios, everyone slowly looked to the left or right depending on where they were facing... and soon the sight of an eight-headed snake came into view!

Screams rang out as everyone started running, Tohka drawing out Momotarou's katana as she swung against the snake heads coming after them, her animal companions on her shoulders.

In some kind of castle, Rinne suddenly blinked at the princess like dress she was wearing and the crown on her head, having no idea what was going on.

"...OK, what just happened to me? I was trying to stop Nia from Inverting by holding her down for Rio to lock her powers, but Raziel moved to her pen and she was able to stop it, we got swallowed in something my immunity couldn't act against, and... now I'm a princess? What's going on here?" Rinne asked herself.

There were a few things about Humanity that Rinne was still completely lost about, and out of those things, one of them happened to be the various fairy tales. Sure, she had read Rio a few books before bed, but they were all just random short stories.

As Rinne walked further through the castle finding answers, the sound of something spinning is
heard as Rinne opens the door and sees an old woman with a spindle in her hands before she turns to notice Rinne looking at her.

"Ah, hello there princess Aurora." The old woman greeted.

"Uh... I think you have the wrong person, my name's Rinne." Rinne replied, unaware of the story world's rules.

Various accounts had the name of the princess unknown, but Aurora was one name often used for the Princess of *Sleeping Beauty*, the spindle's presence was a clear indicator of the same one that was cursed to put her to sleep.

Rinne who saw the spindle wondered what it was, but at the same time... didn't exactly get a good feeling from the sight of it.

"Ah, I do believe you've never seen anyone spin before. Would you like to try it? The worst that could happen is you pricking your finger slightly." The old woman offered.

"Uh... thanks, but no thanks. I need to be somewhere." Rinne replied, trying to leave the room.

"Oh, don't be like that sweet Aurora, it won't take that long." The old woman said, trying to go after her.

"No seriously, I need to go... and now you're giving me a strong feeling that you want me to prick my finger!" Rinne said worriedly.

Suddenly the old woman's face went hostile, and she changed into a dark looking fairy.

"This isn't right, you're supposed to prick it! I'll make you prick it no matter what the cost!" The evil fairy screamed.

"Fairies are real!?" Rinne said in shock.

Rinne looked around and soon saw a window, taking a deep breath... she jumped out to the evil fairy's surprise.

Rinne screamed as she fell, soon landing on the ground intact before running off.

"Damn you Princess Aurora!" The evil fairy screeched.

"That lady's crazy." Rinne said to herself as the scream reached her ears.

As Rinne ran, she eventually found herself exposed to a strange stone that was emitting poison gas in the form of a white mist that hid its true toxic nature, though luckily despite having no access to her powers, Rinne being a spirit wasn't harmed by this level of toxicity.

She looked at it confused before knocking her hand against it, trying to figure out why it was making 'mist' like it was.

"This is one weird stone, what's with this weird mist? Maybe I should break it open and find out." Rinne wondered.

Rinne held up her hand to form Uriel.

Nothing.
...Still nothing.

...And after long enough, Rinne sweat in worry.

"Something's not right here." Rinne panicked.

"...Wait, is that your Rinne?"

"Huh? Who said that, and where are you?" Rinne asked, looking around the area.

"In here, it's me, Kurumi! I'm inside this rock!" Kurumi exclaimed.

"Kurumi? What the, how'd you get in there? Better yet, how do I get you out when I can't summon Uriel?" Rinne asked.

"The rock's not that strong, the danger's the poison gas around it, since you're near it that means your safe. Just... push it to the ground!" Kurumi answered.

Rinne blinked before shrugging, pushing against the rock before it fell down, crashing into the ground a few times before a nine-tailed fox popped out and soon howled, quickly changing into Kurumi wearing a regal kimono.

"I'm free, finally!" Kurumi sighed happily.

"Wait, since when have you been a fox?" Rinne asked.

"I'm not, this world has me as the character known as Tamamo-no-Mae, a fox spirit from an old Japanese fairy tale. It looks like you became Sleeping Beauty. That makes sense considering what you were like until half a year ago." Kurumi answered.

"Wait... who and what now?" Rinne asked confused.

"When I awoke, I found myself in a story as one of the characters. Everyone thought of me as such and my real name didn't register to the characters. That can only mean the place Nia sent us was a world based on story's. For an author like Nia, this is her ideal battleground, we only have the powers of the characters we've become in these stories and the stories may not go the way we know them. In my case, I was deceived and caught at the first stage of Tamamo's journey... and I don't think I even saw the antagonist towards my character." Kurumi explained, biting her teeth slightly.

Rinne's eyes widen slightly.

"So... we're basically in an environment where Nia's free to screw us like an omnipotent god!?!" Rinne shouted worriedly.

"Well I don't think we can really say she's omnipotent, otherwise we would have died long ago. Though she does control this world of stories at the very least. We'll need to find the others before anything else, alone we're in trouble but together we might make it through." Kurumi replied.

"Alright, so... where do we go?" Rinne asked.

"I don't know, but as I'm a Youkai right now, I can feel some things. I don't know how it fully works, but I feel like I'm sensing something to the East of us." Kurumi answered.

"OK then, let's go East." Rinne nodded.

The two quickly ran off towards the East, hoping they would find their fellow friends in the direction
they were heading.

The group continued running away, the eight snake heads of Orochi still chomping at them as the serpent's body continued to slither after them.

"Why the hell is Orochi here!?!" Tohka screamed in a panic.

"I don't know! I don't think I remember a story about this, right now just shut up and keep running before he/she/it eats us!" Shiori replied all panicky.

The six kept running until they soon reached a dead end by a cliff face.

The entire group turned, giving white eyes and blue faces in fear as the snake heads got near them, all of them lunging to gobble them up when.

"Back you fiendish serpent!"

Suddenly, a giant container of sake fell from the sky, hitting the multi-headed serpent on the head before sake splashed out, the snake heads all accidentally drank a bit and quickly got themselves drunk as a lightning bolt struck the ground.

From the lightning, the sight of Mana appeared, dressed as the Shinto God Susanoo and already with the Ama-no-Murakumo-no-Tsurugi, aka the Sword of the Gathering Clouds of Heaven or the Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi, the Grass-Cutting Sword as it was better known nowadays.

"MANA!?" Shiori exclaimed.

"Oh, hey big br-wait, you're Shiori again?" Mana asked surprised.

"Bigger issues Mana." Tohka chuckled nervously, pointing at Orochi.

"Oh right, prepare yourself for the might of Susanoo you slimy monster!" Mana exclaimed.

A smirk plastered itself on Mana's face as Orochi dived at her.

With a mighty yell, Mana swung the Kusanagi before the serpentine monster even neared them, the power behind the swing showed the sword living up to its name as despite not hitting anything but air, all the grass was cut to ribbons and Orochi was sent flying into the sky while slightly bleeding from a few slashes.

Everyone stared in awe as Orochi was flung through some clouds, causing holes to form within them as Orochi vanished from sight.

"Woo! Oh yeah, I've always wanted to try something like that in real life instead of a video game, now I finally have!" Mana cheered.

"Mana, that was amazing!" Tohka said with sparkling eyes.

"Thank you Tohka, or should I call you Momotarou right now... and really Shiori? Kaguyahime?" Mana asked.

"Like you're one to talk, you became Susanoo!" Shiori groaned.

"Susanoo's a god though." Mana smirked.
Shiori sighed at that, making everyone by the animal trio laugh as said trio just looked at each other confused.

"Hey! Don't forget about me Mana, show them!" A squeaky voice shouted.

"Huh?" Everyone said confused.

In a few seconds, the sight of a tiny girl only an inch high was seen on Mana's shoulders, Mana chuckled embarrassingly before moving her hand and walking closer, showing the tiny girl was none other than...

"RIO!" Everyone exclaimed.

"Yeah, it's me!" Rio said in a squeaky voice due to her small size.

"I'm confused, why is she so small?" Yoshino asked.

"Well, since my confused older sister doesn't seem to remember the story about Orochi is considered a Japanese Fairy Tale, I'll explain it." Mana replied, emphasizing the word doesn't to Shiori's embarrassment.

Rio giggled a bit at that, making Shiori blush even more.

"Rio's turned into Issun-Boshi, the character from *The Inch-High Samurai*, and while the story does have something that makes her more normal sized... we haven't found it yet. As a result, she's still only an inch tall." Mana explained.

"I nearly got stepped on! I'm lucky Mana heard me, I get the scary feeling we can actually die in here! I mean, that happens in stories... right?" Rio whimpered squeakily, making Shiori pat her head with her pinkie finger.

"Considering Orochi dies in his story..." Shiori replied, not finishing her sentence intentionally.

Rio gulps at that.

"...Oh wait, that's right! I know we're still separated from everyone else, but I need to tell all of you something, it's about Nia." Rio suddenly said.

"What is it?" Tohka asked.

"Right before she trapped us in here, at the moment she said the name Souji Hasegawa, I remembered something. My memories still fuzzy at times since I was younger until recently... but it's coming back easier, I can remember things easier and remember a lot more related info. I also figured out why nothing seemed odd originally when Nia first introduced herself to us. The reason for that? Well... I honestly thought it was only you before now Tohka, but the truth is you're actually not the only Spirit who lacked a predecessor." Rio explained.

"Really, I'm not the only one?" Tohka said surprised.

Rio nodded in response.

"Yeah, there were two others, and they're both the Spirits that you haven't sealed yet Shiori... or at least I thought that was the case with Nia. Now, I think she's had one and only one predecessor... the very first person I ever made into a Spirit, Souji Hasegawa." Rio revealed.

The other four Spirits gasped in shock at that.
"My god... I knew it was weird when she said that name, but at the time I thought she might have just been someone close to her. So she was actually her predecessor? Hey... wait a second, you always knew when a Spirit died right? Wouldn't you have recalled giving it to Nia afterwards?" Mana asked.

Rio shook her head.

"I don't know when a Spirit dies, I know when they could die. That way I could rush over and maybe help save them in time... I never did, but the main point is I couldn't sense their actual deaths. Although, I do think the first time I felt that warning was with Souji, but I quickly noticed Raziel calm, and I saw who I thought was her fly away safely. Though I was still young when we first saw her a few months back and may have subconsciously thought Nia and Souji were the same person, so maybe... just maybe..."

Rio gasped.

"That's right! I did meet Nia when I first met Souji, she was Souji's student, and Raziel actually noted Nia had the same potential to wield her, if Nia was present when she died... Raziel would have accepted her instantly if she touched the Raziel crystal. That moment, Souji must have actually died, but since it was the first time I felt that feeling and Raziel was calm after, I didn't consider Raziel had immediately found another host." Rio realized in horror.

"So that would mean the DEM killed Souji, and before they got her crystal, Nia took it and became the next [Sister]... but based on what Nia said, there must have been people who could have helped her that didn't. She couldn't believe we'd save others other stopping the Dainsleif because-" Mana gasped.

"Because no one stopped to save Souji from dying, but... wait, something's not right here. Mom revived everyone, shouldn't have Souji come back to life like the others too? Why would she still have such a grudge against mankind if we helped bring her back?" Shiori wondered.

Everyone was stumped at that.

Taking a minute to think, everyone tried to figure out what was making Nia still act this way if Souji was alive. Kannazuki had mentioned back when Rinne revived everyone the only failures were Seigo and Isamu, and that was because they were without souls.

No answers came for a few more minutes, and then Tohka suddenly gasped as she recalled something Nia had said to them earlier.

"...I will avenge the only former Spirit who didn't revived, because even if she regained her body... her memories were lost forever, effectively destroying who she was!" Nia's voice echoed.

"Hey Shiori, how does one remember and forget things? I know it sounds weird but tell me." Tohka asked.

"Uh... well, let's see here, I think memory is a cellular action. When you get amnesia, I think the cells with the associated memories don't respond, but they're still present and why you can regain your memories later." Shiori answered.

"So... hypothetically, what if those same cells were destroyed?" Tohka asked again.

"Well then there's no way you could remember the memories that were-" Mana answered.

Suddenly, everyone froze in place, looking at Tohka.
"Oh my god... Tohka, are you suggesting what I think you are?" Rio asked.

"Nia mentioned something about 'memories being lost forever' right before she Inverted, I don't know what else it could be." Tohka replied.

"I think the only way we'll get answers is to find Nia herself and ask her, and to do that... we need to find the others, and try getting out of this world." Shiori stated.

Everyone nods at that.

"I think the first thing we need to do is figure out where the others are at." Mana replied.

"How do we do that though?" Yoshino asked.

"Hmm... hey Inugami, we still have friends of mine to find, think you can find anyone who has my scent on them?" Tohka asked.

"I think I can do that, let's see..." Inugami replied.

Inugami sniffs the air a bit, and soon rushes ahead as he got a scent.

"Alright, good doggy!" Rio smiled.

Everyone followed Inugami into the unknown, and as they did... Nia was seen floating in the air above them with a strong glare aimed towards their backsides.

Taking a black page from Beelzebub, she started drawing something inside of it and once she was finished, threw it forward to create a vampiric like creature.

"...Enjoy your game now, you'll face reality soon enough." Nia whispered coldly.

-Nia & Souji's Story, Chapter 1-

Souji Hasegawa sighed as she stared at the work before her, she was looking at her most recent concept idea for a story series she wanted to call "Silver Bullet", a manga series that was going to be about monsters and machines in a setting that normally seemed dark and apocalyptic, but was actually from the world's final days and hopeful despite the dark atmosphere.

The problem was her concept idea, despite all she tried... she couldn't make anything from the ground up happy, and if she didn't figure out something soon not only was her idea gonna be scrapped... she could lose her entire job. Even with the Spacequake threat still doing heavy damage to the world, when things settled her idea was expected to help inspire the survivors in the world's time of recovery.

"Damn it, what can I do!? How am I supposed to proceed from here?" Souji said, biting her lip in worry.

"H-Hey, you can't go in there you crazy little-"

Souji turned as she heard her bodyguard complain, and soon the sight of a teenage girl of either 15 or 16 with long silvery-gray hair like her own come into her room, holding a sketch pad and showing an excited look before the guard grabbed her color.

"Oh no!" Nia gasped.
"Forgive me Ms. Hasegawa, this little fan girl rushed through security. I'll take her out right-" The guard answered.

"No, she can stay." Souji sighed.

"B-But Ms. Hasegawa, what about your work!?" The guard stuttered.

"I can't get anything in my head right now, there's no work to interrupt. Maybe this will distract me enough to get something... I'm that desperate right now." Souji explained.

"O-Oh... well, alright." The guard replied.

The security guard put Nia on the ground.

"This ain't something you'll get again, so you better behave or else!" The guard stated before closing the door.

"Y-yes sir!" Nia replied.

Nia walked up to Souji.

"So, you're a fan. I'm guessing you want an autograph?" Souji sighed while smiling.

"Yeah, I'm sorry." Nia apologized.

"Oh, it's fine, not like there's a fan who doesn't-" Souji answered, taking her sketchbook as she put her name on it... only to notice what it was.

"A sketchbook? Oh, do you wanna make a manga like I do?"

Nia nods.

"Yeah, I don't think I'm that good though." Nia admitted, twiddling her fingers as she blushed.

Souji opens her sketchbook and saw a lot of well-made designs.

"Not good? Are you kidding me, while not the pro level stuff, you've clearly got designs and technique down. These are well made." Souji admitted.

"You really think so?" Nia gasped happily, her eyes sparkling.

"Yeah, you'll go far one day... while I might have finally washed out all my ideas. How sad, this might be what kills my career, a manga meant to encourage the world when this Spacequake disaster finally has some solution to prevent the deaths that have taken out half the human race." Souji replied, chuckling a bit before covering her eyes as they shed tears.

Nia blinks at her looking worried, and soon noticed the ideas of Silver Bullet.

Souji soon hears a pencil sound, removing her hand to see Nia adding details to it, she looked a bit panicked before she noticed what Nia was adding.

"What the?" Souji gasped.

"As the story's silver bullet, the protagonist having silver guns would be a good choice, and the dark atmosphere yet hopeful tone needs a signature line such as [There is no darkness if no light casts its shadow. This sight doesn't mean there's no light, it just shows how brightly its shining to cast this
shadow to protect us!], and this black outfit theme works too. In fact, having some of those monsters be a power source and change sides against the machines would—" Nia muttered as she added details.

Souji looked surprised, as she looked Nia's ideas the blockade she had been facing was broken as she agreed with the ideas she herself couldn't create.

After a minute, Nia stopped to think and Souji tapped her shoulder.

"H-how did you... how'd you do all this?" Souji asked.

"Oh, well... I like dark and edgy designs but a hopeful undertone. Too bad that's mostly fanfiction. I kinda made my sketches off that concept, I just tried the same here. Don't worry, I didn't add anything of mine in here." Nia admitted.

Souji stared at her in shock.

"...Wow, you saved my job kid. I bet your parents will be proud to hear this."

"...I don't have any parents." Nia said sadly.

"Oh my... did the Spacequakes kill them?" Souji asked.

"No, I never knew them." Nia answered, shaking her head.

"Ah, they died when you were really young then?" Souji realized.

Nia shook her head again.

"No, I was abandoned, I'm an orphan." Nia answered.

"W-what? An orphan? Wait, so you like this theme because..." Souji gasped.

"Thanks for letting me meet you, it was fun. Well... goodbye then." Nia said as she prepared to leave.

"...Wait." Souji suddenly said.

Nia stopped and turned, looking at Souji.

"What's your name kid?" Souji asked.

"Oh, I'm Nia Honjou. Why do you ask?" Nia wondered.

"Tell me, would you like to be my protege?" Souji asked.

Nia's eyes widened, and with just those nine words... her entire life changed forever.

Now that's one way to tell a story within a story. *starts laughing* I'm sorry everyone, but I had to tell that joke at least once during this arc, so I figured I'd do it now and get it over with. As usual, I've slipped Shiori in over Shido, it's part of how she's learning how being Shiori boosts her Reiryoku, like she unconsciously did last arc.

Anyways, I decided to make Shiori into the Moon Princess Kaguya from "The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter" since I want her to actually have some power like a few of the others. While I
won't reveal who the characters in the original Volume 14 became until they show up, but I will at least say that the characters everyone became in the story world in Volume 14 are all unchanged.

Now, why did I choose the fairy tales that I did for the other characters exactly? Here's why:

For making Shido/Shiori into Princess Kaguya, or Kaguyahime as I chose in this instance to avoid the issue with DAL already having a Kaguya, it was because of how in this story, Shido was born in the Spirit Dimension and isn't a normal human.

For making Mana into Susanoo, it's because of her CR-Unit's name origin coming from the Kusanagi's original name which includes "Murakumo" in it, making it the obvious choice. Especially since two of Mana's techniques had Susanoo and Orochi in the name.

For Kurumi, I chose Tamamo-no-Mae because it fits the story of how Tamamo eventually becomes repentant after being freed from her stone prison. In this story, Kurumi was imprisoned by the DEM without knowing it, and once free she's repentant for what happened while the Cassiopeia was influencing her.

For Rinne, as she was without a body for a while and needed a kiss to regain it, even though the kiss itself wasn't what did it... it led to her regaining her body in the end. That sounds like a Sleeping Beauty to me.

And for Rio, the choice of Issun-boshi came from Rio originally being small and having little to no offensive skill, but eventually growing up into her current appearance, just like how Issun-Boshi becomes normal sized after finding a special mallet.

For this arc, I've also added the story of Nia and Souji's tale between the chapters, it's kinda an indirect method of making the main story look like we're reading between the lines as the characters' efforts to reunite is progressing Nia's backstory and slowly unraveling the mystery behind it, all starting with how Nia indirectly helped become Silver Bullet's co-creator.

Well, that's the first chapter of Nia's Storybook... *blinks and giggles* oh! Unintentional pun there, that's a new one :3

See you next chapter everyone, until then... stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)
Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 96% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 96% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 90% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)
Man, this arc is a bit of a challenge for me, it's one thing to make a fanfic, but it's another to
make a fanfic and then use a story and treat it like a fanfic by mixing it into your own story
for- *blinks and chuckles embarrassingly* ^^; Oops, got a bit complex there. What I'm
basically trying to say is that it's hard to imagine a story that's in another story... never mind,
it'll sound weird no matter how I try to say it ^^;

Well, I'll still accept that challenge. After all, I still have the crossover between this story and
my first DxD story to do, and that's not too different from what I'm doing in this arc, this is
just the first step in preparing myself. Well, now with that clear, it's time to get more of Nia
and Souji's story while focusing on some of the others until they all reunite.

Err... well, until most of them reunite, there's about three that I can't really have show up until
all the others reunite, anyone who's seen Volume 14 knows what I'm talking about. The
hardest part about this arc is that it's tricky to add anything different on a large scale until I
get everyone together, if it was the usual stuff it would be easy, but the fairy tale theme's
making it a bit more rigid than usual aside from scenes for anyone not in Volume 14.

Also, to anyone who's a fan of the Date Another Origin series, I should let you know that I'm
planning remaking Yoshino Friendship and Kurumi Fearful in the future, though that's not
gonna be until I finish up here. Making both of these stories helped give me the confidence
that eventually lead to me having the courage to start this one, so I want to have them redone
with my current skills to properly honor them and their sibling stories.

OK, let's ignore my long rambling and just get this chapter rolling. In fact... I'll also do a
barrel roll! *crouches down and rolls sideways, dragging the chapter's intro screen into view*
Enjoy the chapter!

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"Thanks for letting me meet you, it was fun. Well... goodbye then." Nia said as she prepared to
leave.

"...Wait." Souji suddenly said.

Nia stopped and turned, looking at Souji.

"What's your name kid?" Souji asked.

"Oh, I'm Nia Honjou. Why do you ask?" Nia wondered.

"Tell me, would you like to be my protege?" Souji asked.

Nia's eyes widened, unable to properly process what she heard.

"W-what did you just say?" Nia asked.
"I just asked if you'd like to be my prodigy. You know, I'd become your mentor?" Souji answered.

"B-but... no way, there's gotta be someone better than me, right?" Nia replied.

Souji stood up and patted Nia's head.

"I actually disagree with you there, I was stuck and worried how I'd be able to get Silver Bullet started, and then you came in and gave me the answer I needed. You have a strength for writing that I think I can help blossom beyond my own one day. This story needs you, so let's the message we want from it together and share it with the world." Souji stated.

Nia's eyes sparkled before smiling.

"So? Is that a yes or a no?" Souji smirked.

"Thank you so much, I accept! I won't let you down!" Nia nodded.

"Alright then, let's see some of those sketches. Only fair co-creators both put their ideas into the work." Souji smiled.

"OK." Nia nodded.

Souji looked at Nia's sketch pad again and noticed some character sketches.

"Tell me a bit about these characters, they look like some potential major villains and the hero." Souji asked.

"This vampiric like creature's named Nosferatu, rather than blood, he siphons magical power from the environment to slightly warp reality based on his thoughts but not at an omnipotent level. Especially since he needs his prey to feel fear, but if he's afraid it'll backfire. This slime like being's named Nesuferitu, it's an undead creature made from a powerful soul who couldn't restore his body, he's very hard to kill because he's basically a slime zombie and needs all his slime destroyed." Nia explained.

Souji looked closely, and soon noticed the next page's two sketches, one looking a bit familiar.

"Then there's the Ancestral Deity, Necuratu. It's kinda the ultimate villain and catalyst of events out of these three. She's caused an atypical massacre on many worlds and would target Earth next. I'd say if you want this in the story, don't defeat her until the end. And then there's... oh no, you didn't see Fatima did you!?" Nia said, suddenly blushing.

Souji suddenly giggled, realizing her suspicions were confirmed. The hero was indeed based off of Nia herself.

"Nothing wrong with that, one of my old works had a side kick that was basically me with brown hair and no glasses. I don't think people will mind us using this. After all, they might just expect that it's me with long hair." Souji chuckled.

"R-really, you think these are really OK?" Nia asked.

"I do, now... let's start getting you some practice and making Silver Bullet a big hit in Shonen!" Souji exclaimed with vigor.

In a cold alley way, all gray and dark in color, with a strong winter snow blowing as a familiar red-haired girl was seen with lifeless looking eyes that slowly closed as the flickering flames from her
match died out.

Moments after, a pair of twins, both with orange hair and purple eyes, walked by with one wearing 18th century boy clothing and the other wearing the same but for a girl. Upon seeing the red-haired girl, the twin in boy's clothing screams in a panic.

"Oh no, Kotori! Wake up! Come on! Don't you dare die on us, please don't!" Kaguya panicked.

"Not good, if she's to fall asleep here then we most likely will lose her. We need to think of a way to wake up." Yuzuru noted.

Kaguya sweated before screaming as Kotori's eyes nearly closed, and soon slapped Kotori's face, surprising her sister who gave a horrified look as Kaguya kept slapping Kotori's face in worry.

"I see... I see a field of beautiful flowers and a nice stream. I should follow it." Kotori mumbled.

"No, don't you dare! You're going into Heaven! Wake up!" Kaguya panicked.

Yuzuru sweated more, and soon sighed as she aided her sister in the slapping, having no other idea of what to do.

"Please wake up Kotori." Yuzuru requested.

"Come back to us! Please, wake up! Kotori! Kotori! Kotori! Kotori! Kotori! Kotori! Kotori! Kotori!" Kaguya begged while tearing up.

After another few minutes of slapping, Kotori screamed loudly.

Taking a moment to regain her bearings, Kotori breathed heavily as she used one of her matches to ignite a few logs the two had to give the trio some warmth.

"Oh wow, that was a close one. You two saved my life. Thank you, can't believe I was unlucky and got cast as The Little Match Girl here... before anything past that, how bad does my face look from all the slapping?" Kotori asked.

"Uh..." Kaguya trailed off.

"Well..." Yuzuru sweated.

Kotori's left cheek was all swollen, she had a black right eye, a slight nosebleed and some of her face was a bit purple. How much of that was from the cold and the slapping? Neither twin had an answer.

"Should we lie?" Kaguya whispered.

"I don't know." Yuzuru whispered back, giving a sweat drop.

Kotori blinked in confusion, soon noticing their outfits.

"Let me guess, you two are Hansel and Gretel?" Kotori asked.

"I think we are? Uh... the candy house is part of their story, right?" Kaguya asked.

"Yeah, that's you... wait, did you see the witch?" Kotori asked worriedly.

Yuzuru nodded.
"We did, the two of us found the candy house and ate some of it cause were a bit hungry. Then some old woman showed up and offered us to come inside." Kaguya started.

"However, she seemed rather dubious, so we declined her apparent generosity. After that... she got enraged and chased after us furiously. We didn't have access to our powers, but luckily we could still run fast enough to get away." Yuzuru finished.

"Just like I thought, I can't use any of my powers. All I can do is light a match to make illusions." Kotori replied, an illusionary Chupa Chups in her mouth.

Kotori sighed and looked at the sky a bit.

"What I can make out so far is that Nia sent us all in here with her Demon King, so she's likely why our powers are shot right now. What I can't understand for the love of me is why she did? She mentioned she caused this whole thing, almost like she was testing us, but the reaction she gave us for saving the civilians? It was..."

The Yamai twins looked at each other.

"That was odd, it seemed like we did exactly what she was testing us for." Kaguya noted.

"And yet when she saw it, her expression seemed... pained." Yuzuru added.

Kotori thought.

"Wait, she mentioned a name and asked why people like us didn't exist back then. It was like our result was something that brought up a traumatic memory. Could it be this relates to the DEM?" Kotori wondered.

"Damn it! Not them again, how many Spirits have had their lives ruined by the crap they pull?" Kaguya groaned angrily.

"I don't know, but Nia seems to have been heartbroken by what they did, enough that she couldn't seem to register our act of helping everyone as something genuine. It sounds like they took someone dear to her and no one was there to help. Let's find the others, maybe if we do we'll find Nia." Kotori replied.

The Yamai twins nodded before Kotori and the both of them grabbed a piece of the burning wood, walking out of the alley area before somehow finding themselves by a hill. Kotori blinks at the sight.

"A hill... wait a second, a fictional story with a hill. It's not a fairy tale, but that's gotta be-"

"AAAAAAAAH!"

"I'm coming Maria!"

Everyone turns to see Maria as she was tumbling down a hill with Marina rushing after, both wearing 18th century clothing like the Yamai twins, but with a different color scheme. Unfortunately for Marina, she wasn't fast enough to reach her sister as Maria threatened to land on her crown.

"Oh no, Maria and Marina are Jack and Jill!" Kotori exclaimed.

"And Maria's about to break her crown." Yuzuru added.

"Quick, catch her!" Kaguya shouted.
The three ran towards Maria, hoping to catch her... only for the four to have their heads collide. A dazed Maria landed on top of the three who were as equally dazed from the sudden collision, making Marina sweat drop at the sight.

"Oh dear..." Marina sighed.

Soon everyone regained their bearings and got back on their feet.

"Your head alright?" Marina asked her younger sister.

"Yeah, I'm OK. Jack fell down but didn't break his crown... I seriously think something made my foot give out on purpose. That was not a position I could have normally fallen over from... this story world's scary." Maria answered, gulping a bit.

Kotori shivered.

"I nearly died from the cold cause of my story." Kotori replied.

"A witch tried eating us." Yuzuru replied as Kaguya nodded.

Marina just stood there, looking calm.

Everyone blinked at her, and Kotori walked up close to her.

"Wow Marina, you're taking all this pretty well-" Kotori replied.

"GET ME OUT OF HERE! GET ME OUT, I NEED TO GET OUT! I CAN'T TAKE THIS MADNESS ANYMORE! GET ME OUT, GET ME OUT, GET ME OUT!" Marina screamed loudly, her whole hair going frizzy and wild from the sudden burst of stress.

Marina screamed more and started rolling across the ground, making everyone's eyes get shadowed in shock.

"...She snapped." Maria said worriedly.

"Well, I give her kudos for holding out this long." Kotori said with a sweat drop.

Marina pants before she gets up, rubbing her hands through her hair to fix most of the frizz.

"OK, I got the worst out of my system for now... changing focus. While we were on the way here, we heard a lot of people mentioning something about a king and a Mermaid. While that on it's on wouldn't be much, guess what the Mermaid was claimed to have kept saying?" Marina stated.

"It was Darling, who do we know who uses that world like the plague?" Maria replied.

"That's Miku! Then that would mean she's become the Little Mermaid, which is ironic actually." Yuzuru noted.

"Well yeah, she gives up her voice, Miku's the last person who would do that. Almost makes you wonder if Nia chose which characters we'd be specifically because we wouldn't follow the story?" Kaguya wondered.

Everyone gives a blank face, and Marina screams again.

"I can't handle this world, let's go find Miku and then the others and then kick Nia's ass so we can get the hell out of this place!" Marina complained, her hair frizzing again.
"Agreed." The others said with white eyes, all afraid of Marina's freak out.

Natsumi was seen with messy hair similar to what she had back when she hadn't remembered her child form wasn't her true form, and wearing rags and lacking any shoes whatsoever as she was cleaning the floor with a broom.

It wasn't too hard for Natsumi to piece everything together, she had become Cinderella.

"HEY CINDERELLA, GOTTA CLEAN THE REST OF THIS MESS!" The first step sister mocked.

"MUST SUCK, YOU CAN'T CLEAN FAST ENOUGH TO COME JOIN US!" The second sister laughed.

"Now, now girls. It isn't Cinderella's fault that she makes a new mess each time she cleans the last one." The step mother said before snickering to herself.

As they all leave to go to the king's part, Natsumi heard the sound of something breaking.

She sighed, wondering where the Fairy God Mother was.

"What's taking her? I don't like where this is going, and I can't really tell what Nia's doing. My mimicry doesn't help when this fairy tale can be the same and different at times and I don't even know which version of the story this is." Natsumi wondered.

"Hey, is that you Natsumi?"

Natsumi's eyes widened and she looked at the window, surprised to see none other than Mayuri as she floated on a magic carpet while wearing some Arabian clothing. Based on the outfit and the bags of treasure she had...

"I don't get it, why did Nia make you Ali Baba?" Natsumi asked.

"Uh... I think it's because the open sesame door is kinda like the pod Mildred made me in?" Mayuri asked unsure.

"Hmm... eh, works for me." Natsumi shrugged.

"And I see you're Cinderella, I think I know why you haven't seen the Fairy God Mother yet." Mayuri replied.

Mayuri opened her bags of treasure, and after digging through them long enough, she found a pair of glass slippers to Natsumi's surprise.

"They were in the treasure trove of the 40 Thieves?" Natsumi said in shock.

"Yeah, Nia's like a war tactician. Her plans are scary." Mayuri said with a shaky expression.

"...I'll just put them on now." Natsumi said with a sweat drop.

Natsumi took the slippers and soon put her feet inside them, soon causing a white dress to form around her body with a white rose with a slight cyan tint near the dress' uppermost area, resting across her breasts. Her hair was now in a neat bun, and silky smooth again with a tiara resting on top.

"Come on, your flying carriage awaits." Mayuri said offering a hand.
"Hopefully we can find the others soon." Natsumi replied, taking her hand.

Once on the carpet, Mayuri motioned it to start flying in a certain direction, but as they did... a certain screech caught their ears, making both of them freeze up.

"...Natsumi, what story has something that sounds like that?" Mayuri asked while sweating.

"...None." Natsumi replied afraid.

Soon enough the screech went off again, and the sight of a vampiric creature appeared before them.

"WHAT THE HELL IS THAT!?" Mayuri screamed.

"I recognize that from Mana's collection of Silver Bullet manga, that's the demonic vampire Nosferatu! Nia's put her own series into this world and I think it wants us dead!" Natsumi replied in a panic.

"How screwed are we considering we can't use our powers!?" Mayuri asked as she paled.

"Silver Bullet's a Shonen, a fairy tale would be squashed as easily as someone's teeth sinking into a cream puff." Natsumi answered honestly.

Nosferatu stretches his wings and flies forward, causing Mayuri to gasp as she turned the magic carpet, dodging the monster before it turns after them.

"You won't escape me!" Nosferatu roared.

Nosferatu opened his mouth and started siphoning magic from the fairy tale world's environment, gobbling its power and making it wither into a wasteland similar to those found in the Silver Bullet story.

"Prepare to die!" Nosferatu shouted.

"Oh man, what are we gonna do!?" Mayuri wondered.

"Just keep flying, maybe if we get far enough we'll be in the right environment for us to use against him. Also try to not be afraid, Nosferatu gets more powerful if you show fear, I doubt we'll have the courage to weaken him, but we can't at least limit him a bit." Natsumi replied.

"Alright, guess that's as good a plan as any." Mayuri nodded.

Mayuri focused as the demonic vampire sped up towards them, the Lightning Spirit shifted her body to make the carpet move sharply and quickly from his rushing, using the monster's wings limiting its turning against it. Nosferatu growled before using some nearby trees to slingshot himself via a jump.

"Duck!" Natsumi exclaimed.

"Oh shit!" Mayuri gasped.

The two did, and narrowly missed Nosferatu before he got in front of them.

Nosferatu cackled as the stared at the realization they were trapped.

"You're finished, just like my master wished, you can't escape the fate of death this world has made your reality! Now, time to die." Nosferatu cackled loudly.
Suddenly a silver colored energy blast fired at Nosferatu, causing the demonic vampire to screech in agony and pain as most of its body was destroyed.

Natsumi and Mayuri both stared in shock, trying to find the source of the shot, but failed as a silhouette shadowed by the sunlight looked at them from behind and smiled before vanishing from view.

"No, this isn't possible! Why are you here now Fatima!?" Nosferatu demanded as he tried finding the unseen savior.

"Fatima? That's the hero of Silver Bullet, why would Nia have her show up?" Natsumi wondered.

"Regardless of why, let's use this chance to escape!" Mayuri stated.

Mayuri motions the carpet again, and the two fly off, but Nosferatu's eyes turn at them before using what was left of his body to claw forward, soon siphoning magic to heal and fly after them.

"I really wish we had our power right now, I wish Ali Baba had something other than saying open sesame!" Mayuri growls.

Suddenly an area of stone parted open to the duo's surprise.

"Mayuri, I think I've got an idea." Natsumi smiled.

"I think I know what it is, hold on tight!" Mayuri smirked.

Mayuri flew the carpet ahead faster, and Nosferatu rushed at them as they flew through the parted rocks.

Nosferatu flew behind them and got ever closer.

"I have you now!" Nosferatu cackled with a large smirk.

"Close sesame!" Mayuri declared.

Suddenly the rocks began to closer around them, catching Nosferatu's attention as Mayuri takes a bag of her treasure and chucks it at him, decking Nosferatu in the face.

Once the demonic vampire regained his bearings, he saw Natsumi and Mayuri narrowly making it out of the pathway of the parted rocks before they began fully closing. The same luck hadn't shared itself with Nosferatu, as now the rocks were about to close on him!

"No... this isn't possible-" Nosferatu screamed in fear.

Soon the two heard the rocks smash back together, killing the vampiric creature as it was trapped within them. Mayuri's magic carpet floated overhead in the valley like area they had escaped to.

"Phew... that was scary, I can't believe we killed a vampire like that. He didn't survive that, did he?" Mayuri asked.

"Considering he was afraid, nope. Not to mention I'm pretty sure Nosferatu had a perma-death by Volume 11." Natsumi answered.

The two sighed in relief, when...
"Natsumi, Mayuri? Is that you!?"

The two looked down to see Kurumi and Rinne below them, making Mayuri smile as she lowered the magic carpet.

"Rinne! Kurumi! Thank goodness, both of you are alright." Mayuri smiled.

"Sleeping Beauty and Tamamo, those characters suit you both perfectly." Natsumi replied.

"Same with you, Cinderella and... wait, which Arabian Nights character are you Mayuri?" Kurumi asked.

"Ali Baba." Mayuri answered.

"Thank you, your guys got fitting characters too." Kurumi finished.

Rinne noticed how tired they both seemed.

"Hey, are you two alright? You look like you ran a marathon." Rinne asked in concern.

"We kinda did, well we flew one, the Nosferatu monster from Silver Bullet chased us and we just barely escaped it." Natsumi answered.

"Aw man, the vampire thing? Mana always mentions how hard to kill it was. You had to face that thing?" Rinne gasped.

"Yeah, the strangest thing? Nosferatu claimed to have seen Fatima during the chase. We didn't see her though. I doubt she's one of the others since they wouldn't have hidden themselves otherwise... I wonder what's going on?" Mayuri thought aloud.

Rinne and Kurumi looked at each other for a moment, wondering that themselves.

"Well, think you can give us a ride? We think we found out something about Origami's whereabouts. We're heading over to a castle in the South right now." Rinne asked.

"Of course, the carpet can handle a lot of heavy treasure and I threw out a bag as a weapon against that vampire. You two should be easy for it to handle in comparison." Mayuri nodded.

Rinne and Kurumi both got on, and soon enough the magic carpet took flight towards the South.

Meanwhile as they left, Nia appeared by the parted rocks and stared angrily.

"They actually defeated you? How weak you were, I guess I need to call the bigger guns to deal with this." Nia said with a glare.

Nia drew three more pictures, and tossed them out.

The first one became a slime monster of sorts, giving off a foul stench like the rotten decay of deceased flesh. The second was some kind of large machine with a dinosaur like appearance, and finally a large mass of shadow with some strange alien objects floating as if helping give the shadow a form.

"Let's see how the rest of you deal with these." Nia stated.

While she was standing there, on top of the rocks, a familiar black jacket/coat hybrid and pair of silver guns was seen being worn and held by the same person who had saved Natsumi and Mayuri
from Nosferatu.

She crossed her arms with her guns in them, and soon jumped off somewhere.

Meanwhile with the Yamai twins, Kotori and the Arusu sisters, the group had managed to find themselves in the valley area that Rinne's group had just left, now a little lost on where to find the castle.

"Aw man, this is getting a bit ridiculous. If only we had a compass." Maria sighed.

"I know, and I'm running out of hair to avoid having frizz from my freak outs." Marina groaned worriedly.

Kaguya gasps.

"I got it!" Kaguya exclaimed.

"What is it?" Yuzuru asked.

"Kotori, if you can make illusions, try making one of a map and compass! That'll show us where to go." Kaguya answered.

Everyone's eyes widened at that.

"A man, why didn't we think of that sooner. Let's see... I have two left, huddle around me so the wind doesn't blow them out." Kotori stated.

Everyone did so, and she burned the first match while thinking of a map, and then the second to think of a compass. Everyone turned to look, with Marina getting a closer look at what they were seeing.

"It looks like we're by this mountain formation, and the castle is to the North, so..." Marina stated.

Everyone saw Kotori turn until she found north, facing an area full of trees.

"There we go." Kotori smiled as her matches extinguished.

"Alright, let's get to the castle." Marina replied.

The group began heading towards the trees marking the North, but only moments after they did... a suddenly nose similar to a distorted cry of someone drowning was heard, freaking out Marina who jumped into her younger sister's arms.

"What was that!?" Marina asked.

"You are... way jumpier than usual, which is never!" Maria gasped out, struggling to hold her sister.

"I'm not sure what made that thing, but... I don't like the sound of it." Kaguya shivered.

Yuzuru soon sniffed something gross, and covered her nose.

"What's that smell? It's so vile!" Yuzuru asked, her eyes watering.

"Uh... what the hell is that?" Maria asked, pointing at something.

Soon a slime like monster dripped out of the trees before forming its body, its beady black eyes
actually making it creepier by being so unfitting on the gooey body it possessed.

Kotori gasped as she recognized it, while Maria dropped Marina in shock.

"That's one of the villains on Silver Bullet, the Undead Lord: Nesuferitu! It's pretty much a zombie in slime form!" Kotori answered.

"Oh shit, Nia brought her manga's villains into this world? Horrible time for us to lose our powers!" Marina shouted as she stood back up.

"Only one thing to do... RUN AWAY!" Kaguya screamed.

The whole group began running as Nesuferitu lurched out them, the slimy creature being incredibly fast due to its undead nature.

"Where are you all going? I just want to gobble you up is all!" Nesuferitu said hoarsely.

"Wondrous, it's a cannibal." Yuzuru remarked sarcastically.

Nesuferitu lunged ahead, stopping in front of the group who all slid down in response, the slime monster prepared to grab them as Kotori dove and knocked them all to the ground.

"Hey Kotori, you know this villain, right? How do you kill it!?!" Marina asked worriedly.

"Well it's a zombie slime, so gotta completely destroy the slime body so it can't recover. We don't have any weapons for it. Worse, even if I had any matches, Nesuferitu's body can't be burned because his slime's too runny." Kotori answered.

Kotori's eyes widened, recalling the nearby river.

"Of course, Nesuferitu's body is runny! I got a plan, but I need all of you to scatter and run, please trust me!" Kotori asked.

"Go ahead, no better ideas are coming from us!" Kaguya remarked.

Nesuferitu soon went after them again, and everyone rolled away before splitting up, Nesuferitu shook before splitting into five of himself, each a fifth his size, and went after each Spirit with slightly slower but still very quick speed.

"You can't run or hide, I will catch you and eat you up!" The first Nesuferitu piece hoarsely cackled.

"Says you fatty!" Kaguya mocked.

"I am not fat, I'm obese." The second Nesuferitu piece hoarsely replied.

"...Did he really just say that?" Yuzuru asked.

Kotori jumped to the trees, and the Arusu siblings began running through them as their Nesuferitu pieces charge them and Kotori's tries to locate her.

Kotori checks for the best tree, and smirks before jumping to it, soon whistling to attract the Yamai twins.

"I think she wants us over there, let's go!" Kaguya stated.
"Understood." Yuzuru replied.

The Yamai twins and their Nesuferitu pieces run that way, and the Arusu sisters soon run under a certain tree only for them to be pulled up, confusing their Nesuferitu pieces.

"Where did they go?" Both Nesuferitu pieces hoarsely wondered.

The Yamai twins ran through, soon coming in from the other side as they got pulled up the same, with Kotori looking at them and the Arusu sisters with smile. She put a finger to her mouth before getting up.

Kotori soon jumped to a different tree and whistled.

"Hey, over here nasty slime balls!" Kotori yelled.

All five pieces see her, and soon form back into a single Nesuferitu.

"Ah, exposing yourself? Alright then, I'll just eat you first, bottom's up!" Nesuferitu stated hoarsely.

"Then come get me!" Kotori replied, slapping her butt and sticking her tongue out.

Nesuferitu sinks a bit as Kotori jumps up and down to get his attention, and soon Nesuferitu lurches up as Kotori jumps, only to jump backwards and fall out of his jumping range. As the zombie slime flew... he saw he was aiming at the river.

"Oh no, water!? Not the water! HELP ME!" Nesuferitu hoarsely screamed.

Nesuferitu landed in the water, screaming in pain as the five Spirits walked over to see him dissolve into nothing.

"That was kinda convenient, wasn't it?" Maria asked.

"Well normally Fatima didn't get to fight the guy near water, much less water big enough to kill him instantly. In the manga's story, what ended up killing him was petrification and shattering his body afterwards. Guess we're lucky that this world of shared fairy tales had just what we needed." Kotori explained.

"Well, we better get to the castle before another Silver Bullet villain decides to show up." Marina answered.

With that being said, the group nodded and resumed heading North.

Shiori's group was seated around a small camp fire as they had some fish Sarugami caught from the river.

"You think Inugami's found it yet? I'd like to be more than an inch tall again." Rio sighed, her voice squeaking a bit.

"There, there. He'll find it soon enough." Mana assured.

Soon barking is heard, and Inugami walked over with a decorated mallet in his mouth.

"Alright, you found it! Thanks Inugami." Tohka smiled.

"My nose knows," Inugami chuckled.
Rio smiled and jumped onto the ground, Mana took the mallet and bopped Rio with it, making her and her sowing needle become as big as the others.

"Yay, I'm normal sized again!" Rio cheered.

"Alright, now with that I think we can get back to finding the others. Where do we look though?" Shiori wondered.

"I think I know!" Kijigami replied.

Everyone saw the pheasant fly from high up as she landed on Tohka's shoulder.

"You find something Kijigami?" Tohka asked.

"I did Momotarou, the king's castle at the west is having a party and a lot of people are heading to see something. They may expect you to head over there." Kijigami explained.

"Then that's where we'll head, come on every-" Shiori replied.

Suddenly the sound of something crashing gets everyone's attention, and soon a large shadow overtakes the area as a giant machine drove into view, one that looked a bit like a dinosaur in appearance. Everyone gasped while Mana's eyes widened.

"I recognize that, it's the Dead Raze-NIL8! It was a machine made in Silver Bullet specifically to combat Fatima after she defeated Nesuferitu for good! Worse, considering whose world this is in..." Mana stated with worry.

"This one might be made to fight against the characters we've been cast as?" Yoshino asked.

Mana nodded.

"Aw man, well we've gotta try! That thing's gonna kill us otherwise!" Rio answered.

"Right, Fatima beat it and we can too!" Mana smirked.

Mana jumped up and prepared the Kusanagi before swinging it down.

"EAT LIGHTNING!" Mana shouted.

A storm of lightning bolts rain down on the Dead Raze, but they do nothing as it discharges the electricity through the ground. Mana looks in shock, and soon swung the Kusanagi a few times to create strong winds.

The nearby grass was sliced, but aside from clanks to confirm the wind strikes his, the Dead Raze still hadn't taken any damage!

"No way, how!?!" Mana gasped.

"Try this!" Shiori exclaimed.

A blast of lunar energy fires at the Dead Raze's optical, but it still did nothing to Shiori's surprise.

Tohka rushed forward and slashed her katana at the machine's body, while Rio jumped and thrust her giant sowing needle like a spear, both didn't breach the metal armor of the Dead Raze in the slightest.
"Dang it, how do we fight this thing?" Tohka asked as she sweated.

"Look out!" Shiori screamed.

Everyone saw the Dead Raze's entire weaponry open as a storm of beams, missiles, gunfire and etc. all rained down at the group. Everyone ran away, trying to dodge the chaos, but Yoshino tripped during the process.

"Yoshino!" Shiori called out.

"Shiori, help me!" Yoshino cried.

Shiori rushed over as a laser fell towards Yoshino, and she shielded her with her body just as the attack hit them.

"SHIORI!" Mana, Tohka and Rio all screamed.

Dead Raze gives a loud mechanical sound in response, almost as it to echo the grim situation across the land and making sure everyone could hear it.

Just as the others began to worry Shiori and Yoshino were killed by the blast... they hear coughing, and everyone sees Shiori's hair was now orange as she had just barely managed to move Yoshino out of the way in time.

"Spirit Ascension, but how? None of us have our powers here." Mana asked surprised.

Tohka looked at Shiori, noticing she was only healing, but no flames or Camael... she gasped as she put 2 and 2 together.

"Of course, that's it!" Tohka exclaimed.

"Huh?" Mana wondered.

"We can't use our powers, but there's one thing Nia can't influence... our bodies!" Tohka smirked.

Tohka put her katana into the ground, soon backing up a bit as the Dead Raze prepared another round of attacks. Soon Tohka rushed ahead, gaining speed.

"Here I go!" Tohka declared.

Tohka soon jumped high into the air, surprising her animal companions and friends as she did.

As she neared Dead Raze, the Energy Spirit reeled her fist back.

"You might be made to handle Momotarou's powers, but you aren't designed to my power!" Tohka exclaimed loudly.

Tohka screamed as she threw her fist forward, smashing it into Dead Raze's chest area, and this time the giant dinosaur like machine actually felt the attack as a huge dent formed where Tohka had struck it.

In moments, pieces of its armor began to fall off, and it began to explode in a few spots as the damage spread through a chain reaction. Shiori and the others all looked in shock, with Momotarou's animal companions not even noticing it since the character didn't have that strength.

"Alright I was right! I can still hit hard without my powers!" Tohka cheered in midair.
"Oh, of course! No matter what powers Nia negates on us, anything applying to our bodies themselves can't be negated! Your Spirit Ascension can still use the others' physical strengths!" Mana realized.

"Tohka's amazing!" Rio cheered.

Dead Raze gave a mechanical cry before fully exploding, making everyone cover their eyes from the result, Tohka herself still in the air as it happened.

After the smoke cleared, Rio noticed Tohka was just floating in place.

"Uh... hey big sis, why is Tohka floating there?" Rio asked.

"...Oh no." Mana paled as she realized what was about to happen.

Tohka blinked and looked down, and soon she began falling towards the ground.

"Don't worry Tohka, I've gotcha!" Shiori screamed, rushing to catch her.

Shiori managed to get under Tohka, but instead of catching her... she ended up being Tohka's cushion as she landed on her. Shiori twitches a bit as Tohka looked at Shiori.

"Sorry!" Tohka chuckled embarrassingly.

"Ouch." Yoshino winced.

Shiori slowly managed to get on her feet.

"That was close, I can't believe you noticed that Tohka. I don't know how, but you always seem to be full of surprises." Shiori said rubbing her head.

Tohka giggles.

"But wait, why didn't Nia give that machine a defense against our usual powers?" Rio asked.

"If I had to guess, it's possible she couldn't, or... no, that isn't it. I bet she didn't even realize some of our abilities could slip through. She couldn't have known every detail about her new powers after Inverting. Especially since she was angry, and people make worse judgments or miss something obvious when angry. That's how that whole 'anger makes you dumb' phrase was born." Mana guessed.

"Then we have an advantage now, if we can find the others we'll have that for when we face Nia. We're not completely bound by the rules of this world now!" Tohka replied, pumping her fists up.

"Then let's head West and hopefully find them." Shiori nodded.

The group began heading West, hoping to eventually reach the castle and find the others.

Nia stared in anger a Beelzebub listed Nesuferitu and Dead Raze as having been destroyed, the latter of the two being especially irritating to her.

"Impossible... this isn't possible! How are they doing this!? This is my world, how are they going against fate like this! I won't accept it... I refuse to accept it! No matter what, they will... they will learn the truth." Nia growled, shaking a bit with teary eyes.
The sight of a hospitalized Souji staring at Nia, but Nia looking horrified by something she heard, flashed through her mind.

"I swear they'll understand how Humanity truly is!" Nia screamed, taking her pen and writing in Raziel.

Her message? It was... {Gather every villain so they can have Necuratu destroy them all}, Nia closed Beelzebub, giving a dark look...

...Her story was far from its last scene.

-Nia & Souji's Story, Chapter 3-

Souji panted as she put out more sketch ideas for some of Fatima's techniques and new character designs for her allies.

"Hey Nia, did your get your designs done?" Souji asked tiredly.

"Y-yeah, I got them! Just give me a second to organize the-Wah!" Nia exclaimed.

Souji suddenly saw a whole cabinet burst open, revealing a storm of papers as they flew out and floated to the ground.

"Oh man, we're running out of space here!" Nia shouted.

"This office is getting way too cramped! Hold on, I'm coming!" Souji said, instantly rushing over.

The two began cleaning up, and soon they were both against a wall panting from exhaustion.

"If only we knew a good deal for a better place than this office." Nia breathed.

"I agree... if only we had some physical google that answered exactly what we wanted to hear." Souji panted.

"(I can help you with that.)"

The two both shot up surprised, and soon noticed a mosaic standing before them, outlined like a young girl was there yet invisible.

The two screamed, scaring Phantom a bit.

"(W-wait, wait, wait, wait, wait! It's OK, I'm not here to hurt you!)") Phantom said waving her unseen hands out defensively.

"Who are you!?" Nia asked afraid.

"(Uh... well, my name is... actually I can't share it. You can just call me Phantom.)" Phantom answered.

Phantom soon dug around and revealed the Raziel Crystal.

"What is this?" Souji asked surprised.

"(It's called a Sephira Crystal, this one in particular is the Raziel Crystal.)" Phantom answered.

"Raziel... wait a second, that silver color. Do you mean like the Tree of Life, the Sephirot? The Angel
Raziel that represents Wisdom?" Souji gasped.

"(...Wow, you're like scary on the ball with this.)" Phantom replied in shock.

After a bit, Phantom explained about the origins of the Spirits and the Spacequakes, and why she was offering the Sephira Crystal to Souji.

"...Isaac Westcott of DEM? Are you serious, this is all his doing!?" Souji gasped.

"(Yes, I'm serious, and it was him... his realizer aiding Humanity is just his game to crush their hope when he gains this power. That's why I can't let him... so I need people like you who can bond with them and protect them. Souji, you and Nia are both candidates Raziel accepts, but only if you want. If you accept this then you may one day have to face the risk of the DEM attacking you. Knowing that, will you still take it?)" Phantom asked.

Souji looks at it, and then at Nia, she pauses for a moment before nodding.

Knowing that Nia would be willing to accept the burden, Souji breathes and makes a serious face before she grabs it. At that moment, Raziel absorbs into her body and she gasps, her pupils going white and her Astral Dress forming.

"Whoa!" Nia said in awe.

Raziel formed in Souji's hands.

[It is a pleasure to work with you from here on, I am your Angel: Raziel. I'll aid you however I can.]

"You can talk?" Souji asked.

"Huh? I don't hear anything." Nia replied in confusion.

[Sorry, you're the only one who can hear me aside from the First Spirit, but yes.]

Phantom smiled, and soon put a hand on both girls' shoulders.

"(Keep Raziel and this power safe, I'll come by on occasion to check up on you. Bye for now.)" Phantom stated.

Phantom jumped back and teleported away.

Souji looked at Raziel again, the tome opened op and revealed some knowledge inside to Souji's surprise... this was the power entrusted to her.

A power... that she swore to use wisely, and to protect... but would also spell her soon to be demise.

Nia's really starting to lose it, I don't think she even knows what she's doing now, she seems so confused. Though maybe that's it... Souji was the closest thing to family she had, it's probably because of that she's acting so violently right now... Shido, don't give up, do whatever you can to save her! The main challenge is taking out Necuratu, the central antagonist of Silver Bullet, and all the other stories' villains.

Good news is now only Origami and Miku's whereabouts are unknown, but it's heavily implied the two of them are gathered in the same place. However, the bigger mystery is why is
Fatima in the story world? Why is the hero of Nia's own manga present? She doesn't seem to be anyone in the group, because if they were, they would have let Natsumi and Mayuri know it was them.

Now why did I choose to make Mayuri Ali Baba? I was because of the plot point in the story about the magical door that required the right words to open and close. Mayuri was artificially made in a pod, representing how someone had to open the door for her freedom. A bit more loose compared to the others, but the thieves' treasure was good for getting Natsumi her glass slippers without a Fairy God Mother.

The three groups are about to reunite, and they've shown even without their powers, they can still fight back. Especially since Tohka's helped her group realize they aren't fully powerless depending on if their powers have a side effect on their bodies. Nia might be clever, but she didn't think they'd still have some abilities not scripted to her story. The question now is will they be enough against what's next?

Well, we'll find out next time. Until then everyone, stay awesome ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 96% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 96% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 90% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)
Welcome back everyone, before we start I have an announcement. Volume 17's cover was released (ironically, had I finished the last chapter later, I could have shared that detail with all of you ^^;), so you might be wondering, who's on it? Well... to the surprise of many fans, it isn't Inverse Kurumi, Reine OR Mio! It's actually one of the Nibellcole, the minions Westcott made in Vol 16.

I think there's a reason for this though, Tachibana confessed in Volume 15's afterword that Inverse Mukuro was his original choice for the cover character, but he decided not to use her because he didn't want to give away she would undergo an Inversion during the volume's events. It makes sense when you considering how our first few Inversions appeared.

When Inverse Tohka appeared on Volume 7's cover, we didn't know about Inversions yet. I myself honestly thought Westcott created an evil Tohka because cover's corner listed her as "Spirit No. 10i", nor had I ever heard of a demon named Nahemah. Inverse Origami appeared in Volume 10, so Volume 11 only spoiled anyone who didn't read Volume 10, and Nia's arc was a single volume, so he managed to slip hers in without anyone expecting it.

That likely means either Inverse Kurumi will be appearing, more secrets about Reine and/or Mio (such as if they're one in the same or not), or maybe even both. Ultimately, we won't know what'll be revealed until it comes out next month. I just hope if Inverse Kurumi does show up, we actually get to see an illustration of her, we still haven't seen Inverse Nia and Mukuro and that makes me worry that history will repeat here... please show us Tachibana T^T

Well anyways, this is the last bit of the Nia Storybook arc. It's time for Miku and Origami to finally reunite with everyone who finally regroup, and most of all... everyone's about to face the many story villains and Silver Bullet's ultimate villain. Most of all, you'll learn who the true identity of who's Fatima in this story. So, without further ado...

...Let's begin!

Chapter 57, S3: Nia Storybook, Part 7

-Nia & Souji's Story, Chapter 4-

"So, I can ask you anything and you'll find the answer?" Souji asked, looking at Raziel.

[Well... sort of, I'm near-omniscient, but there are some questions that I just don't have an answer to. To give you one example... ask me about the history of the Spirit Dimension and you'll see what I mean.]

"Uh... OK, then tell me some of the Spirit Dimension's history.” Souji asked.

Souji looked at Raziel had writing form on it... but not in English, it was some alien language.

"Is... this the language of the Spirits?” Souji asked.
"Extinct? What happened?" Souji asked.

"Yeah, now I'm curious." Nia asked.

Well... Phantom didn't tell you everything, I'm sorry, but I don't want to talk about it. True Spirits no longer exist, there's only Phantom and you now, so this language is undecipherable. I mean, I could tell you, but that would still show in Spirit language and I myself can't exactly...

Souji pats the Angel's upper cover.

"It's alright, don't force yourself to talk about anything painful." Souji smiled.

Nia gave her own tooth smile in reply.

An entire year soon passed, and Souji was currently making an announcement where she publicly unveiled Silver Bullet as her upcoming work. Nia was currently getting some additional items for the presentation and wasn't with Souji at the moment.

"I know how afraid we've all been with the Spacequake threat plaguing us, but I know that Humanity will stay strong. We will find a way to survive... and we will see another day for years to come. This series is my message to how even in this dark time, we will not give in." Souji announced.

Everyone clapped in reply, but unaware to anyone... someone was on the roof. That someone was Ellen with the precursor to her Rhongomiant and Pendragon CR-Unit.

She readied her weapon at the ceiling.

"Ike, I'm in position. Am I clear to fire yet?" Ellen asked via a communicator.

"Not just yet, we need the right moment. Everyone's too crowded and as much as I'd rather work under the Law of the Jungle, remember we've never found a Spirit that was formerly Human. I still don't truly know their limits after the First Spirit left me this way." Westcott replied.

"Is that why we're still only engaged, or do you just get cold feet in big events?" Ellen joked in a stale manner.

Westcott chuckled at that.

"Very funny. Don't worry, you'll get your chance soon enough, I just want no interruptions. After all... I doubt you want a battle with [Sister] to end prematurely. Am I right?" Westcott replied.

"Fair point. Alright then, I'll wait." Ellen nodded.

After a bit, the next stage of the announcement was being prepared, and Nia brought the needed props before getting some food. Everyone began moving back as Nia prepared to unveil the protagonist of Silver Bullet.

"And now, I'd like to introduce the concept of the story's hero, Fatima! My protege helped me create the basis of her character, so... it is my honor to reveal her, the one I based her appearance one... Nia Honjou!" Souji announced.
Nia saw a spotlight near her, and suddenly she went red, moving to a wall and looking at it so no one saw her blush. However, the spotlight followed her, and eventually Souji giggled as her protege went into the hall to avoid it.

Meanwhile back on the roof, Ellen was still waiting with her weapon, and then...

"Ah, the lights just went off. Fire at will Ellen," Westcott smirked.

"With pleasure." Ellen replied, a battle hungry grin on her face.

Ellen blasted the ceiling, causing a cave in as everyone gasped and Souji looked up in surprise. As the lack of lights, debris and dust veil made visibility hard to see, Souji made out someone flying down to attack her.

Nia noticed this, and quickly turned to get back in the room and make sure Souji was OK.

"Help, someone please help me!" Souji called out.

However, no one came... they were too afraid. Everyone was too traumatized by the many Spacequakes and the currently inability to avoid them, the building's destruction just registered too much like Spacequake damage.

Nia came back in and noticed the silhouette of someone attacking Souji's. She looked around, surprised that no one was helping, unable to notice they were all being affected trauma induced panic attacks due to the veil of dust and the distance.

"...Why aren't they helping her? Why?" Nia wondered aloud.

'Dang it, this is bad... wait, no one can see! I can fly out without suspicion!' Souji thought.

Before Nia could move to help her mentor, Souji assumed her Astral Dress and flew outside with Ellen following, Nia covered her eyes as the wind blew dust at her.

She soon opened her eyes to see they were both gone.

"Souji? SOUJI!?" Nia called out.

Up in the air, Souji stopped to catch her breath, thinking her attacker couldn't follow... only for her to suddenly cough out blood as she felt something stab through her. She looked down in horror to see she had been stabbed and was bleeding.

She turned to see Ellen flying in midair with a smug look on her face... and Souji's eyes widening as she noticed the DEM logo on her armor.

"Oh my, it seems you didn't know you could be followed. I'm guessing you're not meant for combat either. Killing you will be easier than I fought. I wished for more, but I'm more excited to kill my First Spirit right now that I'll let it slide." Ellen smirked.

'She's with the DEM, oh my god... this is what Phantom warned me about! I've gotta do something or this bitch is gonna kill me!' Souji thought worriedly

Souji prepared her Astral Dress' pen, but Ellen fired at her with her cannon and blew her back faster than she could react, sending her flying the sky and into a building, she grabbed Souji by the head before throwing her up and swinging the same sword she had stabbed Souji with moments early.
Souji screamed as her Astral Dress was quickly cut to ribbons and her entire body was struck with deep cuts that left quickly left her a red stained mess as she fell onto a building’s roof. She shook and panted as she tried to get up, staring at Ellen who held the red stained energy blade in her hands, licking her lips as she readied the final blow.

'I... I can’t win, I have to run!' Souji gasped, flying away as she prepared some writing in Raziel.

"I don't think so!" Ellen exclaimed.

Souji soon finished her writing, which was {make an escape portal now!}, but before it formed for her to go through... Ellen thrust her blade forward, and Souji's eyes widen as it struck her head, and the feeling of a lightning bolt striking her brain went through before she went stiff and fell through the portal.

Ellen frowned a bit, realizing she lost the Spirits.

"Oh well, no matter. There's no way that Spirit will be able to survive." Ellen said to herself, wanting to have some satisfaction over this fight's result.

Souji landed somewhere heard, and her vision began to blur, as she began to realize this and something else... she grabbed Raziel, who had been heavily damaged, and began writing something inside of it.

"This is... all I can do now, I have to tell her... please Nia, please make it here in time." Souji gasped out.

She collapsed, and a slight bit of red was seen underneath her. At that moment, Nia finally found where she was... and her face widened in horror.

"SOUJI!" Nia screamed, running up to her.

The group of Natsumi, Mayuri, Rinne and Kurumi all were flying near the castle, crossing over an area of a snow wasteland which left all of them shivering a bit. Mayuri sneezed loudly, her nose running a bit afterwards.

"W-why is there a castle around this kind of area?" Couldn't they have had the gap between it be more grasslands?" Mayuri asked while shivering.

"B-Beats me, I don't remember any fairy tales with a castle near a snow field." Kurumi answered, rubbing her hands over her arms.

After a bit, they found themselves past the snowy fields and back in green grasslands, the quartet sighed in relief as they felt the warmth of it hit their skin.

"Much better." Natsumi smiled.

"Hey wait a second... hey guys!"

The four all turned to see the Yamai twins, Arusu sister, and Kotori wave to them as they ran closer.

"Hey, you all made it! Good to..." Rinne shouted.

However, she trailed off once she witnessed the state of Kotori's face, which still hadn't healed from the Yamai twins forceful wake up call.
"What?" Kotori asked.

"What do you mean what!? Do you not know how badly injured your face looks?" Mayuri exclaimed.

Kotori blinks, and Mayuri grabs some of the treasure in her bag to use as a mirror, causing the Flame Spirit to scream as she saw it.

"Kaguya! Yuzuru! What did you do to my face!?!" Kotori screamed angrily.

"Don't yell at us, you were about to die of snow sleep!" Kaguya countered.

The rest of the group all sweat dropped at the sight, and Kurumi cleared her throat to stop everyone as they looked at her.

"Shouldn't we focus on trying to find the others? We think we found out Origami's at the castle somewhere." Kurumi mentioned.

"Strange, we also heard Miku might be there as a mermaid." Yuzuru mentioned.

"Then we already know where two of our friends are, after that there's only Tohka, Shido, Mana, Rio and Yoshino left to find." Kotori replied.

"Onward we go!" Kaguya cheered.

The group resumed their trip to the castle, now only Mayuri on her magic carpet.

Mana growled at the castle guard standing in their way, they had tried to get in the castle using the fact Shiori was Kaguyahime to get them in since being a princess, she would have likely been allowed inside and brought them all in as guests.

Apparently, the guard did not consider clothing that wasn't a formal dress as royal or fancy clothing, and was refusing them access to the rage of the elder Takamiya sister.

"You wanna say that again!? I'll have you know I'm the God of Storms Susanoo and I could easily zap you to death if I wanted to!" Mana shouted.

"Oh right, you're a god! And I'm the Lord of the Belly Dancers! I'm not falling for your tricks, get out of here before I throw you all in jail!" The guard shouted back.

"How about I just stab you with my blade then!" Mana exclaimed.

Right as Mana was about to draw the Kusanagi...

"Look, there they are!"

The group of five turned to see the rest of their friends minus the still absent Origami and Miku, confusing the guard slightly.

"Mama!" Rio shouted happily, running into Rinne's arms.

"Rio! Are you OK, did your big brother and sister keep you safe?" Rinne asked.

"Yep, thought Shido's Shiori right now." Rio giggled.
Everyone finally noticed, and Shiori sighed.

"Don't... just don't." Shiori said.

"I bet this has to do with how you seem to be stronger as Shiori." Rinne noted.

"Huh?" Shiori asked confused.

"Well the True Spirits were an all-female race. I think that means being female lets you use more power... I'll explain more later." Rinne explained.

Natsumi looked at the others.

"Let's see... Shiori's Kaguyahime, Mana's Susanoo, Rio's Issun-Boshi based on the giant sowing needle, Tohka's Momotarou, and... oh my goodness Yoshino, you look so cute as Little Red Riding Hood!" Natsumi gushed.

Yoshino blushed a bit.

The guard was now really confused, scratching his head.

"Hey wait a second, I think you might be able to get us in. The guard won't let us through despite Shiori's character is a princess." Tohka mentioned.

"Allow me, I'll charm him into putty." Natsumi stated.

Natsumi walked near the guard who blushed upon gazing at her beauty.

"Oh, hello ma'am, go right in." The guard said before giving a deep lovesick giggle.

"About that sir, those five you were so unkind to are my friends. Could you please let them come in as well?" Natsumi asked.

"U-uh... sorry ma'am, but rules are rules." The guard said, refusing to budge.

Natsumi had a small vein form on her head, and then Mayuri got an idea as she grabbed the remaining treasure bags before appearing near the guard's side.

"Hey, what are you-" The guard growled.

"Let us all in and you can have all the gold in these bags." Mayuri stated, opening the bag as proof.

The guard's eyes bugged out in shock, soon looking around.

"...This guard say no non-nobles walk past him." The guard coughed, taking the bags.

"Score!" Mayuri said, giving a fist pump.

Soon everyone walked into the castle, and once they got in they saw how fancy everything was, Marina's mouth became a wide flat frown from the shock.

"...This is overkill." Marina said.

"Well right now we're basically in the time of the 18th century, so overkill was kind of a thing." Shiori replied.

"May I have your attention!"
Everyone turned as the master of ceremonies walked into view, causing them all to focus at her.

"In a moment, we shall be given the privilege to witness, in person, a seldom seen mermaid princess' enchanting serenade!" The emcee declared.

"Looks like we're about to see Miku." Rinne stated.

"Wait, what did you say?" Tohka inquired.

"Oh right, we forgot to tell you. He heard Origami and Miku might be here, and Miku is likely the Little Mermaid because she apparently keeps saying darling." Kurumi explained.

Shiori's group blinked.

"Yeah, that's definitely Miku." They all answered.

Soon enough, the emcee moved as an area of the castle's wall opened up, revealing a fish tank Miku with a mermaid's tail and wearing nothing but a seashell bra. Shiori went a bit red faced at the sight of the Spirit idol being half naked.

"Huh!? Where is this place? Where's Darling! Where did everyone go!?" Miku asked confused to her surroundings, almost as if she just woke up.

"Quiet down, you have an audience!" The emcee said irritated.

"Struggling is useless since you've been purchased by our generous King. You should serve the King by singing a song, I heard that mermaids have very pleasant voices, so let these honored guests indulge in your singing."

Miku gave the emcee a "who do you think you are" look, frowning and shaking her head with her eyes half closed.

"I refuse." Miku stated, crossing her arms and turning away.

The crowd gasped.

"You're the castle's property now. If you aren't obedient, the King will not be pleased." The emcee growled.

"I don't care." Miku replied, refusing to drop her defiance.

"...A mermaid that won't sing is good for nothing. Guards, prepare her to be tomorrow's soup stock!"

The emcee declared.

Miku and her friends all go wide eyed at that, with Miku in particular going blue in the face.

And once again, due to her status as being Susanoo in the story world, Mana acted without a plan once more.

"You hurt my friend and I'll fry you with my divine lightning!" Mana exclaimed.

This action caused the emcee and guards to turn towards her, making the others go white eyed in panic.

"Seize them!" The emcee exclaimed.
"What's going on here?"

The emcee and the guards freeze, while the others recognize the voice that just spoke.

The entire crowd shows awe as the King made her appearance, and the queen was none other than Origami! Though for some strange reason, she had her cape closed and held it that way tightly, blushing red in embarrassment.

"Origami!" Tohka shouted happily.

"O-Oh, nothing important my lord. These hooligans were just attempting to take the Mermaid we caught for you because she-" The emcee said nervously.

"Those hooligans are my friends, as is that mermaid. You'll leave them alone." Origami said, still blushing.

"B-but my lord, I-" The emcee replied in shock.

"Do it or I'll fire you." Origami said with calm anger.

The emcee flinched at that.

"...Yes sir." The emcee sighed in defeat, soon opening the tank's lid to let Miku get out.

Origami walked over to the others, and Miku soon came over as Mayuri lent her the magic carpet due to her current lack of legs.

"Finally, the gang's back together!" Kaguya exclaimed.

"Uh... Origami, why are you beet red?" Rinne asked.

Origami whimpered, unable to answer.

"In fact, why are you covering yourself like this?" Rinne wondered.

"No Rinne, don't." Origami screamed in horror.

Rinne opened the cape up, and soon she went white in shock along with the others before Origami shrieked in embarrassment. The crowd themselves gave their own shocked expressions.

"I-Is that the rumored?"

"Y-Yeah... what a fantastic dress!"

"E-Exactly! Simply mystifying!"

All of those claims were forced however, because Origami... had nothing under the cape!

She was the King of The Emperor's New Clothes, and unlike that story's king, she was clearly aware she was basically naked.

"...Oh, the King of the Emperor's New Clothes, that explains a lot." Natsumi said, her right eye twitching.

"Someone please give me clothes.

Mana took off part of her jacket, while Rinne ripped part of her dress, giving Origami a makeshift
shirt and waist cloth.

"I've never been more mortified in my life..." Origami cried.

"There, there." Tohka comforted, patting her back.

"Well, now that's everyone, so the only thing that's left for us should be..." Shiori remarked.

Everyone looked at Shiori in agreement, the only thing left now...

...Was to find Nia.

"So where should we look?" Miku asked.

"I get the feeling she'll come to us. On the way here, we got attacked by one of the villains in Silver Bullet. The demonic vampire Nosferatu." Mayuri replied.

"You got attacked by a Silver Bullet creature too? We dealt with the undead slime, Nesuferitu. We only got away because Kotori tricked it into diving into the river." Maria added.

"We all got attacked, the Dead Raze-NIL8 came after us. The only reason we got away is because Tohka realized some of our powers are still present as long as they’re tied to our bodies directly." Mana followed up.

That made some of the others go silent, and Mana blinked.

"...You guys didn't figure that out, did you?" Mana chuckled nervously.

"I HATE THIS WORLD!" Marina screamed.

"Um... about that, there was something strange that me and Mayuri encountered." Natsumi mentioned suddenly.

"Really, what was it?" Shiori asked.

"Well, this Nosferatu said this, so we're not fully sure, but... apparently Fatima is here. She saved us from Nosferatu when he was about to get us." Natsumi answered.

This surprised everyone, especially Mana.

"Fatima!? But how? I mean... well, all of us are here and none of us are her? Who could be Fatima if that's the case?" Mana asked in shock.

"No idea, we didn't get to see her. Though now that I think about it, her voice was familiar, it sounded like-" Natsumi wondered.

Suddenly at that moment, a loud howl is heard before the sound of shattering glass loudly echoed throughout the filled hall. In moments, a familiar wolf was seen in the castle. The same one that was chasing Yoshino and Shiori earlier.

"The wolf? But how, I thought my dumpling pacified him!?" Tohka asked in shock.

"It's possible he digested it already, without it in the stomach it lost its effect! Give it another one." Origami answered.

Tohka nodded and threw another, but before it could reach him, a witch appeared from the shadows
and stopped it. The Yamai twins gasped as they recognized her.

"Your carelessness will be the death of you stupid mutt!" The witch claimed.

"Oh no, it's the witch hag from the candy house!" Kaguya groaned.

"Wait... if Yoshino and the Yamai twins' voice just gathered here, then that would mean... oh crap." Mana gulped.

Everyone suddenly connected the dots, and the castle had some of its walls break as even more villains/antagonistic force(s) crashed into the room, each once staring at their respective character directly.

On the left of the castle came the soldiers of the moon people who wanted to bring Kaguyahime home, the Oni that were to be faced by Momotarou, Orochi who wanted the Kusanagi back from Susanoo, the illusion of the Little Match girl's grandma, the Buddhist monk who would exorcise Tamamo and the evil fairy who tried to put Sleeping Beauty to sleep.

On the right of the castle stood the sight of Cinderella's step sisters and step mother, the Scylla like witch that tried to take the Little Mermaid's voice and lead to her becoming sea form when her love was unrequited, the boy who said the King was actually naked, the leader of the 40 thieves, the ogre like Oni that had the mallet that grew Issun-Boshi, and... the hill well from Jack and Jill?

"Hold up, how the hell is that wall moving!? I call an ass pull here!" Marina complained.

"Uh... sis, you do realize Nia can do that with anything in this world, right?" Maria asked.

Marina's eye twitched.

"I give up!" Marina yelled in anger, her hair fully frizzling.

"Well, at least we've already got our stories' villains here, I doubt Nia has anyone else to throw at us from our tales... Mana, there's no more Silver Bullet villains, right?" Rinne asked with a nervous sweat.

"Well..." Mana trailed off.

Suddenly streams of darkness all swarm together before none other than Necuratu manifested into view.

Everyone turned white in shock.

"Mana... which Silver Bullet villain is that?" Natsumi asked in horror.

"The only one I barely have any info on, because Silver Bullet's 100th and final volume has yet to be released, so there hasn't been anything about her that's been revealed other than her name. That's the Necuratu: The Ancestral Deity! She's the central antagonist and final enemy of Silver Bullet!" Mana exclaimed.

"That thing's a god!?" Mayuri gasped.

"...We're dead, we are so freaking dead now." Kotori breathed.

The entire group moves backwards towards the remaining castle wall as all of the villains neared them, and soon a dark silver flash appeared as Inverse Nia finally revealed herself to the group with a dark look.
"Nia! Please stop this, why are you even trying to hurt us? Aren't we your friends!?!" Shiori called out.

"Shut up! I will... I will never accept it, I will never accept there are people like you! Not when there weren't any people like that when it mattered most to me! I'll show you all... show you how the world works, the rules you dare to ignore! Everyone, take them out now!" Nia screamed.

The villains all charge forward.

The entire group readies what little weapons they have, and expected the worst to come, but right at that moment...

"SILVER BULLET!"

"Say what!?!" Nia said in surprise.

A bunch of silver blasts all fire off and aside from Necuratu, all of the villains were struck and disintegrated into silver spirit energy.

Nia stared in shock at the act, completely flabbergasted to see Fatima's signature attack fire off and take down all the villains she gathered. Soon from up in the sky, the mysterious Fatima dropped into view, revealing her identity was...

"Hey there, I miss anything?" Fatima asked.

Despite the real deal was standing before them, Fatima was none other than Nia herself!

"HUH!?" Everyone exclaimed in shock.

"H-How!?" Nia stuttered in shock.

"I'm really confused here, how are there two Nia's!?" Rio asked as she held her head with her hands.

"Well, to answer that I'm Nia, but I'm also Fatima. After all... Nia did design me in her image, so it isn't to strange I look like her." Fatima smirked.

"But how? I thought that Fatima was designed after protege, how could..." Mana said before gasping.

Fatima nodded.

"That's right Mana Takamiya, the one named Souji Hasegawa? She was the true creator of Silver Bullet, but the series only happened because her protege gave her the means to develop and complete it, that protege's name... was Nia Honjou." Fatima smiled.

Nia growled.

"Shut up... don't speak my mentor's name like that!" Nia screamed.

"Poor Nia... you've let your guilt at anger blind you." Fatima sighed.

"What do you mean... what happened?" Rinne asked.

"It was half a year ago, right after Rinne used the revival wave to bring back all the previous hosts of the Sephira Crystals using the Cassiopeia's stored power..." Fatima answered.
Shortly after she began, the nature of the story world's power caused the tragic tale to enter and play through everyone's minds.

Nia's eyes shrunk and shivered, her hands shaking as she saw the information Raziel had just presented to her.

Having realized Rinne awakened upon sensing her unique spirit power from her revival wave, she asked Raziel to learn what it was. The answer had taken a while get through since Raziel didn't want to risk the First Spirit sensing its search of her plans.

After Rinne's brief period of being 'dead', Raziel finally managed to get the info using the brief period she had been gone to safely get the information without any risk of being caught, and what the Angel found? It was just as shocked as its master was.

"Raziel... tell me you're kidding, tell me this is just some joke. If not... then please tell me I'm awake and this is real!" Nia said, tears welling in her ears.

[I'm not kidding, this is the real deal, and you are totally awake. Using a large amount of stolen power... Rinne gave back the stolen lives of every past host of the Sephira Crystals. I can feel her, Souji's alive again, she's come back to this world!]

Nia's voice shook as she started crying, and soon she wiped her tears, she wasn't ready to shed them.

"Raziel... tell me where she is, please!" Nia begged.

[She's at the Qilin Memorial hospital in Osaka. Go to her Nia, go and don't hesitate!]

Nia quickly took that advice and flew through the sky in her Astral Dress, quickly getting herself to Osaka without taking the time to think she could have used Raziel to just draw up a portal and shave most of the time she was using now.

Upon arriving at the hospital, she rushed inside without wasting a second, catching everyone's attention as she breathed heavily by the counter.

"I... I heard someone silver hair and blue eyes was brought in. I think I know her, do you have any pictures of her?" Nia begged.

"Oh, so you think you know this patient? Alright, let me see... ah, is this who you're looking for?" The counter lady asked.

She was without her glasses and her hair was a big mess, but the he picture was definitely of Souji.

"Yes, that's her! Please, what room is she in, that woman's m mentor... I thought she was dead for the last few months!" Nia asked while tearing up a bit.

"Whoa, calm down miss. Just calm down. You'll find her in room 183, it's on the second floor and the 4th room to the right of the right wing's elevators." The counter lady replied, handing her an access key.

"Thank you so much." Nia smiled.

Nia quickly rushed up to the room, smiling as she was about to see the face she worried had silenced forever.
'Maybe... maybe there's still reason to hope in Humanity, if the people here were so willing to help Souji this quickly... then mankind can't be as bad as I've led myself to believe all these years.' Nia thought.

Nia put the key up to the door, and soon it unlocked. She turned the handle and walked into the room.

That's where she saw her... the same short silver hair and blue eyes she had remembered, and the same young-looking face, while her whitened pupils and glasses were gone... nothing could tell Nia that this wasn't Souji she was looking at.

"Souji!" Nia shouted happily.

"Huh?" Souji blinked, turning towards Nia.

Nia panted a bit, smiling at her mentor with teary eyes as Souji looked at her own.

However, Souji didn't smile back, she just looked... confused.

"Um... I'm sorry, but... who are you exactly?" Souji asked.

Nia's smile instantly turned into a frown, and her eyes widened in horror at that dreaded sentence shattered everything she had been expecting.

Nia's eyes gain a dark ring around them, and shrink to a small size without any light in them as she stared at what Raziel just told her.

"What... did you just say?" Nia asked.

[I... I said this isn't just memory loss. It's memory obliteration, when you make memories, cells are responsible for storing and managing them. It's how head trauma can leave someone with permanent damage, even if just a loss of recent events. When Souji was killed... the severe damage she received was... the only comparison I can give you is it was like her skull was cracked open and a stun gun was shoved inside. Who knows, maybe what killed her had the same power as such a voltage, I mean you remember how badly wounded she was, right?]

Nia's teeth gritted.

"You were the one fighting by her, shouldn't you have known this from the start!?" Nia screamed angrily.

[I was damaged Nia! I wasn't even conscious for her last writing, I could only subconsciously cause what she wrote to happen, if I had known I would have told you! I was just as horrified to learn this! I don't even remember who murdered her or what was the finishing blow that ended with you finding her as she bled to death!]

Nia shook, and soon held Raziel closer.

"What... did she write? Show me what she wrote to you. Show me!" Nia demanded.

Raziel silently did so, and soon the words appeared on Raziel's pages.

Nia saw the message, and soon dropped Raziel to the ground, revealing the message without the
blood stains blotching out the full sentence was... { Before my death, allow me to keep all my memories of Nia until the very end, no matter how much it shortens my remaining time }, causing Nia to fall to her knees.

As that one sentence took over her thoughts, Nia held her head, recalling all the questions she asked Souji before leaving the hospital, hoping she just had amnesia and would answer them once she remembered.

Souji noticed how Nia was staring at her, and became a bit worried at the expression on her face.

"Hey, are you alright? You look like you've been through a lot." Souji asked.

"Nia, don't you remember? I met you during your work at a fan event... I snuck in your room, then you saw my work, and told me... if I wanted to be your protege. We made the Silver Bullet series together, and you designed Fatima after me... even left the message for our readers that you designed her after your beloved student?" Nia asked, crying a bit.

"Don't you remember how I was an orphan, but you treated me like a little sister? You were like the sister and mother... I never had, and never knew. I helped create the villains in the story, we became co-creators... I helped your story idea go through and get finished, causing me to save your job. I became... important to you, and... you entrusted everything to me when you went away." Nia asked with a shaky voice.

Nia cried even more, the tears flooding down her face.

"Don't you remember Souji? Don't you... remember me? I'm Nia Honjou, your... your protege! Please, please tell me this is a joke... please tell me you really haven't forgotten me, please!" Nia begged.

"Souji... is... is that my name? I'm sorry... with how upset you are right now, I believe what you're saying, but... I don't remember you at all." Souji asked.

Nia's lip quivers, and she looks down.

Nia's head slowly lowered to the floor, and then... the dreaded moment came.

Nia rose her head back up and screamed so loud, one wouldn't have been surprised if they had soon learned after she had been pushed to insanity. Her eye rings deepened and her pupils shrank into black dots.

[Nia...]

Raziel only stared at the screams it's master gave, it was clearly she had been already fragile and cracked from Souji's death, but now?

She was broken... without Souji's memories, her identity was gone. By all means in Nia's eyes, her mentor hadn't come back to life... her body was here, but not everything that made her Souji Hasegawa, and with that realization... her already low standard of mankind truly hit rock bottom.

After her scream, Nia's eye went back to their usual form, but now... there was a cold almost jaded feeling to them. It was like she had truly given up on the world, and yet... Raziel felt it, deep inside of her part of her still wanted to believe, the one small glimmer of hope.
Everyone stared in shock, now it all made sense, why Nia was acting the way she was...

...She was crying, but also so angry at the world she wasn't able to let people help her, because of the huge scar in her heart.

"Oh my god..." Rio gasped.

"Those words really were more important than they initially sounded." Tohka said with tears in her eyes.

"Nia..." Shiori breathed.

Nia growled, tears in her eyes as she stared angrily.

"Yeah, that's right... everything she said is true... and when she cried for help before she was murdered, no one came to help her!" Nia exclaimed.

"Nia, back then people were terrified of the Spacequakes, some barely escaped them alive! I'm sure they only didn't help because that fear froze them, they-" Rinne explained.

"Don't give me that excuse! 75% of Humanity had died from the Spacequakes before methods to prevent outright extinction came from the shelters! She begged for help, not one gave it to her, what excuse was there not to save a life when so many had been taken already!?" Nia screamed.

Rinne couldn't say anything to that.

Fatima sighed, soon looking at Nia.

"And yet, part of you still believe. The whole reason you mad Shiori have a meltdown was because you wanted to see if they truly wanted to help the last spirit of their own free will rather than convenience. If you didn't believe that, you'd have never started it, even with how you reacted." Fatima replied.

"Shut up, you don't know what you're talking about!" Nia screamed.

Fatima's eyes were shadowed for a moment before she raised them back up, showing determination in them.

"I do know, because... that bit of hope glimmering within you? The reason I'm here despite you didn't form me like the Silver Bullet villains is because I'm that hope! That part of you is what brought me here, as long as I exist... you can't stay that you don't still believe!" Fatima revealed.

Nia's eyes widened.

"Everyone, together... we'll stop Necuratu! Shiori, this is it, you need to reach Nia... you need to save her! It's the only way to win against Necuratu and escape this world! No one can leave unless Nia herself wants to go back!" Fatima declared.

"Right!" Everyone shouted.

Nia gritted her teeth and screamed loudly, her dark spirit power flaring out. She ripped out a bunch of Beelzebub's pages and created shadowy minions, some converging into monsters of black steel, the villainous mooks of the Silver Bullet series as Dark Spawns.

"I'll destroy you, I'll end you! All of you!" Nia roared.
"Well then, I promise I'll save you!" Shiori shouted.

Shiori rushed ahead, rushing through the shadows and Dark Spawns as they charged at her, using Origami's powers to boost her thoughts and calculate the right movements to make. Necuratu prepared to attack her when Fatima aimed her guns at the shadowy deity.

"SILVER RAIN!" Fatima shouted.

A bunch of silver blasts hit Necuratu, causing her to turn towards the others, only for a crackling to be heard above her as Mana swung Kusanagi down and unleashed a burst of lightning on her. Tohka followed up with few sword slashes and then a fast right hook.

The so called Ancestral Deity tipped over, barely managing to keep her balance.

"Alright!" Kotori cheered.

"Come on, even if it's just sticks, we've gotta keep that thing down!" Rio smiled, holding her giant sowing needle up.

"I've got some sticks here!" Kaguya smirked, holding the firewood she and Yuzuru hadn't used up.

Necuratu soon found itself being hit by sticks, and while they did nothing, they still annoyed her greatly and left her distracted as she had to keep switching focus. Especially as Fatima kept firing her guns at her.

Shiori fired off her moon blasts, switching between Tohka, Kurumi, Natsumi and Origami's powers to evade and fight the Raudskinna shadows and Dark Spawn copies. Eventually, she soon stood in front of a surprised Nia.

"No problem, I can just-" Nia stated as she went to grab her Astral Dress' pen.

"Not so fast!" Shiori shouted.

Instead of firing at Beelzebub, Shiori blasted Nia's pen, snapping it in two as she saw the broken pieces get flung far before her.

Shiori soon grabbed her hands, locking her in place as she pinned her to the ground.

"Get... off... me!" Nia roared.

"Nia, listen to me! I know you're in pain but-" Shiori replied.

Nia headbutt her before she could finish.

"Shut up! Shut your damn mouth you-!" Nia screamed.

Nia soon felt Shiori headbutt and interrupted the Imagination Spirit the same way she did to her, the two now with their heads locked as Shiori kept holding her down.

Seeing this, Fatima realized what she needed to do.

"Guys, hold her back, I'm gonna help Shiori end this!" Fatima stated.

Fatima soon rushed over towards Shiori and soon put her hand on Nia's head, confusing Shiori a bit. Fatima looked at her and smiled.
"I'm just making sure her hope isn't too far to reach you." Fatima smiled.

"Nia, I get how you feel! You're mad, angry, afraid... so many emotions that make you lash out because you don't know what else to do, but this isn't all you can do! There's another way, multiple ones even!" Shiori stated.

"Shut up! You... you couldn't ever understand how I feel, what losing Souji meant-" Nia shouted back.

"YES I DO! My father... when he was killed, his soul was destroyed, my mom couldn't bring him or my uncle back despite she intended to!" Shiori screamed.

Nia paused after that, and as that happened... Necuratu spun and knocked everyone away. The all watched as Necuratu prepared an attack, only for a glowing light to shoot out and deck her in the face.

Everyone gasped at the sight, and soon Rinne noticed someone extend a glowing hand to her, her eyes widening as she saw Seigo's will standing beside her.

"I never got to fight by everyone's side, I gotta thank this world for the opportunity. Mind if I lend a hand here?" Seigo asked.

"Father!" Mana and Rio smiled.

"Yeah... you don't even have to ask." Rinne smiled, tearing up a bit.

"Then I'll help out too!"

Everyone looked to see another glowing figure by Rinne, one with blonde hair and purple-pink eyes. Mayuri gasped as she quickly realized who it was.

"You're... Isamu Murasame!" Mayuri stated.

"Uncle Isamu!?" Mana gasped.

Isamu smirked, and soon he and Seigo readied themselves as Necuratu prepared for another strike. Shiori stared at Nia, tears streaming down her face onto Nia's as she did, but her face having a determined look.

"And then, I nearly lost my mom right after she came back! I know damn well how it feels to feel like you've lost someone twice over! It's painful, but... you've not alone! We're your friends Nia, you fought by our side, still tried to protect the world, you were kind to Mana despite she was just another fan!" Shiori shouted.

"I... I... no, I can't! I can't let go! Souji may be alive, but without her memories he's-" Nia replied.

"You wanted people to help her back then right, then why wouldn't you do that now!?" Shiori screamed.

Nia's eyes widened.

"You're right, she'll never remember... but I saw that memory. Even if she didn't remember... she was concerned! You were a stranger to her mind, and yet... her heart still cared, even if you can't get back what you lost, you can still have her in your life! You can start over, but that depends on your efforts!" Shiori said as cried.
Shiori's tears soon flew into Nia's eyes, and soon silhouettes of the other Spirits extended their hands on top of Shido's, all giving her a different look of encourage and their unique smiles, and Nia's eyes began to shake.

As her feelings began to reach Nia, Shiori noticed the world beginning to crack, and Necuratu began to groan in pain as its body slowly dissolved away.

Taking the chance, Seigo and Isamu rushed and attacked Necuratu, and everyone else soon dealt one last strike. The Ancestral Deity froze in place before shrieking as its body burst apart, the story's world losing its power to keep Necuratu in existence.

Seigo and Isamu soon noticed their forms vanishing.

"Well, looks like that's it. Back to being lingering wills I guess." Isamu chuckled.

Isamu looked at Mayuri and rubbed her head.

"Make Reine happy when the adoption finally goes through, she'll be lucky to have you as a daughter." Isamu smiled.

"...Dad." Mayuri sniffled, taking his hand briefly.

"Seigo, please... answer me this. Is there a way you could come back to life?" Rinne asked teary eyed.

"Do you believe there is? If you do, then have faith you're right. Until next time Rinne." Seigo smiled as he hugged her.

Both vanished, leaving the Spirits a bit teary eyed at the sight.

Nia and Shiori still stared at each other, Shiroi shifting back to Shido as the world's power no longer was able to force him into the form of his female counterpart.

"How... how can I believe? What if the same thing happens again!? What if I only get hurt more by the fact Souji will never be as I remembered her?" Nia begged.

"You remember her, that's what important, and if the same thing happens again... then just try again! Besides, this time... you don't just have one person to reach out, there's all of us! If one of us is in danger, call for them, and we'll all come! Please Nia, believe!" Shido exclaimed loudly.

Nia's eyes trembled, more tears falling out.

"Remember... remember what your message in Silver Bullet was?" Shido asked.

"There is... There is no darkness if... no light casts its shadow. This sight doesn't mean... there's no light, it just shows how brightly its shining... to cast this shadow to protect us!" Nia said as she cried.

Shido smiled and nodded, still teary eyed.

"We're here for you, and that... is a promise. Tell me, do you believe me? Can you believe me?" Shido stated.

"Shido... I..." Nia said as her voice shook.

With that, the cracks formed even larger as Nia's Inversion began to flicker away.
"I want to believe, please... show me... show me I'm right to believe! Show me... by stopping that mad man Westcott, so Souji's lost identity can finally rest in peace!" Nia cried out loudly.

At that moment, Nia felt Shido kiss her. Her eyes shook as Fatima saw her herself fade away.

"Hold onto that hope Nia, I know you won't regret it." Fatima smiled.

Fatima soon faded into silver sparkles that flew into Nia's body, and soon Nia's Astral Dress finally began to dissolve away, Shido quickly took off his jacket and put it around her as he did. With that last act... the world created by Ashufiriya finally shattered.

Everyone on the Fraxinus crew watched as the dome of Reiryoku faded, and everyone had disappeared, including Nia... and they had no idea what had happened.

"No... NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!" Reine screamed in horror.

"Quick, someone do something! Get readings... anything! Find out what just happened!" Kannazuki ordered in a panic.

From afar, Chinami was watching in shock.

'If I had intervened, then [Sister] wouldn't have forced an Inversion... I actually made the right choice by staying away. Now we'll have her dark spirit power, and that leaves [Zodiac]'s left.' Chinami thought, soon heading off.

Though before she did, she looked around and tossed something at the ground.

Everyone's worries kept growing... until the Reiryoku dome reformed, and everyone suddenly reappeared, falling to the ground. Reine and the others all just blinked in shock at what just occurred.

"What... just happened?" Reine asked.

"Commander, I think it was a time distortion. What was about a minute for us was likely much longer for everyone in that dome. If that isn't proof enough... reading show Nia's powers have been sealed!" Shiizaki answered.

Reine stared at her surprise.

"Get everyone back into the base, we'll need everyone to explain what happened... and I need a pain killer." Reine sighed, slowly slumping onto the floor.

After getting Nia a new change of clothes, everyone let her cry for a bit until she calmed down.

"I'm... I'm so sorry, I... I wanted to believe that... people like you existed, but... the pain was just so bad. It was like my identity shattered in half, and my anger... my regret... my hatred... it dominated everything else." Nia sniffled.

"It's OK Nia, you went through something I doubt anyone else in the world will ever experience. Not in the way you did at least. You didn't do anything wrong, you just didn't understand what you were doing." Rinne said as she rubbed her back.

Rinne sipped her coffee and soon exhaled a bit.

"That must have been a painful burden to bear, I'm sorry... if only Ratatoskr had been able to reach
"you back then..." Reine apologized.

"We can't change the past, what's done is done, but we can learn from it." Elliot stated.

Nia soon tightened her fist.

"I... have a favor then." Nia asked.

Souji stared at the window, soon hearing the door unlock as Nia walked inside, a look of fear on her face. She looked behind her as Shido and the others all gave her looks of encouragement.

Nia breathed, and soon walked forward.

"...Hey there Souji, I visited you about half a year ago. I'm not sure you remember though." Nia said sadly.

"...Nia Honjou, that's your name, right?" Souji asked.

Nia showed surprise.

"It was strange, I don't remember anything... or I thought I did, but the doctors told me that there was one bit of my memory that didn't get destroyed. It was one small thing, but... I remembered that name. Then I recalled you told me after you visited me." Souji replied.

Souji slowly turned to Nia.

"You were... important to me, enough that for some reason, seeing you leave here sad made me... hurt." Souji admitted.

"Souji..." Nia breathed.

Nia cried, and soon hugged Souji, and soon she returned the hug.

"I... I know you'll never remember anything else, but... please... at least be part of my life, just one more time?" Nia asked.

"I'm not sure what you mean by that, but... I will try." Souji replied, smiling a bit.

From the door, the other smiled as Shido turned and laid his back on the wall, shedding a single tear.

Soon, everyone was back in Ratatoskr, with Reine working on papers to have Souji transferred to Tengu Hospital at some point in the future. Everyone was gathered, all looking at Nia, unaware of the sight of a robotic bug crawling on the wall and listening.

"Alright... I promised, didn't I? The identity of the Spirit you all know as [Zodiac]... but first, who's the one who thinks she might be her younger sister?" Nia asked.

"That's me." Mildred replied.

Nia looked at her, noticing Mildred as she was currently tinkering with some kind of invention.

Nia took a deep breath.

"Her name is... Mukuro Hoshimiya." Nia revealed.
Everyone turned as they heard Mildred drop the gizmo she was working on, staring in shock at Nia's answer.

For 5 years, for 5 long years... Mildred had been searching for the answer to one simple question, was her younger sister a Spirit? Had she found where she was the day she saw that image of [Zodiac] in the DEM?

Finally, she had her answer... she had found her little sister. She moved her hands to her mouth as her mind finally processed the information, and began to sob with tears quickly flowing down from her eyes.

"Mukuro... I've finally found you!" Mildred cried.

"Oh my god, so it really was Mildred's sister all this time!" Matthew replied in shock.

Reine guzzled more of her coffee and nearly swallowed than she could handle, soon focusing on Nia.

"Tell us Nia... where is she?" Reine asked.

Nia pointed a finger up into the air.

"The same place she's been the last 5 years, above Earth's atmosphere..."

"...In space."

Wow, I did not expect this chapter to be as long as it was, but... there you have it. Nia's finally had that wall around her heart shattered, had her powers sealed, found a bit of peace, and most of all... she's revealed Mukuro's identity, ended Mildred's long painful and wait for an answer about if her little sister is indeed the Spirit that made her decide to leave the DEM 5 years ago.

Now the only Spirit left is Mukuro, and Ratatoskr's learned exactly where she is... but based on that robotic bug crawling on the wall, it looks like someone else did too. Oh boy... things are about to heat up, and I'll say it right now, the remainder of Season 3? It's all about the group's attempt to seal Mukuro before the Mayuri Judgment adaption officially ends it.

So, Fatima was none other than Nia herself, or rather the small bit of hope that led to her causing the Shido Countdown arc before her trauma overpowered that feeling and caused this arc. The reason I did that was because while I could have used Souji... that felt too much like a repeat of what I did with Saya back in Kotori's arc, and it seemed like it would be a little too predictable.

For Shido and Isamu appearing? You might think that was shoehorned in, but recall how I said they were a bit more important this arc? Let's just say being in the Ashufiriya world will have an after affect that will come to play in the group's attempts to seal Mukuro. So, while it seems random now, I promise it'll make more sense later.

That's it for now, see you next time when start Mukuro's arc! Until then... stay awesome ^^
-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 97% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)

Nia - 95% (Photographic Memory)
This is it, after a long wait, we're finally about to have Shido and the others end the Spirit saving journey of their battle against the DEM, and the time to go after Mukuro has begun. I've really wanted to get this point for a while, and now I'm excited to have finally made it, especially since it'll be interesting to play out events between Mukuro and Mildred while she's both emotionless and full of emotion.

Before I say anymore, time to answer a guest review by Seeker213: "If that is the case, I have no idea how they're gonna pull that off, the best guess I can think of is that they might get some of Nia's Qlipha Crystal back which is enough to get one under their control, and keep Westcott a bit of a threat for a while longer if he doesn't have something else under his sleeve."

"I'm already curious and excited to what those ideas might be ^^, I can't wait to hear them. Also, thanks for the music suggestions you gave me, I've actually had a few moments where I could have used Silvery Wings, but I kept forgetting about it. That last one I'll need to listen to and... *sees the first one* wait, Infinite's got a theme now? How'd I miss that reveal?"

"Oh! Before I forget, I took your advice on changing that scene in The Dark, but Not Evil, I honestly only added that joke in because I didn't know what else to put. Having Tohka ask Shido if he's OK ended up feeling a lot more natural."

OK, with that done, I'll make an announcement that's related to the last part... because I had many people interested in the story's concept, "The Dark but Not Evil" is now going to become a full story! I don't know when I'll actually start working on it (other than I'll wait for info from Volume 17 to be released first), but it will happen eventually.

Now it's time for this arc's this arc's emotion, and this time it's "Apathy", this emotion is gonna be a bit harder to work with, but I think I've planned the right scenes to use with it.

So, without further ado, let's begin!

-Mukuro Hoshimiya, Code Name: [Zodiac]-

Angel: Michael, the "Seal-Removing Lord" - The most powerful of the Angels, Michael takes the form of a staff designed like a key, which Nia has jokingly referred to as a "Spirit's Keyblade" after seeing it the first time. True to its design as a key, Michael works more like one than a staff in the most supernatural and divine of ways.

By manipulating an area of space, Michael can warp the dimensional field around it, changing the fabric of space-time to her own use no matter where she is. According to Nia, while her powers run on imagination, Mukuro's take it a step further and go beyond the normal concepts of reality with her only limitation being understanding how she can affect what Michael's used on.

- Alternate Form: Segva, "Lock" - The power of Segva is the ability of limiting or disabling. Using Michael, the power of Segva can seal away certain functions of whatever Mukuro choose as her target. Such possibilities to this include shutting down the operations and
functions of machines, sealing a certain ability, and most dangerous of all... it can work on abstract concepts like emotions, memories.

A testament to Michael's full power when using this ability is that the Angel could use Segva to actually stop the Earth's rotation. However, Mukuro can't use this on everything, and while the full extent of what's immune to this technique is unknown, some of its uses when applies to another Spirit may or may not work depending on what was targeted.

- Alternate Form: Raitabu, "Unlock" - The reverse ability of Segva, where instead of sealing something away, Mukuro frees it and unseals it from a lock, even one not created by Segva. One of Mukuro's primary uses for this ability is the creation of wormholes to teleport herself, redirect enemy attacks, or gather objects and/or debris to launch as projectiles. Mukuro can even summon meteorites made of condensed and solidified Reiryoku, though this is a lot more draining than launching other projectiles.

- Alternate Form: Shifuru, "Release" - If Mukuro's already great power isn't enough, or she needs to use a large amount of power in a short period of time her usual abilities aren't quick enough to provide, she can have Michael transform into a halberd-like weapon and unleash the Angel's true potential. When she does this, her Astral Dress changes shape which makes it appear as if she's undergone Inversion, but only halfway. While in this state, her Reiryoku also burns out around her body, making it dangerous to directly touch her.

- Alternate Form: Jerez, "Solution" - One of Michael's most dangerous abilities. By decomposing Reiryoku and the bonds holding molecules together, Michael creates a focused energy wave that can melt through anything. The only thing that can be hit by this technique and live is another Spirit, and even then, it will still heavily damage them and cut their Astral Dress apart, though certain defenses like territory barriers if used right can negate it.

- Alternate Form: Alhazma, "Beam" - By focusing her powers and warping spatial energy around the tip of Michael's key, Mukuro can launch a concentrated beam of Reiryoku that can piece through anything, with only the strongest of defenses and Rinne herself (though only because Michael will refuse to kill her) being exceptions.

- Powers: Mukuro's elemental affinity as a Spirit is Space, and she's mastered her abilities in the 5 years she's been a Spirit, not to mention her element is presence everywhere meaning she's had ample opportunity to practice. Not only is Mukuro quite versatile with her powers due to the effects of Michael's various abilities adapting based on the situation, use and even what it's used on, but she's managed to use them on herself to aid in her solitude.

The most notable aspect of using Michael on herself is having used it to live a distance away from the atmosphere, hiding where neither Ratatoskr or the DEM have ever managed to find her in the last 5 years, and even making survival in it possible by making her body not require any food, drink or air to survive, while locking away her own emotions so she wouldn't ever feel loneliness or regret from her choice. The biggest testament to her strength is that Nia claims that if Inverse Tohka were to fight her, Mukuro would win... and this is without trying.

Risk Factors: S

Spacequake: AA
Chapter 58, S3: Mukuro Space, Part I

Reine guzzled more of her coffee and nearly swallowed than she could handle, soon focusing on Nia.

"Tell us Nia... where is she?" Reine asked.

Nia pointed a finger up into the air.

"The same place she's been the last 5 years, above Earth's atmosphere... in space." Nia answered.

"Wait... what!?" Mildred exclaimed in shock.

"She's in space!?!" Reine repeated.

"Yep." Nia answered.

"For 5 years?" Kotori asked.

"Uh huh." Nia nodded.

"Doesn't she need to breathe?" Tohka wondered.

"Apparently not." Nia shrugged.

"She at least has food and drink, right?" Rinne inquired with a sweat.

"...Nope." Nia shook.

Silence followed for a few seconds, and then...

"How the hell does that work!?!" Everyone asked loudly.

"Uh... well, I'm not completely sure. While I've used Raziel to look up Mukuro's powers before..." Nia answered.

Raziel materializes besides Nia.

[The problem is Michael's a very complex Angel, it's powers are over the element of Space, but because manipulating space and gravity to a high degree can warp reality, it's a bit beyond my full comprehensive. I guess you could say she's warping around logic, so I can't accurately get any info.]
"Whoa... no wonder you said she was the strongest Spirit. I thought the beam attacks she launched out and how she helped us destroy Choronzon already made her pretty powerful, but that takes the cake!" Mana said in surprise.

Shido sweated a bit.

"I don't think we're ready to go after her just yet, we need some time to seriously prepare ourselves for when we try to go help her. I know Raziel just said it can't give us all the answers here, but... will you still help us prepare best we can Nia?" Shido asked.

"Sure thing, I'll especially need to tell you about how to help you ship defend against her attacks if she retaliates." Nia replied.

As everyone began discussing information, the metal bug soon scurried away out of Ratatoskr.

Chinami was soon seen back outside near a hidden area with a portal, various DEM loyalists walking through it as she kept watch. Right after the last person walked in, she saw the metallic bug scurry towards her.

She picked it up with her hand, and soon it compressed back into a portable capsule shape before she pocketed it away.

"Quite the surprise, for [Zodiac] to have been hiding out in space? It's no wonder we never found her. Honestly I feel stupid we didn't consider that with her various beams that rained down from nowhere." Chinami said to herself.

Chinami soon entered the portal herself as she tapped a button on a wrist watch she was wearing, closing it behind her.

She soon landed in the Inverse Void, heading into the DEM's base as she removed her Winter clothes and made way for Westcott's office. Once she reached it, she walked inside where Westcott was waiting.

"Ah Chinami, you took a bit longer then I was expecting you. Care to share the reason for this?" Westcott inquired.

"My apologies sir, when I arrived, I found that Shido boy acting suspicious from some apparent meltdown that [Sister] caused. I intended to engage, but I decided not to." Chinami answered.

"Oh? Strange, if I didn't know any better you seem to still care about that Spirit cousin of yours?" Westcott chuckled.

Chinami smashed an indent into Westcott's desk with her fist.

"...Don't even joke like that." Chinami glared.

"Sorry, I guess that was a bit too much." Westcott apologized.

"Regardless, I was right now to, his power went so out of control that it was too much for the other Spirits. I would have not had a chance against that force as I am now. Luckily, there was an upside... [Sister] forced herself to undergo an Inversion, which means you should now have her dark Reiryoku." Chinami revealed.

Westcott's face widened at that, soon smiling as she chuckled a bit.
He moved to the wall so he could take a look, and sure enough he saw Nia's dark Reiryoku now contained in what was once an empty spot, leaving only Mukuro's left to be claimed as his own.

"I apologize again Chinami, it seems your judgment was spot on, now only the power of [Zodiac]'s inversion remains to be claimed. Now, if only we could learn where she is, then the only remaining issue would be what Jessica said about her lack of emotions. Our dream is getting closer and closer." Westcott smirked.

"Actually sir, I believe you'll be happy to hear this... I sent a Serket automaton to spy on Ratatoskr. You'll be happy to hear that thanks to [Sister]... I know where [Zodiac] has been all this time." Chinami smiled.

Westcott froze, soon turning to Chinami with an impressed expression.

"...Go on?" Westcott stated.

Another two and a half weeks would soon pass by, soon becoming December 23. As of currently, Ratatoskr still had yet to take action to go after Mukuro, only due to the advice Nia had given them adding onto the Fraxinus' upgrades and the various wizards CR-Units.

Included in their weaponry and tech upgrades came Nia who used Raziel to help the other Spirits learn more about the depth of their powers, advising Mana on how to use hers now that she no longer had her Murakumo, and even giving Shido some advice on his Spirit Ascension levels and his passive abilities. Small story short? It was like a Spirit boot camp as Ratatoskr prepared for war against a single enemy.

Luckily, this wasn't the case as of today. Since Christmas Eve was slowly approaching, everyone was taking the day off to go visit a shrine. Everyone currently had their hands clapped together by the donation box, having put in a coin inside and then ringing the bell for good luck.

Each of them was wearing a kimono matching their colors and a matching or related symbol, examples being Tohka who had butterfly designs on hers, while Origami's had... origami cranes. Shido himself had even joined in, taking the form of Shiori, while it was partially part of the practice Nia and Rinne suggested for learning to draw her full Reiryoku, he also just wanted to match the theme of his harem.

"May our luck in saving Mukuro go well." Shiori prayed.

"May our luck in saving Mukuro go well." The others all repeated.

From the distance, the Spirits not part of Shiori's harem, or the extra Spirits as Nia had named them due to lacking a connection to a Sephira on the Tree of Life (even Rinne because Da'at could be both considered and not considered a Sephira) watched alongside Reine.

"They've come a long way, and they're all feeling confident about their chances in saving Mukuro." Rinne smiled.

"I don't blame them, Mildred's suffered 5 years trying to find her, and now she has a chance to finally make things right between them. They all want to help her get that chance with all they've got." Reine replied happily.

"Helps that with Nia, we're not going in completely blind." Maria smiled.

Marina groaned a bit.
"Uh... Marina, are you still mad about the classification she gave us?" Mayuri asked.

"Extra Spirits my ass, you're making it sound like you're so special to have a true Sephira Crystal in you. Like that Sephira Spirit title is so much better. It ain't, and you know it Nia Honjou!" Marina whispered angrily.

Nia suddenly sneezed, getting the other's attention as she wiped her nose.

"...I think she is." Rio giggled nervously.

"Where'd that sneeze come from?" Nia wondered.

Rinne giggled a bit before she held up a picnic basket.

"Come on everyone, I made us some lunch!" Rinne called out.

"Good, cause I'm hungry." Tohka replied.

"When aren't you hungry Tohka?" Origami chuckled nervously.

Soon everyone sat down at a table, and Rinne opened the basket to reveal some fried chicken, rolled omelets, takoyaki, rice and some fresh salad. For the drink, there were canisters of nice warm tomato soup.

Everyone gathered a bit, quickly enjoying the food.

"Delicious!" Tohka said cheerfully.

"I still can't believe how well you and Shiori can cook." Nia asked.

"Aw, stop it Nia. I'm blushing" Rinne said with a blush.

Mana drank a bit of her soup and sighed from the warmth it gave.

"So how soon are we gonna go try to help Mukuro? It is almost Christmas, and I'd kinda like to have her enjoy it with us." Mana wondered.

"I'm not sure how well the enjoyment part might work." Nia mentioned.

"Why is that?" Shiori asked.

Nia scratched her cheek.

"Well... from the time I've been in contact with Mukuro, she seems kinda... dull. It's like talking to a cardboard box." Nia admitted.

"That bad?" Kotori asked.

"Bad enough her reactions are always... this." Nia answered.

Nia copies Mukuro's flat stare, and everyone gets a bit unnerved by it.

Rio coughs to distract everyone.

"OK, I guess that's a challenge we'll have to deal with eventually." Shiori chuckled.

"Other than that challenge." Kurumi remarked.
Everyone turned to see Kurumi pointed towards Tamae, their teacher shaking not from the cold, but cruel reality hitting her. Worse? Her eyes were just two big black circles at the moment.

Mikie rubbed her back trying to calm her down, which wasn't working very well.

"I'm going to turn 30 years old soon, and I still haven't found a fiancé... it isn't fair." Tamae whimpered.

"There, there." Mikie assured with a sweat drop.

"I don't get it, Tamae's so sweet and pretty, why hasn't she found her soul mate yet?" Rinne asked.

"The heart is a mysterious thing Rinne, enough that it is more unpredictable than any weather pattern." Nia chuckled.

Everyone sweat dropped as Tamae starts sobbing.

"I wish a meteor would fall on me right now and just end my misery!" Tamae wailed.

"And that's just extreme!" Nia exclaimed in shock.

Meanwhile, deep in outer space, Mukuro was asleep like usual... until she suddenly heard a nose and turned to look behind her. The sight of dozens of DEM warships flying across space after appearing through portals from the Inverse Void soon entered her view.

And accompanying those spaceships were thousands of different automatons, ones that now had designs that looked like that of an Inverse Spirit applied to them. The Dimensional Spirit held out her hand.

"[Michael]" Mukuro stated.

The large key formed in Mukuro's hand as the DEM army neared her.

"All hands, capture Zodiac! Don't hold anything back! Attack as if you were trying to kill her!" A DEM pilot declared.

"ROGER!"

The various warships accelerated as all of the automatons rushed ahead.

Mukuro held out Michael before and then...

"Segva - Lock."

In that mere instant, every Automaton suddenly malfunctioned to the surprise of the DEM forces.

"What the... every automaton of every type has just gone offline! She didn't even attack them!" A DEM captain exclaimed.

"No signs of her emitting any kind of Reiryoku energy either, what's going on here?" A DEM crew member wondered.

Mukuro soon pointed Michael at the left most ship.

"Alhazma - Beam."
Mukuro fires off a beam from Michael, slowly moving it left to right as it began razing through each DEM ship, incinerating the automatons in its path as all the DEM ships took heavy damage and had parts of their outer haul explode.

As the people in the ships panicked and screamed, Mukuro prepared to do something else.

"Evacuate! Evacuate! Abandon ships, retreat back to the-" A DEM officer shouted.

[You are not escaping us, let's finish this Mukuro.]

"Raitabu - Unlock."

Mukuro spun Michael, and soon she created a wormhole that began to swallow everything inside of it. The scraps and remains of the automatons and the ships soon are all swallowed, with Mukuro staring at where some of the few scraps remained.

Back with everyone else, Tohka soon remembered something and looked at Rio.

"Hey Rio, remember when you told us back in the story book world how the Michael Crystal hasn't had any other possessors similar to my case?" Tohka asked.

"Oh yeah, I did say that. Why do you ask?" Rio wondered.

"Because I'm curious what it was like when you made Mukuro into a Spirit." Tohka answered.

Everyone soon turned to Rio upon hearing that question, and Rio soon scratched her head.

"Uh... about that, I didn't make Mukuro into a Spirit." Rio admitted.

"...Huh!?!" Everyone asked confused.

"Well, that's a bit of a complicated story." Rio answered.

"You see..."

Phantom was flying around as usual, trying to find potential Sephira Crystal hosts, and soon she took out one of the only two crystals she had that hadn't found their host. Unlike Sandalphon which just couldn't find another one since Tohka could deny the position due to her coma, the golden-yellow crystal in her hand, the Michael Crystal... it had never reacted to anyone.

"(Will I ever find a host for you? At this rate, I'm thinking you're the only one I can't find a suitable wielder to match your power.)" Phantom sighed.

Suddenly at that moment, the Michael Crystal began to shake before glowing brightly.

"(Huh? Wait a second, if you're glowing then... you've found a-)" Phantom gasped.

The Michael Crystal soon shot off her hand, flinging across the city at a speed faster than Phantom could keep up via flight or even visual contact.

"(What the hell? Is the Michael Crystal... is it going to its wielder on its own?)" Phantom asked.

An upset looking Mukuro was seen in another part of the city, and a shining sound soon entered her ears as she turned to see a golden light.
"Huh?" Mukuro stated.

Before she could react, the Michael Crystal flew into her hands, soon being absorbed into her body as Mukuro gasped and her pupils whitened. Her outfit transformed into a lilac and white Astral Dress.

The ends of her skirt, which were adorned with constellation patterns, were divided at the edge. Additionally, she had transparent purple gloves that were also engraved with constellation patterns. Lastly, she wore purple shoes with flat pink soles that were attached to metallic greaves resembling the leg armor once used by medieval knights.

"What just... what just happened?" Mukuro asked worriedly.

[Hello there, what is your name? I'd like to call you by such rather than by Master.]

Mukuro looked at a large... staff/sword-like key? (She wasn't sure) As it materialized before her, surprising her a bit.

"Uh... m-my name's Mukuro Hoshimiya. W-what are you?" Mukuro asked.

[Ah, I see. It's nice to meet you Mukuro, I am the Angel Michael, and I am here to protect you and help grant your greatest wish.]

Mukuro gasped as she heard that.

"Michael did that itself?" Kaguya asked.

"Yeah, I never managed to find where Michael had gone or who it chose, and I never sensed Mukuro in danger all that time. As a result..." Rio answered.

Rinne thought for a bit.

"It's possible that Michael didn't follow the pattern the others did due to how on the Sephirot, Michael's in the direct center and connected to the other 9. Even Sandalphon despite the lines making it seem like it isn't." Rinne theorized.

"Like it was so strong, it was looking for someone that was guaranteed to be the best host for it?" Origami asked.

"One way to looked at it. Considering how powerful Nia mentioned Mukuro was, I think that it ended up making the-" Rinne answered.

At that moment, a portal suddenly formed in the air above where Raizen High was, and a mass of burning metal shot out from it. The said metal shot impacted the sports ground, leaving a small crater there and shaking the entirety of Tenguu City as it did.

Shiori who was sitting next to Tohka ended up falling over, knocking the Energy Spirit over and causing Shiori to fall on top of her in the process, somehow also causing the top part of Tohka's kimono to come down, making Shiori blush as she now saw a large amount of Tohka's massive cleavage.

"Shiori... please stop staring and help me up?" Tohka said blushing even more.

"S-Sorry!" Shiori replied.
Shiori got up, and quickly helped Tohka up before fixing her outfit.

"Just what was that?" Natumi asked.

"Wait a second... guys, do you think it could it be?" Miku wondered.

Nia summons Raziel.

"Raziel?" Nia asked.

[No doubt about it Nia... that was Mukuro's doing.]

"If that was Mukuro, then why did she-" Yuzuru asked.

Nia held up a hand to Yuzuru's mouth.

"Wait, let me figure it out." Nia replied.

Nia opened Raziel.

"What is that "meteor" made out of exactly?" Nia asked.

[Looks like... DEM automatons and Dark Reiryoku, you know what that means.]

Everyone gasped.

"The DEM's attacking her!" Marina exclaimed.

"No, more like they attacked her." Nia replied.

[Yes, they didn't stand a chance, that was her warning message to the organization. Westcott won't listen, but she's still made it clear how powerful she is. Based on my info, 41 other locations in the world were hit with similar faux meteorites and they were all near areas once owned by the DEM.]

Everyone gasped at that.

"W-what about all the people inside? Did she kill them?" Yoshino asked worriedly.

[Luckily, no. Though she did make them think she was going to kill, what happened with them is she simply teleported them all into a single place with some of the debris to identify they're with the DEM. They're being arrested as we speak, but still... nothing's saying the next time they try she will silence their lives.]

"...Then we have no choice. We have to go help her now, or we might never get another chance." Reine reasoned.

"Everyone, to the Fraxinus!"

Everyone nods before heading to the nearest secret entrances to Ratatoskr's base, changing into normal clothes on the way down and Shiori reverting back to Shido. Once they were finished, they all followed Reine to the Fraxinus' storage bay.

"Alright, everyone get ready... it's time to meet the new version of the Fraxinus." Reine stated.

The door opened and soon enough they saw it... it took the same basic shape of its previous frame and tripled its size, increased its length by double, and added a bit more to its width. It possessed the
same white and blue color scheme, but now with various circle spots referencing the Sephira and by extension all of the Spirits.

This might ship's new name was...

"Everyone, say hello to the Fraxinus Anomala." Reine introduced.

"Whoa, look at it!" Maria smiled.

"It's the same size as the Arbitel now, incredible." Marina noted.

"I bet those circles representing our colors are a hidden weapon to, I wonder what it could be?" Origami wondered aloud.

Not wasting anymore time, the entire group got inside the ship.

Upon finding themselves in the Fraxinus' ship bay, the group saw the usual five members of the Fraxinus crew along with Kannazuki, but now there was also the sight of Matthew, Tohka's parents, Kotori's parents, Mildred, Artemisia and... actually, it seemed like everyone was now added onto the crew.

"Whoa..." Yoshino breathed.

"Did you fit everyone on this ship or something?" Natsumi asked.

Nia chuckles a bit.

"I told them they shouldn't hold anything back, and they listened. They listened very well there." Nia answered.

"I can believe that." Shido sweated.

"Prepare for takeoff. Maria, Marina, ready to link up?" Reine asked.

"You got it!" The Arusu sisters answered.

Their eyes answered as they linked their minds to the Fraxinus' systems, and soon the ship began to light up as it prepared to take off.

"Preparing the Fraxinus Anomala for spatial flight." Matthew announced.

"Hey Reine, it might be a good idea for us to try initial contact via that projection probe, otherwise she may be hostile with us." Nia mentioned.

"Alright, ready the probe Sakura." Reine requested.

"You got it!" Sakura said with a thumb's up.

As Sakura readied it, Ren walked up to Shido and attached a metallic wristband with a red light that began blinking onto his wrist.

Once that was on, a pair of goggles were put over his eyes to link with the probe's line of sight.

"What's this?" Shido asked.

"That's how we're gonna use the probe to show Mukuro you via a projection. The wristband is how
it shows you through it." Ren answered.

"Alright, launching probe now!" Sakura exclaimed.

The Fraxinus shot a probe up high into the sky, soon reaching near the atmosphere.

Once there it stopped, opening up to release a light and project an image of Shido, one that caught
the attention of Mukuro. The Dimensional Spirit stared at Shido's projection, only to aim Michael at
him.

"Alhazma - Beam."

"Wait, don't-" Shido shouted.

Michael fired off the beam, and Shido screamed as it went through him, only to remember it was his
projection being attacked and he was fine when no pain hit him.

Mukuro prepared another attack.

"No stop, I'm not here to hurt you! I just wanna talk! The me you see is just a virtual projection,
please!" Shido shouted again.

[Hmm... Mukuro, let's hear him out.]

Mukuro soon stopped her attack's charge and stared towards Shido. Her gaze focused on the
hologram, but luckily due to the goggles, she didn't realize he was part Spirit.

"...Who are you?" Mukuro said.

"Uh... I'm Shido Takamiya, it's nice to meet you." Shido replied.

"Shido, very well. I am Mukuro Hoshimiya." Mukuro responded.

As Shido was talking to Mukuro, everyone watched their interactions on the monitor. Mildred was
the one most focused on their conversation though.

"...Something isn't right, Mukuro never talked like that. She wasn't so... calm, cold and... calculated.
She was full of energy, life and emotion. What happened to her, and why did it happen?" Mildred
said fearfully.

"Really? Out of all the years I've known her, I've never seen her like that." Nia replied.

After hearing that, Mildred turn to Nia were an even more worried look on her face before turning
back to the screen.

Meanwhile with Mukuro and Shido directly, the latter saw some options appear on screen.

1. Honest Response - "I wanted to know... can we be friends."
2. Romantic Response - "Will you be my lover?"
3. Racy Response - "I'll be your master from now on! Be my obedient slave, and I'll train you until
you can no longer live without me!"

"Alright everyone, make your choices people-" Reine announced.
"WAIT!" Mildred shouted.

Everyone stopped before they could vote.

"I know you might find this crazy, but... I need you to have Shido say option 3!" Mildred begged.

"Say what!?" Everyone exclaimed.

"I... I can't help but feel something's very wrong with Mukuro, she doesn't sound like how I remembered her, doesn't act like I remember her... and no matter what I feel something unnatural behind it. The only way I can know how bad is if I know how she reacts to that response." Mildred explained.

Everyone gives an unsure look in response to that, and Reine decides to reply to Shido.

"Shido, you heard that right? Do you think we should try it?" Reine asked.

"...I'd normally wanna die for saying that, but Mildred sounds so worried about her sister. I guess I've got no choice." Shido answered.

Shido gulped in response.

"Please don't let this backfire." Shido whispered.

"Mukuro... I'll be your master from now on! Be my obedient slave, and I'll train you until you can no longer live without me!" Shido exclaimed.

"I see." Mukuro said.

Everyone went wide eyed at that, she didn't care about what he said at all. That's when the Arusu twins noticed something.

"Commander, her emotional state... it didn't change at all!" Maria replied.

"Yeah, it's like it's frozen solid!" Marina added.

"What? Someone bring it up on screen, let me see." Reine requested.

Right on cue, the emotional graph appeared, and...

...nothing, all of her emotions were unchanged. Not just that, but Reine noticed she wasn't registering any emotions!

"What the hell?" Nia gasped.

"No... emotions? Oh my god, what's happening here? That's... that's not like my sister at all!" Mildred replied.

Mildred's eyes began to tear up as she slid onto her knees.

"What's happened to her?" Mildred sobbed.

Even Shido wasn't sure how to reply now, he was just as shocked that Mukuro hadn't reacted to that, much less the way anyone that wasn't a Masochist would understand.

"Projection, tell me what you are here for." Mukuro stated.
"Uh... I'm here to save Spirits like you." Shido answered.

Mukuro raised an eyebrow at that.

"Save?" Mukuro wondered.

"I've met all the other Spirits aside from you, and I've sealed away their Powers. They've been able to live ordinary lives. I can't give you that too." Shido explained.

"I understand, the confidence you show here shows proof of your claim." Mukuro replied.

"Then you'll-" Shido smiled.

"But I refuse your offer." Mukuro answered.

Shido showed surprise at that, soon rubbing the back of his head.

"Well... I can't force you to believe in me, but-" Shido mentioned.

"It has nothing to do with doubt." Mukuro said.

Shido's eyes widened at that.

"What? But, if that's the case... then why?" Shido asked.

"Because I have no desire to, I shall simply stay here." Mukuro answered.

"B-but that way DEM may attack you again!" Shido countered.

"I shall just destroy their forces once again." Mukuro answered.

[They don't have the strength to oppose us, we didn't even use more than a fourth of our true power against them. They will only waste their forces in their attempts as we slowly reveal our true strength.]

"Don't underestimate them! The DEM has even more powerful weapons, and you haven't even seen their strongest wizards yet!" Shido exclaimed.

"If I cannot win, then I can simply flee by creating a wormhole. Unless, are you to tell me this DEM can chase me at the speed of light?" Mukuro asked.

And with that, Shido ran out of words to use as his artillery against hers.

However, that's the moment Shido realized there was still one big question that they hadn't gotten an answer to, how was Mukuro able to survive in space for the past 5 years despite the conditions would kill everyone else almost instantly.

Though it wasn't the necessities for a human's survival he had been curious about... it was the fact she was alone.

"Hold on, you can't tell me you enjoy being here alone? No one who feels emotion can eventually handle solitude!" Shido shouted.

"You are correct, that's why I've locked my heart and all feelings away." 

Shido's eyes widen at that.
"Wait... locked away?" Shido asked.

"Correct, one of Michael's power is Segva, the power to seal things away. 5 years ago, I used this power to seal away my body's necessities, and every emotion I possessed. Now, I feel nothing." Mukuro answered.

And with that, everyone gave expressions of shock and horror. It also explained the reason for her emotional graph.

The one that was hit the most was Mildred, her glasses fell off her face and shattered before she collapsed and felt her whole body shake.

"H-hey Mildred?" Katie asked worriedly.

"Come on, hang in there!" Ryouko shouted.

"No... no, no!" Mildred panicked.

Nia took a deep breath, trying to regain her bearings.

"It wasn't that she was dull in the slightest, she took away everything. That's what made her so indifferent... she had no way to care what I asked or spoke to her about." Nia muttered.

[That's not all Nia]

Nia materialized Raziel in her hands as she looked at it.

[The kind of understand she needs to do that... I think we all need to see that battle. Reine, you should have a recording, shouldn't you?]

"I should... and I guess considering the situation we should watch it." Reine answered.

Reine moved a finger across her console screen to bring the video to the screen so it could be played, and everyone watched it.

In the short span of time it played, they saw just how one-sided it was. The DEM never even got the chance to attack while Mukuro only used three attacks against the largest DEM force the group had ever seen.

"My god!" Tohka gasped.

"Annihilated..." Origami breathed.

"No way, for her to have strength on that level... she's had to have completely mastered her powers!" Nia gasped.

[I don't think there's any room for doubt, 5 years of solitude and to live in these conditions? You'd need to know your powers at their very roots for that.]

"Hey, wait a second... Kurumi, Mildred said she found out that Mukuro might be a Spirit when you fought her around 5 years ago! How come you didn't remember that battle, or what she looked like now that I think about it?" Kotori wondered.

"I... I don't know. Why wouldn't I-hey wait, if she can lock things, then could it be possible she made me forget we ever fought? Sealed away that memory?" Kurumi wondered.
Saya suddenly sweated at that.

"OK... officially freaked out now!" Saya replied.

Shido shook a bit, the thought of sealing away someone's emotions? He couldn't understand the reasoning behind it at all... it just seemed so painful.

"W-why would you do that? You can't even feel happy now!" Shido asked.

"If there was a reason, then it has faded from my memories since. Regardless of what I did so I will not undo the lock." Mukuro answered.

Shido shook his head.

"No, that's too sad. You deserve to be happy! Not to mention your sister, and your parents... they're waiting for you to come home even after all these years! I even know your sister, she's with me right now!" Shido exclaimed.

Mukuro went silent for a bit, and no one was sure if she forgot or simply chose to deny Mildred as such, but the next words hit hard like a stain you might never be able to remove, and they were...

"Sister? I don't recall having such a thing." Mukuro answered.

Shido gasped at that, soon spreading to the rest of the ship as if they heard someone use a forbidden word.

But it was Mildred's reaction that was the worst, her eyes light slowly faded away before she suddenly stopped breathing and fell over.

"Mildred? Mildred!?" Mikie shouted in worry.

Ryouko soon checked her pulse, and didn't notice any.

"Oh no... I think the shock put her in cardiac arrest, get the med team ready before we lose her!" Ryouko ordered.

Some of the crew helped carry Mildred to the medical office ASAP.

Nia gave her a somber look and opened up Raziel and wrote {make the med team do their best as they try to resuscitate her}, feeling sympathy for Mildred over what she just suffered. No one deserved to hear such a thing.

"Don't die, you're not allowed to." Nia sniffled.

"It seems I have misunderstood you Shido" Mukuro stated.

Shido showed surprise to that comment.

"What I deem as happiness, you speak like I am in the wrong and you are in the right. You may have saved Spirits before, which I believe, but I am me... not them. Why do you even wish to aid me?" Mukuro asked.

Shido tried to speak, but he couldn't find the words.

"It seems I've drained all your rebuttal away. Now that you are like this, I shall ask my own question.
If you did seal me, could you also ensure my protection? Have any of the other Spirits avoided sustaining a conflict like the one I just fought?"

Shido's eyes widened at that.

When he sealed a Spirits powers, they were weakened because of the bond levels for his Spirit Ascension worked, while all of the spirits were now around 99% and Tohka was at full strength...

...He couldn't deny it, he did by all means weaken them, no matter how much or little.

"Your face says it all, the hypocrisy you have is like a maze, and I will not let myself be snared." Mukuro bluntly answered.

Shido's eyes shook at that.

Was it true, was... was he really just being a hypocrite? Was he doing something wrong? Normally he'd be sure he was doing the right thing, but... Mukuro's lake of emotion just seemed to make it seem like he was letting the reality of truth and wisdom smash through what he just told himself as true.

"Leave me and never return. If you ever do return, know this... I shall use Michael's power to stop the Earth's rotation." Mukuro declared.

"What!?" Nia gasped.

"Uh... Nia, how bad is that?" Tohka asked.

"You don't need Nia to answer that one Tohka, if the Earth were to ever stop rotating... well that's it, game over for everyone." Origami answered.

Tohka's face paled before she slowly turned white from the fear.

Mukuro soon aimed Michael at Shido's projection.

"And with this, we begin our eternal parting." Mukuro said softly.

"Segva - Lock."

The project and probe malfunctioned, and Shido's body suddenly shook before he screamed in some kind of pain.

After a few moments, he fell forward, causing Mana to rush up and catch him.

"Big brother? Big brother, please wake up!" Mana exclaimed.

"Please... wake..."

Suddenly Mana fell to the ground as well.

"Mana!?" Rinne called out worriedly.

Then as if Rinne's words had caused a domino effect, everyone noticed all the other Spirits, Rinne included, suddenly collapse to the ground. Almost as if Mukuro had somehow triggered something with her last act. Reine looked at the scene around her, terrified.

"All the Spirits have collapsed, get the med team for all of them too! Hurry!" Kannazuki declared.
"What's going on, what's... what's happening?" Reine asked.

Whoa... things have just gotten chaotic and way out of Ratatoskr's hands. They prepared for nearly three weeks to try and be ready for when they went to save Mukuro, and already its shown that hasn't guaranteed a thing. Mukuro's power isn't just incredibly dangerous, but now she's used it... the threat to silence the Earth's rotation.

Not just that, but Mukuro's already shown how hard it will be to seal her. While Raziel can get info on her, due to the nature of Michael's abilities, it's hard for the Angel to get a lot of info because of the nature of her powers warping reality to a small degree. Not to mention not only did Rio reveal Michael chose her and she never got to meet Mukuro, but she seemed to have sealed away Kurumi memory of the fight that made Mildred leave DEM.

Also, poor Mildred... that was the one thing she never wanted to hear and she heard it, she's been searching for her sister for years and learned that her emotions have been sealed, already adding to the guilt she feels for believing she made Mukuro run away 5 years ago. To have Mukuro say that regardless if she's honestly just forgotten about her family or her lack of emotions talking... no one wants to hear their family deny them. Is it any wonder the combined shock and stress caused her to go into cardiac arrest?

Then to top it all off, Mukuro has actually made Shido doubt himself! Worse, somehow when she locked the probe... it somehow caused Shido, Mana and all of the Spirits to suddenly collapse, all while the DEM's eventually going to come back for Mukuro eventually. Everything's become a giant mess for the group, and so far, there doesn't seem to be any sign of answers.

For anyone curious about why the new Fraxinus is called "Fraxinus Anomala", its due to how the original and Fraxinus EX Celsior are both named. From a genus of the same name which means "ash", reflecting the kind of tree Yggdrasil is, which fits the creature Ratatosk is named after and due to it being the Norse counterpart to the Sephirot, both being Trees of life. The reason I chose the Fraxinus Anomala in particular is because Anomala sounds like anomaly, reflecting how this version of the Fraxinus is very different from the previous two due to Nia's advice when upgrading the Fraxinus EX.

So, that's it for today's chapter, I hope you enjoyed it. Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)
Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)
Chapter 59

Last chapter definitely ended on a cliffhanger, with every one of the Spirits having passed out from Mukuro somehow just locking the probe, not to mention I've yet to elaborate on if Mildred's OK after she went into cardiac arrest. For her sake, let's hope when Mukuro said that she just forgot she had a sister considering she doesn't remember why she's even in space or sealed her memories away.

I'd say for this chapter, we'll essentially be having a breather of sorts, Ratatoskr's gonna be using some time to recuperate, but we're also going to get some big reveals and see a little focus on the DEM as they begin their second and hopefully (at least to Westcott) final wave against Mukuro. This won't be a normal battle between the two organizations, because this battle's going to be a bit more... serious, so to speak.

What does that mean in this case? I'll let you all think on that since I'd rather not spoil the particular behind, but I can say in Volume 14 & 15 that there were some lasting effects from a large-scale DEM attack against Ratatoskr, even though realizers undid most of the damage. Especially the one about... Westcott having his arm... cut off... and reattached. *shivers* That's not very fun to read unless you expect it.

Anyways, I'm pretty excited for when the battle comes up because in-story, this is their first major clash since Ratatoskr's crushing defeat during the Ten-Oh Festival due to becoming predictable after having saved so many Spirits. That defeat left a mark on them, and it won't be long until they'll be able to get their revenge with their upgraded forces, but the resources Westcott has in the Inverse Void has let the DEM forces level up as well, so... *giggles*

With that out of the way... let's begin!

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Chapter 59, S3: Mukuro Space, Part 2

~10 Years ago

Standing in a mysterious location, the sight of Reine Murasame standing between a pair of ovals made of energy, or more actually time stasis fields, was seen. She looked inside as the sight of two children, a boy with short blue hair who was the older of the two, and the other a girl with blue hair in a ponytail, was seen.

"Shido... Mana... this is it, the time you're finally meant to awaken from here." Reine said somberly.

Reine took a close look at the two, preparing to use a pair of devices she had on hand to free them, but when her hands neared the stasis fields...

"...No, I can't do it. I caused my brother, their own father, and my own husband to get killed by sending them on that mission to rescue them. I can't raise them, and I don't have the right to raise them. There's only one thing I can do for them..." Reine stated.

Reine made a pair of calls as she had the time stasis fields holding the Takamiya siblings brought over to Tenguu City. Leaving them in an area of the city where she knew they'd be found by the local orphanage quickly enough.
Once she did that, she resumed her phone call with Kotori’s mother.

"They're in place, I just need you to quickly come over. I've already mentioned things to our Ratatoskr agent there. Since their mother's status isn't dead, it doesn't seem right for them to be adopted until we know for sure if she's really gone or not." Reine replied.

"OK, but... Commander, are you really sure you want to do this? You are their aunt... shouldn't you be the ones to watch over them?" Haruko asked.

"...No, I lost that right long ago. If I raised them it would only lead to pain, and maybe their deaths. I can't do it. That's why I'm begging you to watch them for me Haruko, you already have your daughter, they need a friend to mend the broken hearts they'll have when they wake up. Regardless of why they're even broken." Reine answered.

Haruko's voice didn't reply for a bit, clearly taking in Reine's words with sadness.

"...OK." Haruko replied.

Reine soon cried before taking the devices and hitting the stasis fields with them, making them disappear. She quickly ran off the moment the fields vanished, tears streaming off her face as she did.

After a few moments, the Takamiya siblings finally woke up from their two-decade long nap, both slowly adjusting to their surroundings. Shido shook it off first and looked at Mana, but unfortunately, he didn't recognize her like he used to.

Mana soon regained consciousness and turned to the brother she couldn't recall either.

"...Who are you?" Shido asked.

"I don't know, who are you?" Mana asked.

As Mana tried to get out, she felt weakness in her legs, causing a locket she didn't know about fall into view, causing it to open and reveal the picture inside.

"Huh? What's this?" Shido asked.

He read it and noticed some engravings inside, they said: "To my little sister Mana, thanks for being the best sister any brother could have - Shido Takamiya", and the picture inside of that locket?

It was him and Mana.

"What's wrong?" Mana asked.

Shido showed her the picture and the words.

"Look... this is... us." Shido answered.

"Mana... Shido... brother and... sister..." Mana read.

The two looked at each other.

"You're my... brother?" Mana asked.

"And... you're my sister?" Shido asked in return.
"Oh my goodness!"

The two looked to see a woman notice them both.

"What are you two doing here? This is no place for children, let's get you out of here." She stated.

Shido and Mana spent a day or two at the orphanage, but they were always by themselves, something that often happened to newcomers who felt out of place and hadn’t found the small bit of joy the other children had.

However, it didn’t take long for something to change. They, alongside the other children, noticed a married couple come in one day with a red-haired girl. The young Kotori was as small as Rio used to be wearing the old twin tails she had since dropped in the present, but they were so tiny they seemed like upside down horns.

"Big brother, who... are they?" Mana asked.

"I'm not sure." Shido answered.

After the orphanage keeper and the married couple talked for a bit, the Takamiya siblings noticed the woman of the pair walk towards them.

"Hello there, may I know your names?" Haruko asked.

"Uh... I'm Shido Takamiya, and this is my sister Mana Takamiya." Shido answered.

"Shido and Mana, those are nice names." Haruko smiled.

Mana held her brother’s arm a bit fearfully.

"It's OK, you don't need to be scared." Haruko assured.

"W-why are you talking to us?" Mana asked.

"You really miss your mother and your father, you don't even know where they are, do you?" Haruko asked.

The two blinked confused, but they could someone tell what her words meant subconsciously. Haruko held out a hand to them.

"So, would you like to stay with us while we help you find them?” Haruko offered.

"Stay with... you?" Shido repeated.

"Until we find your home, we'll share ours with you." Haruko explained.

Haruko turned to her daughter and motioned her over, a scared Kotori shook a bit before leaving her hiding spot behind her father and walking closer, soon hiding behind her mother instead.

"Don't be shy Kotori, they won’t hurt you." Haruko comforted. patting her head.

"...Hello." Kotori said shyly.

"This is my daughter Kotori, she's feeling a bit lost in the world as well. I think together you can help each other. So, what do you say, would you like to come, or would you like to stay here?" Haruko
asked again.

The Takamiya siblings looked at her, and then after thinking for a bit... Shido offered out his hand.

"[Remember Shido]"

"Huh?" Shido asked.

"[Remember Shido, you must remember! It still exists out there.]

Shido gasped.

"Father? Uncle Isamu? Where... where are you!?

"[Find it Shido, you must...]

"[...Find the key! You have to save her, no matter what you must save Mukuro!]

Shido looked around in shock as the memory landscape shattered apart into an endless black, he ran around confused as he tried to find his father and uncle's voices again.

"Dad! Uncle Isamu!" Shido called out.

As Shido kept running, he eventually found himself suddenly stopped as he saw a giant version of the Sandalphon Crystal, staring at it in shock.

One part of the crystal showed a black mass, which branched off to show a saddened Inverse Tohka looking ahead, revealing the mass as the Inversion taint. At the same time, a bright light branched off to show a smiling Ethereal Tohka, reflecting the imbued power that was the Ethereal blessing.

"What is..." Shido asked.

The two versions of Tohka slowly turned their hands towards Shido. At that moment, four voices ran out at once, one being the deeper voice the Inverse Tohka created by Choronzon possessed.

"[You must find the truth Shido, I know you can find the key... and stop Westcott.]

"I don't... I don't understand-Ah!" Shido replied.

Shido screamed as he suddenly regained consciousness, he felt himself sweating as he looked around to find himself in the med bay, where all the other Spirits were all resting a similar way, only they still had yet to regain consciousness.

Mildred was also there, but in far worse condition. She was borrowing an oxygen mask while a pulse monitor was making sure her pulse slowly returned to normal, no one wanting her to enter cardiac arrest again and dying from it.

"...What was all of that? A dream, a message, something else?" Shido wondered.

"Good to see you've finally woken up."

Shido looked to see Reine wearing the lab coat she usually wore when she was doing her role as Tamae's assistant teacher at Raizen High.

"Aunt Reine? Wait, you're a doctor too?" Shido asked.
"Actually no. Well, now that I think about it... can play the violin at a professional level, act as a foreign translator, land a royal aircraft, and the official medical officer here on the Fraxinus even states that I conduct medical treatment better than he can." Reine mentioned.

Shido gave a shocked face.

"How are you not a doctor if you can do all of that!? Especially the last one!" Shido exclaimed.

Reine shrugged.

"...why are all the girls unconscious?" Shido asked.

"We're not sure. For some reason, when Mukuro locked our probe's functions, it made you collapse and then it spread to the others. While it might be because you were connected to the probe... I'm not sure about the others. Especially Mayuri as she's the only one who's lacking any connection to you, she doesn't give you a passive ability after all." Reine admitted.

"Tell me Shido, did you experience anything while you were KOd? I noticed signs of abnormal beta waves and an increase in rapid eye movement. The latter happens often with intense dreaming, so combined with the former..." Reine asked.

Shido soon looked down at the ground.

"I saw... it began with me seeing a memory of the past, it was around the time you woke us from stasis. Maybe I partially gained part of your memories, maybe it was my mom's or even the bit of dad in me, but... besides the point. After that happened, I heard dad's voice... and then Uncle Isamu's." Shido answered.

"What? What happened, what did they tell you?" Reine inquired.

"It was... to remember, to find the key. I'm not sure what that meant, but I remember when dad gave me the power to seal Spirits, he told me he had a vision of the girls. That I would see Tohka again, and then... they said I must save Mukuro. Then, that's when the strangest part happened." Shido explained.

Shido took a deep breath.

"Tohka's Sephira Crystal appeared to me, but it was huge compared to before. Then, the taint of the Inversion, and the blessing of the Ethereal Shift... both branched out to take Tohka's alternate forms before both of them, dad and Uncle Isamu all said: "You must find the truth Shido, I know you can find the key... and stop Westcott.", and then... I screamed in pain right as I said something and woke up here." Shido explained.

Reine bit her thumbnail as she thought on what that could mean.

"Hmm... I wonder, were they talking about a possible revival like he implied to Rinne while you were all in Nia's Ashufiriya, or is there something about the Spirits we still don't know that my brother knew?" Reine wondered.

"With how the Spirit sealing power was made through something that infused with Isamu's soul during the rescue mission, and how Seigo was in the Spirit Dimension, studying all he could there... no doubt now, we've gotta find a way to save Mukuro." Reine stated.

Right as she said that though, she noticed Shido looked distantly, shaking a bit.
"Shido?" Reine asked worriedly.

"Was I... were we doing the right thing?" Shido suddenly asked.

That got Reine's attention, and it terrified her because she knew why he'd even consider saying that. Mukuro's words seemed to have gotten to him.

"Shido, you-" Reine replied.

"Sealing the powers of the Spirits was to help them, giving them a chance to live normal lives... that's what I wanted to believe from the start. I honestly wanted to believe that."

Shido's right hand starts shaking.

"And yet, the DEM keeps attacking us with all they have. Worse is each time I seal a Spirit, I weaken them, only Tohka's regained her full strength and the others are still missing part of theirs. Not to mention, it nearly killed my mother, and she's still weak even now!" Shido shouted.

"Calm down Shido, you know you've-" Reine tried to interrupt.

"...I've just been a hypocrite all this time, damn it! I can't do this anymore!" Shido screamed.

Shido soon ran out of the room, and Reine stared at him as he left, soon lowering her head.

Back in the Inverse Void, everyone was watching the footage of Mukuro's retaliation against their first wave, which made even the normally calm Ellen feel nervous since her battle hungry nature was giving her a strong feeling she hadn't used her full power.

Though the Westcott's reaction took the cake as his face was actually shown sweating, something he normally didn't do with Spirit matters unless it was Shido throwing a wrench into his plans with them.

"I'll admit it... this is a bit unexpected, this level of strength is nothing like the other Spirits. I thought we saw her full power against [Nightmare] over 5 years ago, but it seems I made a mistake in thinking [Zodiac] had already matured her full potential." Westcott admitted.

"We didn't see any previous [Zodiac] before now, so she might be like [Princess]. The only difference is that our inability to locate her meant she was able to master her abilities without interruption." Jessica replied.

Chinami sweated at this.

"Sir, do you think I may have made a mistake with telling you about Zodiac as early as I did? I think maybe I should have waited or said to prepare better-" Chinami asked.

"Calm down Chinami, no one's made progress without mistakes. After all, if I had always been careful, we'd never had had the current [Angel] reveal the wonder of Inversion to us. We simply underestimated her, we won't make that mistake again." Westcott assured.

Chinami sighed in relief.

Westcott soon turned to Ellen, a serious look on his face.

"So, what do you think Ellen?" Westcott asked.
"Based on what I see, my gut's giving me a good feeling she didn't need to use her full power. My guess is that she's at least an S-Rank. In fact, she might be second only to the First Spirit in her power." Ellen admitted.

"Oh, so she's quite powerful then? Hmm... looks like we have no choice, we'll have to send in everything." Westcott declared.

Everyone gasped at that.

"Sir, are you sure? If we fail then we'll-" James inquired.

"If we don't use our full power here, we'll just slowly chip away are our strength. Not to mention after this, the Ratatoskkr organization has to have decided to make a move, Chinami did get this information from them after all. By all means, we will fail if we don't do this." Westcott answered.

James sighed at that.

"I hate to admit it, but you're right. We don't have the luxury of time, circumstance or an ideal situation." James replied.

"The Arbitel's upgrades are finished now, hopefully they'll be enough to push this Spirit onto the defensive." Chinami mentioned.

"Prepare all our ships, Automatons and finish maintenance on our CR-Units. We're going to war." Westcott smirked.

Back on Earth, around the location of one of the Ratatoskkr buildings that were owned by the DEM, a strange sight began to form.

A pair of weak but glowing lights.

"R...n...e"

"R...i...e"

The two lights struggled as they tried to form into something else, but after a while, they just compressed away and dissolved.

Back on the Fraxinus' med bay, the sight of Mildred waking up was seen, her condition having since stabilized. She slowly got up and looked around, having a bit of trouble because she wasn't wearing her glasses.

"What happened?" Mildred asked.

"You suffered an intense shock to your mind and body that you went into cardiac arrest."

Mildred squinted she made out Reine's figure facing towards her.

"One second, you broke your glasses during the shock, but we've managed to repair them." Reine mentioned.

Reine put them on, restoring Mildred's vision.

"Ah, thank you Reine. I'm as blind as someone in thick fog without these." Mildred smiled.
"You're welcome." Reine replied.

"Let me guess... that cardiac arrest thing. It was from something related to Mukuro?" Mildred asked.

Reine went silent before nodding.

"Yeah, I won't say what it was because I don't want you to relapse, but I will mention that they were words that no sister should ever have to hear." Reine confirmed.

"...Mukuro." Mildred whimpered.

Mildred soon began to cry, and Reine pulled Mildred a bit closer to hug her, rubbing her head a bit. A few grunts were heard as the Spirits all began to wake up.

"My head, it's like someone hit me with a tire... twice." Kaguya groaned.

"What happened?" Origami asked.

"I feel like my head's split open." Rio replied, rubbing her forehead.

Reine sighs in relief.

"Good, you're all awake. It doesn't seem like any of you were seriously harmed." Reine stated.

"I wonder what happened to us, did we react to Shido somehow?" Rinne asked.

"That seems to be the most likely explanation." Reine answered.

Rinne soon looks around and sees Shido was missing.

"Uh... Reine, where did my son go?" Rinne asked.

Reine sighs as she turns around.

"...He woke up earlier and ran off somewhere in the ship, and now he's lost his faith if we're doing the right thing. As he is now, I don't think he'll even want to seal Mukuro." Reine admitted.

"What?! No way, you're lying... that's not my big brother! He'd never give up on her, just like he didn't give up on Tohka, on mom... how he didn't give up on anyone!" Mana screamed in anger.

"Mana, I-" Reine replied.

"NO! Say anything more about my brother giving up, and I don't care that I'm in a hospital bed and not at my best, I will get up from it and put you in one of these beds!" Mana shouted.

Mana pants angrily, and Reine closes eyes as she goes silent.

'Shido, please... you need to believe in yourself again. For everyone who believes in you.' Reine thought.

Noticing Reine's troubled face, Tohka gets off her bed, and struggles to stay up.

"Tohka, you shouldn't be up right-" Reine stated.

Reine only needed to see Tohka looking at her to realize what she was trying to tell her with her determined face, and seeing that... Reine couldn't stop her.
"Here, at least support yourself with this." Reine offered.

Reine moves an empty IV stand to help Tohka support herself as she went to find Shido, and soon... Reine thinks before she taps part of the room's wall panels, activating something across the entire ship.

Mukuro was in her usual rest in space, and soon the sudden sound of a portal opening was heard, she opened her eyes and looked as she saw none other than the same portal as before from the DEM's attack... but this time an entire wall of these portals came.

From these portals came the DEM's full army force, over millions of automatons of each kind, and a total of 10,000 ships including the Arbitel and every DEM wizard using a realizer attachment to their CR-Units that functioned like air helmets and oxygen tanks.

"...So, you have come to annoy me once again." Mukuro stated.

- (*Infinite's Theme - Sonic Forces*) -

From the Arbitel, a projection of Westcott from the Inverse Void appeared, and like with Shido she fires a beam at it, only for it to fail.

"It seems you employ the same tactic as the boy, but chose to bring an army to me, therefore I am to assume you are the DEM?" Mukuro asked.

"A pleasure to meet you too [Zodiac], I am Sir Isaac Westcott, the founder and chairman of DEM Industries. Nothing personal... but I want your power, so I'm going to have to kill you now." Westcott answered.

Mukuro summons Michael.

"Your arrogance is without boundaries, or perhaps even sanity, so I believe I must one again show you the futility of challenging me." Mukuro replied.

"Segva - Lock."

Soon all the DEM automatons were instantly shut off, but this time Westcott's projection smirks before it presses a trigger and fades away.

The automatons all feel a shock as their systems are restored.

"It seems you have learned a bit, but I haven't revealed all my cards either." Mukuro stated.

The DEM forces all fired at Mukuro, but the Dimensional Spirit quickly revealed her speed, teleporting away from each shot using a combination of her wormholes, natural movement, and the Spirits' usual teleportation.

As she did this, she secretly created wormholes out of sight and after landing from a certain wave of shots, twirled to make a wall of wormholes.

"Rataibu - Unlock."

Suddenly all the other wormholes sucked up all the debris that was surrounding the planet's atmosphere before using it all of it as a meteor shower against the DEM army.
"Quick, put up defenses, put them-AH!" A DEM wizard shouted.

Many wizards were suddenly flung back as the maelstrom of space debris began pelting the DEM forces. A few hundreds of DEM automatons exploded, while a few dozens of DEM warships all either had small explosions rendering the ships temporarily unusable... or they outright detonated in a fiery blaze.

Westcott looked at the destruction and then at Mukuro who twirled Michael and looked at him as emotionless as ever.

"Impressive." Westcott answered.

- (*insert song end*) -

Mukuro held Michael high as the Angel glowed brightly.

"This is only the beginning." Mukuro stated.

Westcott smirked, having a good feeling that Mukuro would be quite an entertainment opponent to challenge...

...and his entire army would gladly take that challenge.

Shido was in part of the Fraxinus, sitting on a chair and all curled up on it while in the form of Shiori, mimicking the same position Tohka had felt almost a whole year ago when she blamed herself over him slightly getting hurt by Origami when the lock on her powers vanished.

She slightly looked up as she stared out the windows to the outside.

"...Just what have I been doing?" Shiori asked herself.

"The right thing, and being sorry for no reason."

Shiori's eyes widened as she turned to see Tohka struggling to walk towards her, still in the hospital gown and using the IV stand to support herself, she was about to fall over when Shiori rushed sprinted towards her, catching her mid-fall.

"Tohka, what are you doing!? You shouldn't be walking right now!" Shiori shouted.

"Says the girl who ran out of the med bay first!" Tohka countered.

"...OK, guess I deserve that." Shiori mentioned.

Soon Shiori helped Tohka sit down, and resumed sitting herself.

"Why are you Shiori right now anyways?" Tohka asked.

"I dunno, I guess I handle stress better in this form due to what I had to deal with before we sealed Miku. Then again since the Spirits were an all-female race going by my mom's words..." Shiori chuckled.

She sighed soon after.

Tohka looked at her worriedly, and put a hand on her shoulder.
"...I thought we were doing the right thing, but how can that be the case now?" Shiori replied.

"Shiori, look at me." Tohka asked.

Shiori did, and then...

...Tohka punched her in face, surprising the former greatly as she fell to the floor.

"YOU IDIOT!" Tohka cried.

Shiori held her cheek as she saw Tohka crying, shedding tears as she stared at her.

"How can you be... so incredibly... stupid!?" Tohka asked.

"Tohka?" Shiori asked.

"Don't you "Tohka" me, not as you are right now! You've saved 9, no... 15 Spirits and you let the words of one make you question yourself now!?" Tohka screamed.

Shiori didn't know how to respond to that.

Back at the med bay, everyone wondered what Reine had just done.

"What did you just do?" Rinne asked.

"It'll make sense in a moment, but first... Mildred, I want to hear the story behind how Mukuro joined your family and why she ran away. If you don't mind me asking, and I mean the full story. Don't leave anything out... I'm hoping it'll reveal something about why she's this way now." Reine asked.

"...OK, I guess I'm already feeling bad enough, it can't make things any worse than what I just heard." Mildred answered.

Mildred breathed as she began to tell her story.

A younger Mildred was seen with her parents at an orphanage, and they told her something.

"Eh? Really, you mean... I can choose my own little brother or sister?" Mildred asked surprise.

She stood before her parents, a black-haired Japanese woman that was her mother, and a blonde-haired American that was her father, as the tow of them both gave her a smile of approval.

"Of course, since we're adopting someone, it's only fair that you get to have some say, you are going to be his or her big sister after all." Mildred's mother answered.

"My parents wanted another child, but my mom wasn't in the mood to get pregnant again, and she wanted a child a bit older than a baby without being too old. So, we went to the orphanage, they let me decide who my new sibling would be."

Mildred smiled at that, and soon the orphanage caretaker walked to Mildred.

"Come on, let's show you all the children." The orphanage caretaker smiled.

"OK." Mildred replied.

She soon brought Mildred inside, and she saw all the kids inside, playing a bit, they all noticed her
as she came in.

"Everyone, this is Mildred Fujiwara, her parents have come to adopt a child. She'll be picking one of you, but promise not to influence her decision, OK?" The orphanage caretaker explained.

"OK!" The children all replied cheerfully.

Mildred looked around as she saw everyone play, and it was amazing at what she saw, but then... she noticed a long child in the corner. That child had blonde hair that she had tied in two buns. Mildred stared at her before looking at the caretaker.

"And then... that's when I saw Mukuro for the first time."

"Who's that girl over there?" Mildred asked, pointing to her.

"Oh, that's a recent addition here. Her name's Mukuro Hoshimiya. We... don't really know much else about her except she apparently came from China, but somehow eventually ended up here. We can't get any more information from her." The caretaker explained sadly.

Mildred turned back to look at her, and then... something in her clicked. It was as if she and this girl were meant to meet each other.

And with that, Mildred made her decision, walking over to her.

"I'm not sure why, but... I saw Mukuro and my heart told me "she needs me", and she looked so sad and lonely. As a result, I walked over and introduced myself."

"Hey there." Mildred greeted.

Mukuro slowly looked at her, not saying anything.

"I'm here because my family wants to adopt a child, so... would you like to be my little sister?" Mildred asked.

Mukuro's eyes widened slightly, and Mildred kept smiling.

"And I said it right there and then."

At that moment, Mukuro slowly reached out her hand to Mildred's, who took it in return.

Years went by, and Mukuro had grown happier, starting to talk more. Though she was always closer to her parents and sister than others, not that her family minded since she was at least attempting to be social.

Currently, Mildred and Mukuro were sitting in the former's room where she was braiding the latter's hair.

"You've got pretty hair Mukuro, I wish I had hair like yours." Mildred smiled.

"But your hair's pretty too sis." Mukuro replied confused.

"Well... yeah, but it isn't a lush waterfall like yours is. That's what I'm a little jealous over." Mildred admitted embarrassingly.

The two sisters laughed at that.
"We got along so well, I knew I made the right choice in choosing her as my sister... but even though I was her sister, I... I never truly understood her own feelings."

**Mukuro waited on one certain day, the day Mildred promised to take her to Tenguu Tower.**

Soon enough, she noticed Mildred finally show up, though with a few friends by her side. Mildred saw Mukuro had a worried face... but she ignored it because she just assumed Mukuro had thought she'd arrive too late for them to go.

Not to mentioned despite she kept making that face, Mukuro didn't say anything, so she just assumed Mukuro might be having a bad day or a problem she felt she couldn't tell Mildred about, with the older sister being oblivious the whole time.

"Hey Mildred, your sister's hair is a bit long, isn't it? Wouldn't it be better to make it a little shorter?" One of Mildred's friends asked.

"Uh... yeah, I guess it's a little long. Maybe I should take Mukuro to have it shortened soon?" Mildred answered.

Neither of them, or any of Mildred's friends, noticed the look on Mukuro's face, it was wide, and her eyes were filled with horror...

'This is... the hair big sis told me she loved! Why would she say otherwise now, why... what have those people done to my big sister!? She's mine... why are they taking her!? She's mine!' Mukuro thought.

"How could I have been so... stupid! She loved her long hair, because I had told her I loved it. That was the day everything went wrong... because I bet it was only shortly after this event that she became a Spirit."

An upset looking Mukuro was seen in another part of the city, and a shining sound soon entered her ears as she turned to see a golden light.

"Huh?" Mukuro stated.

Before she could react, the Michael Crystal flew into her hands, soon being absorbed into her body as Mukuro gasped and her pupils whitened. Her outfit transformed into a lilac and white Astral Dress.

The ends of her skirt, which were adorned with constellation patterns, were divided at the edge. Additionally, she had transparent purple gloves that were also engraved with constellation patterns. Lastly, she wore purple shoes with flat pink soles that were attached to metallic greaves resembling the leg armor once used by medieval knights.

"What just... what just happened?" Mukuro asked worriedly.

[Hello there, what is your name? I'd like to call you by such rather than by Master.]

Mukuro looked at a large... staff/sword-like key? (She wasn't sure) As it materialized before her, surprising her a bit.

"Uh... my name's Mukuro Hoshimiya. What are you?" Mukuro asked.

[Ah, I see. It's nice to meet you Mukuro, I am the Angel Michael, and I am here to protect you and..."
Mukuro gasped as she heard that.

What I wish for is..." Mukuro replied.

The next day, Mildred walked by one of her friend’s homes, and seeing them outside she decided to say hi.

"Hey, how's today going Suzuki?" Mildred greeted.

The girl however looked at Mildred funny.

"I'm sorry, but... who are you?" Suzuki asked.

"Huh?" Mildred replied.

Mildred went around, looking for everyone she knew... but only her parents and Mukuro seemed to still know who she was.

Everyone else she ever knew... it was like she had never existed to them. She rushed back home, and panted as she found her mom and dad sharing the same worry.

"Mom, dad... what about you? Does anyone remember you either?" Mildred asked.

"No, not a single person... is this some new phenomenon like the Spacequakes?" Mildred's mom wondered.

"This is terrifying!" Mildred's father whimpered.

Mukuro soon walked closer to her family.

"Don't be scared, you still have me." Mukuro replied.

However, the look she gave her family didn't match what she felt, what she was hoping was warm and comforting... was suddenly terrifying and cold. Mukuro had yet to realize what she had become, or the aura she was giving off.

"And that's when Mukuro said the words that made me and my family cause our greatest mistake..."

"...Mukuro, what are you saying?" Mildred asked.

"You are my family... now no one can take you from me." Mukuro smiled.

And that's when it clicked to Mildred and her parents, Mukuro herself had somehow done this... she made everyone forget them.

Mukuro had expected a happier reaction, but instead?

"...How dare you." Mildred growled.

"Huh?" Mukuro replied confused.

"How dare you! What gave you the right to do that!?” Mildred shouted.

"That mistake was... we yelled at her, not understanding she might not understand what she did was
wrong. We treated her like she intended it... and tore into her with some very hurtful words."

Mukuro backed up a bit, a little scared now.

"What in the right mind make you think it was right to take away our existence to everyone who ever knew us!?” Mildred's mother exclaimed angrily.

“Do you know how much agony this has brought us!? I can’t believe you’d be such a selfish hoarder! You can't share us, so you do this!?” Mildred's father screamed.

"B-but I... I...” Mukuro whimpered.

"Don't try to excuse yourself young lady! I never knew you could be so... so... so cruel!” Mildred screamed.

And with that word, Mukuro's eyes shook before she started crying, she sniffled before running upstairs. The sound of a door closing was heard, and then... then Mildred and her parents realized what they had done.

"That word, that one... dreaded word... oh how much I wish I could take it all back."

"...Oh my god, did we actually just yell at her?” Mildred gasped.

“We did, I feel so stupid. Mukuro's never tried to do anything bad to us before... and yet we treated her like she wanted us to suffer... I don't think she ever realized what she did was wrong. We should have just explained that to her.” Mildred's mother sniffled.

"Damn it, I can't believe we let our anger get the better of us!” Mildred's father growled.

"...I'll go check on her.” Mildred replied.

Mildred soon went to Mukuro's room and knocked on the door.

"Mukuro? Hey, it's me... I didn't mean to yell at you. Please open up-” Mildred asked.

Her knocks opened the door on its own, as if it hadn't been closed.

Mukuro, suddenly feeling worried ran into her room, and soon saw an open window, but what ended up being the most painful thing she saw was a lone note.

"She left a note, a single worded note... and it was the worst thing I could have ever read."

The note said: 'Goodbye' on it, nothing more... noting less.

"No... NO... NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!” Mildred cried.

Mildred's parents both heard her screaming and ran up, soon finding her in Mukuro's room and the absence of their younger daughter.

"...Where's Mukuro?” Mildred's father asked.

"She's... she's gone! Mukuro ran away from home, and it's all my fault!” Mildred cried.

Mildred soon teared up a bit, having finished her story.
Needless to say, everyone was a bit saddened by it, even the normally tough acting Marina couldn’t fight shedding any tears because of how heartless she felt it would make her look if she hadn’t.

"That's... that's so sad." Rio cried.

"Mildred, I'm... I'm so sorry." Rinne replied.

Mildred wipes her tears, with Reine handing her a tissue.

"That's why... that's why I went so far to try and find her, I wanted to apologize, but... now she doesn't even see me as her sister anymore. I pushed her to this, if only I had paid more attention, she was in an orphanage for god's sake! I should have considered she was fragile, that's gotta be how she became so emotional when we adopted her!" Mildred cried.

Reine hugged her close, letting her cry while the other Spirits all shed tears, sympathizing with her pain.

Shiori's eyes shook as she and Tohka heard the story from where they were on the ship, Reine having turned the speakers on so the entire ship would hear it. To learn Mukuro had suffered like that, to hear how Mildred was still suffering over it... she wasn't sure how to process it.

"Don't you see Shiori?" Tohka said suddenly.

"Huh?" Shiori replied.

"That story you just heard... that's why you can't give up on Mukuro!" Tohka cried.

"But... but she threatened to, she told me that...

Tohka screamed and grabbed Shiori as she shook her, soon doing it enough times that Shiori got nauseous before Tohka let go of her.

"Mukuro ran away because she was crushed by how her family reacted, right?" Tohka asked.

"Well... yeah, Mildred did imply that." Shiori answered.

"Then... then..." Tohka stuttered.

Shiori soon saw Tohka making the saddest looking face she had ever seen on her.

"If that's the case, and she locked away her memories... then don't you think the reason she did that was because she felt so lonely, she couldn't bear the pain? That it took locking away everything that could make her said to escape it!?" Tohka exclaimed.

Shiori's eyes widened at that.

It all suddenly made sense, why Mukuro couldn't remember the reason she sealed her emotions away, because no one could live in solitude. No matter what... all species strive for communication, and a lack of it can be a huge mental strain.

Mukuro... wanted to be saved, but she couldn't realize that because she didn't have the emotion to feel that way!

"She wants to be saved... she really does!" Shiori gasped.
"So, will you do it Shiori? Will you... will you save her?" Tohka asked.

Shiori breathed before punching herself, surprising Tohka.

"Thank you Tohka, thank you for waking me up. I've been so stupid... and now I know what I have to do!" Shiori declared.

Shiori's eyes glowed as she summoned her false Uriel, and Tohka soon cried happy tears.

"Come on, let's go and save a Spirit!" Shiori smiled.

"...Yeah!" Tohka replied.

Suddenly the alarms go off, alerting everyone.

"Everyone, the DEM's left the Inverse Void! They've begun an attack on Mukuro and it's in progress right now with a massive army! We're requesting reinforcements as we speak, all personal prepare for the worst... because we're going to war!" Sakura exclaimed over the speakers.

"Alright, no going back now... it's time to end this, to save Mukuro from the DEM!" Shiori exclaimed.

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We can have our doubts, but sometimes facing them makes us come back stronger. Now with the DEM's attack on Mukuro, Ratatoskr's got only one chance to rescue her, and now... they've gotta fight the DEM in an all-out war! Will Shiori, the Spirits and Ratatoskr be able to come out of this in one piece, just what will everyone need to do to achieve victory against the DEM who's gotten stronger despite Ratatoskr adapting to their previous defeat in the Miku arc?

Finally, we get at least a small peak at Mukuro's backstory through Mildred, but you still haven't see everything. Mukuro has her own part of the story that we still don't know and it'll be a while before I reveal it. Also, just what is this "key" that Seigo and Isamu told Shido about? Is it an answer to them reviving like he hinted to Rinne in the last arc, or is it related to another mystery about the Spirits?

Either way, it looks like Mukuro's holding her own against the DEM for now, but this time Westcott's partially present and already seems to have a counter to her locking the Automatons, we don't know how much longer she'll be able to hold up though. Not to mention, the Adeptus trio hasn't shown up in the fight just yet and the Arbitel's third incarnation hasn't revealed any of its powers yet. Next chapter is the first stage in a fight to remember!

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

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-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)
Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)
OK, before we start, it's time to answer about what I mentioned last chapter about Date AST Re:Strike. Most of you either said you were OK with it or were indifferent with the entire thing. So, as a result, I've decided I will move Date AST Re:Strike's chapters into this story once Season 3 finishes up. Though they won't be identical to the originals.

While the general ideas and such will stay the same, I'll be adding onto and fixing them a bit, and turning them into movie chapters. So, there's a chance the three chapters may end up becoming 2 to fit how the movie chapters are generally much longer. I personally think I could do better with some of the fights, especially Mana vs Minerva, so when they're put in, check them out again because they'll be new and improved ^^.

How the process of adding them in will work is this. After Season 3 ends, I'll get the Crossover started, and since I've never done a crossover and will be a bit slower in making it, I'll add the Re:Strike chapters within that time frame. I'll start by leaving them at the end so veteran readers can check them out without having to backtrack to find them, then after a few days pass after adding all the Re:Strike chapters in, I'll rearrange everything back into place.

Now that we've got that done, time for the chapter's start notes! As of this part of the story, and at the very least for the rest of the Mukuro arc with the exception of the period Shido tries to win Mukuro's heart over enough to seal her, things are going be... very different than they've been in the rest of the story has been for one major reason. I don't know how to say it without giving it away, so I'll just say... *thinks* be on guard.

There's gonna be a lot of fighting, and Mukuro's situation is gonna be last on the list, on the bright side you'll get to see some characters fight in the rematches you've all been waiting for them to partake in. As well as ones that you might like or expecting based on past character interactions, I know I'm excited for who I've chosen as Ellen's opponent :3

We've got Ratatoskr vs the DEM, the Fraxinus vs the Arbitel, and Everyone vs Mukuro! I'm so pumped I can't help but make my speech epic due to the sheer fighting that's about to happen! In fact, I'm gonna get some donuts right now to spark my excitement and writing potential! *cheers* I've gotta channel all this excitement and energy into this chapter!

Speaking of which, let's actually start it! *holds up a flare guns and fires it* BEGIN!

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Chapter 60, S3: Mukuro Space, Part 3

Suddenly the alarms go off, alerting everyone.

"Everyone, the DEM's left the Inverse Void! They've begun an attack on Mukuro and it's in progress right now with a massive army! We're requesting reinforcements as we speak, all personal prepare for the worst... because we're going to war!" Sakura exclaimed over the speakers.

"Alright, no going back now... it's time to end this, to save Mukuro from the DEM!" Shiori exclaimed.

"Right!" Tohka nodded.
Before doing anything, Shiori put a hand on Tohka and used some of his Reiryoku to activate Miku’s passive ability and relieve her body of its pain. Now with her main form of stress gone, Tohka shook off the fatigue and got back on her feet and back flipped in the air.

"Wow Shiori, I don't know what you do but I feel better than ever!" Tohka exclaimed happily.

"Let's meet up with the others, come on." Shiori replied.

The two soon rushed to the bridge, meeting with the others already there. Reine, Mildred and the other Spirits all quickly followed, and Shiori noticed the Spirits were all still in the same tired and weakened state that Tohka had just been in.

Shiori sweat dropped at that and chuckled embarrassingly.

"Hold on a sec, let me fix that." Shiori stated.

Shiori puts her hands on all the Spirits, and soon felt Miku's passive ability restore them.

"Nice, glad you've got an ability like that one." Nia remarked.

"Well, I try." Shiori giggled.

Reine took her seat in the Commander's chair.

"Alright, status update everyone." Reine ordered.

"Maintenance fully checked, all systems are green!" Matthew replied.

"All reinforcements accounted for, the Tenguu City's base forces all present!" Ren added.

"All systems green on support!" Sakura confirmed.

"All Ratatoskr divisions' sending aid to our coordinates as we speak!" Minowa mentioned.

"Coordinates are X-375, Y-168, Z-924!" Shiizaki stated.

Reine nodded, and soon breathed before grabbing her hair band and closing her eyes. To most of her crew's surprise, she pulled it off before double layering it over her wrist. Her eyes reopened with a series look on them.

"Alright, prepare launch into space!" Reine ordered.

Everyone nods.

"Deploying territory!" Kawagoe announced.

"Starting engine, powering all systems to speed until atmospheric breach is detected!" Nakatsugawa stated.

"Powering all Realizers, staring up all of the Realizers and Ashcroft Delta devices!" Mikimoto approved.

As this happened, part of the Ratatoskr base moved, and soon enough everyone heard a special alarm go off to announce Ratatoskr was about to send most of its forces. Everyone quickly ran the shelters as the buildings shifted accordingly.
Soon the roads motioned into a launch ramp, and it split into many more as the Fraxinus and various other ships like the Sagittarius and more were moved onto each individual ramp path, some of which that contained the support vehicles. Mildred sat down and brought up a screen.

"City shifting has been completed, all ships are docked. Alright Chairman Elliot, on your command we have lift off!" Mildred stated.

"Very well, all forces... GO!" Elliot declared.

Soon the Fraxinus and every other ship was launched forward by the ramp docks, catapulting them into the air before they started to speed up as they slowly neared the atmosphere and the area where Mukuro was fighting the DEM forces.

As they rose up, the Fraxinus saw various ships near their other ships as they flew in from other Fraxinus branches across the globe.

"It looks like all ships have gathered, now all that's left is-" Karen stated.

Suddenly everyone felt the Fraxinus shake as they crashed into something, everyone was knocked to the floor while Reine tried to hold steady.

"Maria, Marina! What just happened? How did we hit something!?" Reine asked.

"Let's see." Maria wondered.

The two both linked to the Fraxinus' systems... and an unseen yellow field of energy was before them, the Fraxinus smashing right into it.

"Oh crap! It looks like there's a field of Reiryoku that's condensed into a barrier!" Maria replied.

"What!?" Reine asked in surprise.

"I definitely see yellow Reiryoku, the battle in space must have Mukuro using so much power it's caused the magic particles to crystallize into some sort of membrane, we can't breach the atmosphere!" Marina growled.

- (*Fairy Tail - Last Magic*) -

Reine looked forward, and gave a determined frown as she grabbed two levers on the control console.

"Kannazuki, grab the rear controls... we're shattering that membrane ourselves!" Reine declared.

Everyone looked at her in shock, and Kannazuki taps the wall to reveal to extra levels on it.

"Alright, on your signal." Kannazuki replied.

"OK, do it now!" Reine answered.

Four sharp wing extensions jut out of the front of the hip, soon piercing into the membrane, and everyone held onto part of the ship as it began shaking.

Reine and Kannazuki on the other hand felt the backlash of the Reiryoku hitting them.

"No way... you aren't stopping us, don't give into some stupid barrier Fraxinus!" Reine begged.
Reine and Kannazuki pushed their levers further, and the Fraxinus' engines pushed harder, soon cracking the membrane.

"It's cracking!" Marina smiled.

"Do it!" Maria cheered.

The Fraxinus pushed harder... and soon burst forward, smashing a hole through the membrane before causing its fragments to briefly turn visible and fade away as the entire membrane shattered across the atmosphere.

"This is Karen Nora Mathers, the Reiryoku barrier has been cleared, all ships proceed and double time it!" Karen announced.

- (*insert song end*) -

Everyone in the other ships nodded before they all accelerated.

"Oh man, the ship took heavy damage. How can it fight in this condition?" Rinne wondered.

"No worries, we've got it." Reine answered.

A seat rose from part of the bridge's floor and a few monitoring wires appeared from it.

"Kotori, sit down on that real quick and channel your powers through those wires. Leave the rest to us." Reine asked.

"Uh... alright." Kotori replied.

Kotori sat on the chair, the wires soon attached onto her skin, she grunted as she channeled Red Reiryoku into them.

\[\text{Reiryoku detected, assigned Spirit: Efreet. Activating Reiryoku adaption program, restoring all damage to the Fraxinus.}\]

At that moment, everyone looked in shock as the Fraxinus glowed red and fire burned on the haul, restoring all the damage it had taken like Kotori would until it was back at 100%.

\[\text{All systems restored.}\]

"No way, did the Fraxinus just..." Mana gasped.

"Yes, thanks to Nia's aid, we created an equivalent to the Spirit Ascension for this new Fraxinus model, and one other feature similar to one of Rinne's abilities. We call it the Seirei Armament." Kannazuki answered.

"You can store up a portion of Reiryoku onto the ship for the latter ability, but when a Spirit's sitting on the chair, they give the ship access to some of their abilities. I recommend you all take a seat and store some power." Reine explained

The Spirits all nodded as the Fraxinus and the rest of Ratatoskr's ships had fully entered into space, and soon enough...

...James Paddington noticed a signal reach the Arbitel, getting his attention.
"This is... verify the signal now!" James demanded.

"Roger that sir!" A crew member replied.

After examining the reading, he saw more appear, and they all came from the same source: Ratatoskr.

"Sir, the signals are multiplying and they're all of Ratatoskr! They've sent an entire army here!" The crew member stated.

"Did they send everything? Damn, no wonder Sir Westcott asked us to send everything, we're fighting a three-sided war here, the Spirit and Ratatoskr? Alright, let's show them the same defeat they were given 3 months ago!" James ordered.

"Understood!" The whole crew responded.

The Arbitel slowly began to move, getting Westcott's attention from his projection.

"So, they finally showed up... time to end this." Westcott smirked.

"Finally, I've been waiting for this. I'll finally get a chance to make that Tohka Yatogami feel the full sting of defeat!" Ellen smirked, her bloodthirsty smile showing.

"You can have her, but I want Mana!" Jessica cackled.

"I don't mind, just let me handle [Angel] and I'm fine." Chinami stated.

Westcott chuckled darkly.

"Go on then, show them the power of my strongest Wizards in their newest forms." Westcott declared.

As the Fraxinus forces appear, they begin firing against the DEM's forces, with the Fraxinus slinking through as they got closer to the Arbitel and Mukuro. Tohka who sat on the chair last soon got off, the Fraxinus fully registering her added Reiryoku.

"Alright everyone, I have no doubt that the Adeptus wizards will all go after you soon. Because of that... Mana, Karen, Artemisia?" Reine stated.

They nodded.

"You've got it, we'll take care of them! The rest of you take out the rest of the DEM fleet." Artemisia replied.

"This is everyone's fight this time, we all stand united." Karen added.

"Let's take them down!" Mana exclaimed.

They all ran off to the deployment area, meanwhile Elliot turned to Reine.

"I'll be moving over to the Aries support vehicle since it needs a pilot and I'm familiar with using it, you're in charge of everything Reine. Give them everything you've got." Elliot stated.

"You've got it Elliot, I won't let you down." Reine smiled.

"Alright Field Agents, head to the auxiliary room and begin your direct link to the remaining support
vehicles.” Kannazuki ordered.

"Yes sir!"

Elliot rode off on his wheelchair, while Hiroto, Ai, Mai, Mai and a few others all headed over to the support vehicles,

Finally, Reine turned to the Spirits.

"Everyone, this is the major point we need to achieve. If we want to have any chance of having Mukuro listen to reason... we must unseal her emotions.” Reine stated.

"But how do we do that? She's got Michael, only she can make it work, right?” Mayuri asked.

"And while I may be the only other one who can command an Angel, I can't use an Angel other than Uriel, or make it use one of its abilities on their current host. That means I can't tell Michael to unlock her emotions either." Rinne added.

Nia chuckles before wagging her finger.

"Who has the Angel that knows almost anything?" Nia mentioned.

"Does that mean you found out a way?" Origami asked.

"I didn't need to, it was easy to put two and two together for this. We'll have Haniel copy Michael and use it to unseal Mukuro's emotions." Nia answered.

Everyone gasped at that.

"Of course! I can't believe we forgot my own Angel, but wait... I can't use another Angel's alternate forms unless I have Baal. Certain abilities like Segva count as alternate forms, and we can't just make me Inverse here so Baal can work around that issue." Natsumi stated.

"That's where I've got Raziel to help us." Nia smirked.

Nia summoned Raziel and opened the book up.

"Alright Raziel, how can we make a Michael created by Haniel's Kaleidoscope ability use its Segva ability?" Nia asked.

[Let's see... processing the info now.]

Soon the Spirit language appeared on the pages, and Nia showed it to Rinne.

"Alright Rinne, what does this say?" Nia asked.

"Hmm... "With a strong enough force of fire and wind backing Haniel, it should be able to cast an alternate form's power", strong enough force..." Rinne wondered.

Rinne soon gasped.

"Of course! Strong force, fire, wind... if Shiori uses a Triple Spirit Ascension and adds Camael and Raphael's power to it, it could use equip with Camael and Raphael's charged attacks to empower it!" Rinne exclaimed.

Shiori's eyes widen before she smiled and nodded.
"Yeah, that might just work! Although it also means I only get one shot. If I miss, then Mukuro will likely take me out and we'll never get another... we need to think about this, how can near-guarantee this to work?" Shiori wondered.

"I think I know a way." Natsumi smiled.

Natsumi whispered something to Shiori, and soon her eyes widened.

"Alright then, let's go for it everyone... we'll save Mukuro no matter what!" Shiori declared.

"Right!" Everyone exclaimed.

Marina soon pressed part of the ship and opened a panel with necklaces that had small charm like realizers attached.

"Here, wear these special realizers we've made. They'll let you breath in space while letting you move like you were flying in the sky. Boycott was working on these, but he still doesn't know I'm not dead." Marina explained.

Everyone puts them on, and Marina gives a sinister sounding chuckle as they stare at her nervously.

"Boy is he gonna get pissed off when I'm through with him." Marina smirked.

"Alright then... this is it, let's go!" Rinne announced.

Ellen flew through the sea of space, prepared to near the Fraxinus when...

"OH NO YOU DON'T!"

Ellen's eyes widened as she held up Caliburn in surprise.

She ended up being right to do so when Artemisia rushed in and smashed her sword, the Nandaka, directly at her. Ellen parried for a bit before she was pushed back, Artemisia standing right before her.

"Artemisia... I'm sorry, but you're not the one I'm currently after." Ellen stated.

"Well too bad, I'm the one you're getting. I think you told me back at the Ten-Oh festival that "You could have given me trouble if you were fresh instead of the sorry state the others left you in," am I right?" Artemisia asked.

Ellen crossed her arms a bit.

"So? I have no intention to face you here and now, the only one I want is Tohka." Ellen stated.

"Oh, I see... then you admit it?" Artemisia smirked.

Ellen raised an eyebrow.

"What?" Ellen asked.

"You admit it, that you what you said about me giving you trouble is proof that you're not the strongest wizard, but I am." Artemisia answered.

Suddenly, Ellen's eyes shrunk before contorting into a look of anger.
"Never, I am the world's strongest wizard! I'll prove it to you here! Last time Ike had me keep you alive, but now... I have no reason to keep me from killing you! Prepare to die Artemisia Bell Ashcroft!" Ellen declared.

Ellen raised Caliburn out with one hand before slamming the other on her CR-Unit, causing a marking to appear before her body's Maryoku began turning dark, distorting her screaming voice as the Arthur gained a black coloration transformed into the Inverse Arthur.

"What the?" Artemisia gasped.

"Let's see how you do against my new power Artemisia!" Ellen screamed.

Ellen rushed ahead, and Artemisia did the same.

Shiori began flying through the ocean of space as she neared Mukuro, who was looking towards the DEM and Fraxinus ships.

"OK, here goes... Triple Spirit Ascension! Haniel, Camael, Raphael!" Shiori shouted.

Soon Shiori's hair became red, green and orange, with her eyes becoming red, green and purple in color as copies of the three Angels she called formed around her.

Spinning a bit, she grabbed Haniel before grabbing Raphael, and soon stuck the broomstick into the front of the bow before grabbing Camael.

"MEGIDDO!"

Camael transformed while floating before Shiori grabbed the fused Haniel and Raphael, sticking it into the Megiddo cannon and grabbing it.

"Alright Haniel, here goes... Kaleidoscope - Michael!" Shiori shouted.

The three Angel copies all melded and soon created a copy of Michael that sparked with power, Shiori grabbed the key and soon felt the power surging.

"Yes, this is it. I just hope this works..." Shiori breathed to herself.

At that moment, she saw Mukuro move as she intended to go somewhere else. Taking a deep breath...

"Mukuro!" Shiori screamed.

Mukuro suddenly stopped, and turned to see Shiori staring at her holding her copy of Michael.

"...Your form may be different, I remember you. The boy who called himself Shido. Regrettably, it seems you have trouble with remembering things, did I not tell you to never bother me or I'd stop Earth's rotation?" Mukuro asked.

"You know, I'm honestly quite surprised you bothered to remember me at all." Shiori smiled.

Mukuro raised an eyebrow at that.

"What do you mean?" Mukuro asked.

"You had no reason to remember me, and yet you did. Maybe part of you really wanted to see me
again. Yeah, that has to be it... and that can only mean you truly did seal away your emotions because you were lonely." Shiori smirked.

Mukuro blinked at that.

"What strangeness are you speaking about?" Mukuro asked.

"Just that you should be prepared Mukuro, because my ego has no end! If you say my hypocrisy is a maze you won't let yourself be ensnared in... then I'll just have to build that maze even bigger and force you to be ensnared!" Shiori exclaimed.

"...Are you saying you refuse to ignore me? Even if I threaten to destroy the world?" Mukuro asked.

Shiori smirked and soon swiped her hand down, creating a wall of flames that put Mukuro on guard before Shiori rushed out, slamming the copy-Michael on her.

[Interesting. It seems she has a power that allowed him to mimic my form, but I don't sense the same power beyond my weakest and most natural abilities.]

"Then she is of no true concern, but it seems she will still combat us. It seems she realized that despite I do have the power to carry my threat, I had no intention to do it, I was too careless." Mukuro stated.

[Then I guess we have no choice but to prevent her from bothering you again the hard way. I'd rather not get too rough and hurt her, but we all have to make sacrifices.]

"Indeed." Mukuro agreed.

Mukuro spun Michael, and Shiori held her Copy-Michael like a staff in return.

Jessica looked around the battlefield for any signs of her hated rival, and then...

"Hey Jessica, over here!"

"Mana!" Jessica growled.

The younger Half-Spirit soon flew down into view, smirking as she stared at Jessica.

"Finally, I've got the perfect opportunity to kill you once and for all!" Jessica cackled.

"You, kill me? I don't think so. I still owe you for killing my Uncle three decades ago, so you're the one who's not coming out of this alive, so get ready!" Mana declared.

Jessica cackles loudly at that.

"Oh really, well... let's see how you handle this!" Jessica stated.

Jessica slapped the Mordred's chest area, and a symbol appeared on the CR-Unit before the same thing Ellen did happened to her, making her CR-Unit turn black as it transformed into the Inverse Mordred.

"You made your Maryoku become like an Inverse Spirit's!?" Mana shouted in surprise.

"Hah! How do you like this now, let's see how that stupid Murakumo of yours does against my new Mordred's new power..." Jessica began.
Soon the Scarlet Licorice appeared before equipping to her, soon changing into a black color and changing to add additional weaponry.

"...and my Black Licorice!" Jessica finished.

"...You really like licorice, don't you?" Mana joked.

Mana sighed before readying herself.

"Alright, time for you to see my new trick." Mana smirked.

"**Spirit Ascension... Sandalphon!**"

Jessica's suddenly blown back a bit as a large amount of Reiryoku forms around Mana, and when she could regain her foot to look... the wizard known as Adeptus 2 was shocked to see Mana with purple hair and eyes and a Limited Astral Dress based off Tohka's.

"What the... what is... where is your Murakumo!?!" Jessica roared.

"Oh that? It got broken, but this is a much better replacement for it. So..." Mana answered.

Mana formed a crystalline sword.

"Let's dance!" Mana shouted.

The DEM ships that slipped through the Ratatoskr ships' fire all began to slowly move closer to Shiori and Mukuro's battleground.

"All forces, prepare to fire!" A DEM captain ordered.

The ships all prepare to charge a black, and right as they were about to fire...

...a sudden purple colored energy slash shoots at them, hitting the ships weapons and making them explode slightly, with two of the ships fully detonating.

"What!?!" The DEM captain gasped.

"You aren't getting anyone near them!"

Soon the DEM ships focus their viewing cameras downwards a bit, and the sight of Tohka alongside every Spirits aside from those fighting others like the Takamiya siblings were gathered in one place, all with their Angels out and their Astral Dresses (or Limited Astral Dress in Rinne's case), and ready to face them.

"What is this? I thought the members of the Adeptus squad were supposed to be handling them!? Yet nearly all of them are here!" The DEM Captain exclaimed.

He growled and slammed the button for the communication feed.

"This is the captain of the Hyperion, get over her right now Adeptus Squad!" The DEM captain yelled.

"That's a negative sir, we've been ambushed! We can't reach Adeptus 1-3 either!" Adeptus 4 replied.

"What!?!" The captain gasped.
"Ratatoskr's sent out every-" Adeptus 4 replied.

Ryouko shouted loudly as she swung her sword down, causing Adeptus 4 to scream as her hand was sliced in two. She panicked as Ryouko merged her Cry-Cry-Cry with her sword.

Adeptus 4 quickly parried the attack.

"What... what the hell are all of you? How did you become so strong!?" Adeptus 4 asked fearfully.

"The same way we became stronger after what you did to us nearly a decade ago. You hit us hard, we come back with even more force, because when you piss off this ragtag bunch of misfits... our tantrums are deadly!" Ryouko answered loudly.

Adeptus 4 saw Ryouko smash through her sword and have her gun charge aimed at her. She tried to fly away, only for a territory barrier to trap her... and Ryouko's gun still charging and aimed at her, and the AST Captain's face clearly saying: "This isn't a bluff" to her.

Now that she had a moment, Ryouko turned to the rest of the AST.

"Everyone! This isn't like any fight we've been in, this is a full-on war, don't hesitate or hold back! These people have every mind to kill you and this time... we can't let them live! Just know this, you're not fighting to kill, you're fighting to survive!" Ryouko exclaimed loudly.

The AST was quite shocked by that order, to possibly have to go beyond simply defeating their opponents?

"...I get it." Ashley suddenly said.

Everyone looked at her.

"Yeah, think about it? We're not going to be shown mercy by the DEM, any of the organization's members would kill if they had to for the sake of Westcott's goals. That's a fact we've known for a long time, so... we should have considered at one point we'd have to consider our lives or theirs." Leonora added.

"Then there's the biggest part of the overall picture. No matter what any of us Ratatoskr do, there's someone that has to die for this madness plaguing the world for the last 30 years to finally end... Westcott." Cecile stated sadly.

And with that, the AST members all went wide eyed as the reality finally hit them.

Now with only Mukuro as the remaining unsealed Spirit, things wouldn't be like they were before, Westcott would get truly serious for what he wanted if he had to and most of all... with all the Spirits allied to Ratatoskr, the whole organization would become his target.

"...Hey guys, do you really believe in what people say about having blood on your hands if you kill someone?" Mikie asked.

"Well, I'm not sure much this might mean, but... remember when Mana took out Minerva? She wasn't afraid, and she didn't show she was traumatized it, but that wasn't because she enjoyed it either. She was fighting to save Artemisia, she wasn't killing because she wanted to kill, she was fighting for her life and others." Katie answered.
Everyone listened closely at her words, and soon Katie showed the resolve of her words on her face.

"I think that's what it means to have blood on your hands, to kill willingly. You can regret eventually, but that won't change at one point you truly wanted to end someone's life. That isn't us, and as long as we remember that, I think we can all agree that we'll never truly have blood on our hands." Katie stated with determination.

"Fight to protect and not to kill, don't be the sword... but the shield!" Saya gasped.

Ryouko smiled.

'That's it girls, I knew you'd figure it out.' Ryouko smiled.

Soon she put her and on the C-C-C's trigger.

"No... please don't, please! I'll change, I'll leave the DEM, just don't kill me!" Adeptus 4 cried.

"I'd like to believe you... but when the DEM gathered back its most loyal members after Westcott survived the black hole, you went back to him. For that one reason, and because of people in the group like Ellen..." Ryouko replied.

Ryouko shed a tear, clearly distraught with what she had to do.

"...I'm unable to believe you, if you want someone to blame, then blame Westcott." Ryouko apologized.

Ryouko pulled the trigger, and soon a strong Maryoku blast vaporized the Adeptus 4 wizard, and Ryouko sobbed as she saw the empty space where she once stood.

Chinami searched around for Origami, and soon heard something coming near her.

"...How disappointing, I guess my fight with [Angel] isn't today either." Chinami sighed in annoyance.

Chinami drew Arondight as it clashed with Karen's sword, causing the Ratatoskr wizard to flip onto her feet and skid against the non-existent ground.

"Karen Nora Mathers, the younger sister of Ellen... so you're my opponent. I think I don't mind this fight, to end the life of someone like you will be my proving point for taking [Angel]'s life afterwards." Chinami mentioned.

"Sorry, but I'll be the one victorious. I still can't believe you join the DEM and fight against your own family." Karen stated angrily.

Chinami blinked before laughing, catching Karen by surprise.

"You don't have the right to say that, after all... aren't you fighting your own the same way?" Chinami smirked darkly.

Karen's eyes widened.

"...That's, that's different! My sister chose to be a monster, but you learned your adoptive parents were killed by accident, and by your own adoptive sister, Ellen isn't like Origami... she's not the victim!" Karen shouted.
"If you truly think you're right, then by all means you should be the winner. So, with that in mind... let us prove who the right one is, right here and now." Chinami replied.

"You asked for it." Karen replied.

Chinami grabbed her sword as the two rushed at one another.

In a field of the DEM ships, the Sagittarius (which Matthew was controlling remotely), alongside the combat and support vehicles based on the astrological zodiac. Scorpio, Gemini, Leo and Taurus were all being remotely piloted by the same people who used them during the fight with the Deus, with Elliot riding in the Aries directly and the other six being remotely piloted by the Fraxinus' original crew and Mildred.

Using the rocket booster attached to it, the Taurus catapulted itself and spun fast enough to drill through a fleet of DEM automatons and warships, causing a chain reaction of explosions.

"Oh yeah! That's one..." Ai began.

Mai had the Scorpio fire its tail stinger like a sonic charged harpoon through even more of the same targets.

"That's two..." Mai followed up.

Finally, the Leo had its claws slash through another large group as Mii had it quickly dart around.

"And that's three!" Mii finished.

"Here's a recharge you guys!" Hiroto stated.

The Gemini unleashed lightning from the electrical pillars on it to recharge all three vehicles, and as that was happening, the Sagittarius fired a Mystletainn shot that cut through even more ships.

"We're clearing out a good number of the DEM's forces, don't let up." Matthew noted.

The other zodiac vehicles either support or attack the other ships with weapons based on their respective zodiac symbol. Meanwhile in the Aries, Elliot put his hands on two levers as two frontal arcs on the ship opened up before swallowing all the Maryoku streams within range.

He pushed the levers forwards, and the Aries burst forward before smashing through most of the forces before him.

"A little rusty, but I've still got it." Elliot chuckled.

Soon an explosion is heard behind him, and he turns to see the others zodiac themed vehicles slowly explode, one by one.

"Oh no, the Taurus is gone!" Ai said via speaker.

"Destruction of all but the Aries has been confirmed, I'm sorry sir." Matthew replied through the speaker.

"Sir, get out of there now!" Minowa stated.

Elliot turned the Aries to see the sight of the DEM ship known as Heptameron staring him down.
It began charging its lasers at the Aries, making as Elliot sweat before quickly making the zodiac based vehicle go onto the defensive as it flew away.

The Spirits all flew out of the way as the DEM ships all fired at them, each warship's captain not even realizing they had completely diverted their attention to Shiori and Mukuro's fight. After getting an opening, Tohka raised Sandalphon as she summoned its throne.

"HALVANHELEV!" Tohka shouted.

Tohka swung downwards as the throne slowly formed the Sword of the End, and soon it smashed through a whole flurry of ships.

Kotori soon grabbed Camael tightly in one hand, holding it up into the air.

"MEGIDDO!" Kotori exclaimed.

"Now... burn them all to ashes, do it Camael!" Kotori screamed.

Kotori fired the beam while moving the Megiddo cannon, causing the fiery laser to burn through multiple ships.

"Quick, deploy territories now!" The Hyperion Captain ordered.

"That won't help you, I won't let you hurt my friends." Yoshino said quietly.

Zadkiel roared and caused any icy cyclone, the ice caused the territories that formed to become frozen prisons.

"Oh no, she froze the Maryoku in our territories! Break the ice shells, hurry!" A DEM captain panicked.

Origami soon focused her finger forward.

"Kadour - Sword of Light!" Origami yelled.

Metatron's pillars shot forward, breaking through the ice shells as they also smash through the ships.

The remaining shells were all fired on Kurumi and the Nibellcole clones.

"And that's how you do a quick draw." Kurumi smiled, blowing the smoke off Zafkiel's calibers.

"El Kan'aph!" The Yamai twins called.

Their fused bow formed before they pulled the three strings together, firing off and smashing through the ships that escaped Zadkiel's freezing, and the reinforcements coming from behind.

Miku slammed her hands down on Gabriel's keyboard, soon unleashing a sonic scream at those ships, causing some of their hauls to explode and burst, cracking some windows and armor in the process.

"Quick, everyone... get... the oxygen tanks and... weapons online!" A DEM captain ordered, putting on an oxygen mask.

"Take out these damn Spirits, kill them all!" A DEM crew member roared.
The ships all charge beams or unleash rapid fire and Rinne cuts through the beams with Uriel, while Rio causes Eden to enlarge and shield everyone.

"Hey Rio, got a request on how I should flip the tables on these ships?" Nia asked.

"How about you give Mayuri's lightning have a good chance of messing their systems up?" Rio requested.

"Alright, go for it Mayuri!" Nia shouted.

"You've got it." Mayuri nodded.

Mayuri flew forward, soon rising up as Nia wrote "guarantee Mayuri's lightnings fry their systems." in Raziel's pages.

With a mighty shout, she unleashed her lightning and all of the ships suddenly smoked as their systems went haywire and some began to crash into each other.

"Damn it... damn it all!" The Hyperion captain declared.

Westcott grunted a bit, Ratatoskr was doing what they had since Shido had begun rescuing the Spirits... overpowering him.

"Impossible, I didn't underestimate them this time! How can they have learned to fight against the enhancements made by the Dark Maryoku I've created and applied to my forces? How!?!" Westcott growled.

"Oh, that's quite easy... boycott!" Marina exclaimed.

Westcott's eyes widened at that voice, and soon he saw Marina appearing through her remnant link on the Arbitel's communication systems.

Marina giggled mockingly as Westcott's eyes widened.

"How's this possible, you were deleted!" Westcott demanded.

"Should have actually checked that, and unfortunately Boycott, I hate you and all you stand for now. Oh, and to make things worse? I'm not a genuine Spirits and I shared all the knowledge of what you were working on. We already had ways to prepare for it?" Marina smirked.

Westcott's eyes widen.

"No... this is, this isn't possible." Westcott breathed.

"Aw, look at that... after so long you're finally losing your cool again. I wonder how you'll freak you when you lose this Spirits too? Well, good luck losing... BOYCOTT!" Marina exclaimed.

Westcott's left-hand shook, and his eyes twitched as he mustered all his willpower to not snap and flip out at that moment.

Then at that moment, a bunch of vines constrict the ships near the Arbitel before an intense poison mist sprays and corrodes the same ships.

"Oops, forgot the goodbye gift!" Marina laughed.
"Damn you!" Westcott growled.

A yellow light and a mixture of red, green and orange light dash and collide with one another in the air, showcasing the fight between Shiori and Mukuro.

'Come on, I still need to find the right opening!' Shiori thought.

'This isn't as easy as I expected.' Mukuro thought.

Mukuro soon jumped back, and twirled before holding Michael forward.

"Rataibu - Unlock."

Mukuro forms wormholes that begin to gather the remaining debris around the Earth's atmosphere.

"Oh no you don't!" Shiori stated.

Shiori threw her hand forward, creating an intense wave of fire to burn all the trash into cinders, and soon enough Mukuro noticed the Earth's atmosphere had had all the trash finally cleaned up from it. Realizing this, she held Michael sideways before spinning it.

"If you think I need something to fling to use this, you are sorely mistaken." Mukuro remarked.

The same wormhole moved positions before firing meteors made of her Reiryoku out it, and Shiori swung the Copy-Michael like a bat against them as Mukuro herself charged a beam from Michael's tip.

"Alhazma - Beam."

The beam fired out at Shiori from behind, and she felt it hit her... but managed to take it before flinging it away, taking a deep breath before regaining her focus.

[Amazing, she's still fighting... just how much power are you using right now Mukuro?]

"I'd rather not mention how much, but I think she's aware it isn't the same amount I've been using to fight off those ships before now." Mukuro answered.

Shiori held up Copy-Michael, a small amount of sweat on her face as she smiled.

"Sorry Mukuro, but... I'm still standing!" Shiori replied.

"I will admit that this has been more challenging than I expected, but I doubt you will force me to use my Shifuru against you. Even now I shall still end the victory." Mukuro stated.

'Shifuru? I don' know what ability that is, but that wording makes it sound like a last resort, I gotta unseal her before she uses it!' Shiori thought.

Elliot flew the Aries around as he tried to avoid the Heptameron's attacks, struggling to get away and locate where the Fraxinus is.

"Damn, this ship is persistent, but if I can just make it through then... then I'll be able to-" Elliot grunted.
"Sorry, but that's not happening."

Elliot recognized that voice before the Heptameron suddenly detonated on its own, creating a huge cloud of smoke and throwing the Aries off a bit and blinding Elliot's view as he was tossed around from it.

"What the? What just happened?" Elliot asked himself.

"James... show him the Arbitel Necroma's power." Westcott declared.

"Wait, that was... oh no! I've got to get away right-"

Suddenly a stream of Dark Maryoku tendrils spike through the smoke, and pierce right part of the Aries, making Elliot's eyes widen as he sees one struck the engine behind him... and said engine began to spark.

"No... Karen..." Elliot gasped.

And at that moment, it happened... the Aries exploded, and the Fraxinus suddenly got news that his pulse disappeared. Everyone still on the ship gasped and showed faces of horror as the revelation was shown on screen. Reine's body trembled as she saw the analysis.

"No... no this can't, it can't be!" Reine gasped.

In her trembling, she accidentally hit the communications button, reaching out to the other members of Ratatoskr.

"This is Ryouko here, what's going on?" Ryouko asked.

"This is Karen, I'm a bit busy. What is it? Did something happen?" Karen grunted.

Nearly everyone but Shiori and the Spirits soon replied, making Reine realize what she hit... and at that moment, everyone picked up on her sudden silence to her horror.

"Reine, please respond, what happened!?" Karen called out.

Reine began to whimper, and soon shed tears as she had no choice but to reveal the horrible truth.

"Everyone... Chairman Elliot is, he's... Chairman Elliot is gone! He's dead!" Reine screamed sadly.

A huge silence silent suddenly rang across those who were listening on the news, and most of the group suddenly froze up.

This wasn't anything they didn't expect, a few Ratatoskr ships had already been destroyed... they had gotten casualties, with what the DEM was suffering there was no ideal way to think that they'd all make it back alive, but to hear that? To hear Ratatoskr's founder died?

Everyone had their own horrified reactions, but no worse than Karen, having just heard her own husband was now gone. As all of that happened... Westcott began to start laughing, cackling as he enjoyed the act he just committed, and made his announcement form the Arbitel.

"Finally, he's finally gone... Elliot Woodman is dead!" Westcott exclaimed.
going to die. During Mukuro's arc in canon, Kotori was told at one point that some unnamed people were killed that reached at least the double digits, and that was only at the moment they had the Fraxinus EX head off into space and could have gone up.

So, I figured to truly show how serious the arc would be now that there's only one spirit left seal, similar to how Westcott got serious trying to kill Shido in Volume 16 where only Kurumi's left now and apparently Westcott seems to be afraid of Shido sealing her because it'll make him the "key" for something... I'd have this fight be serious enough that some aren’t making it out of this conflict alive.

Not to mention as this chapter just showed, there's one big difference I'm doing from canon, making some of the deaths be named characters you've come to know in this story, and to both DEM and Ratatoskr allied characters. While some named characters in canon have died before like Jessica and James Paddington, they weren't major characters since both really only mattered for a single Spirit's arc.

Since Elliot was the first major casualty, how serious is this gonna be? Well, while I can't tell you who is planned to be killed, and admittedly the number of deaths won't be that large, probably not hitting the double digits... the only characters I can guarantee will survive are Westcott, Shido, Mana, and all of the Spirits. Also, while some of the deaths just show the danger, there are a few like Elliot's that have story related reasons.

It's also the reason I've had some the characters heavily consider the prospect that the fight with the DEM has only gotten all the more real as of this point, and since Westcott will only continue to cause trouble and damage the world... not only do they have to eventually kill him, they have to consider the moments when it truly is "us or them" and be forced save the lives of themselves or their comrades by ending another's. With Elliot being killed, that truth has been fully cemented, and now Ratatoskr's members have to face it.

As I said before, this is only the case for at least the Mukuro arc, I don't know if I'll be doing anything like this again afterwards just yet. I may very well only have the deaths that happen here occur for how the few that do happen affect the story and the characters, either way... this is only the beginning. Mukuro's arc is far from over, and as I said above, the only safe point for anyone is when Shido most of the characters is when Shido finally begins his attempts to win over her heart.

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)
Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)
Chapter 61

Here we are, the war continues and the many battles within it resume, Ratatoskr just got wind of their founder and chairman's death, now the question is... how will they react? Will their morale drop and leave them vulnerable, did Westcott chose the wrong first kill and light a fire in that's made their determination burn brighter? We're about to find out.

Now this chapter's gonna show the battles that I only let begin last chapter, now it's time to see Mana vs Jessica for the umpteenth time, Karen vs Chinami, and most of all... Artemisia and Ellen, which is a fight I've really been waiting to do since Artemisia rejoined Ratatoskr at the end of Season 1! Oops, I shouldn't forget the ships either, because the Fraxinus and Arbitel are about to prove which ship is stronger.

Most of all, it's now time for Shiori to try and unlock Mukuro's emotions, because if she misses... she's screwed because of how the Triple Spirit Ascension's fusion based attack works. The surge of emotion is high, the action is packed and explosive, and I'm wondering how drained I'm gonna get once all this excitement in my bloodstream burns out!

So, let's get this chapter started! *hits a gong* BEGIN!

Chapter 61, S3: Mukuro Space, Part 4

Reine began to whimper, and soon shed tears as she had no choice but to reveal the horrible truth.

"Everyone... Chairman Elliot is, he's... Chairman Elliot is gone! He's dead!" Reine screamed sadly.

A huge silence silent suddenly rang across those who were listening on the news, and most of the group suddenly froze up.

Meanwhile as most of Ratatoskr registered the news, Westcott was cackling loudly as he enjoyed the act he just committed, and now... he was going to stomp on their loss even further for the fun of it. He soon made his announcement from the Arbitel.

"Finally, he's finally gone... Elliot Woodman is dead!" Westcott exclaimed.

Meanwhile with the AST members...

"Elliot... h-he's really g-gone?" Mikie stuttered.

"No way... he was killed?" Katie gasped.

"And Westcott is... laughing at his death." Saya muttered.

The remaining eight Adeptus wizards all flew towards the shocked AST intending to use the opening to attack them.

"Take them all out now!" Adeptus 5 roared.

Right as they neared the group... Saya's eyes widened before she screamed, creating a barrier faster and stronger than ever before, pushing all eight Adeptus wizards away.
Saya turned at them with an angry look, and soon every member of the AST gave the same pissed look as hers, with their individual and unique expressions all showing it differently, and their CR-Units glowing as if they reacted to that rage.

"He was a great man, and you dare to mock him... you dare to think of it as a joke, and use how hurt we are to your advantage! I thought you were just bastards and jerks, but I can't believe how cowardly the DEM really is!" Mikie cried.

"C-cowards!?!" Adeptus 6 replied.

"Everyone... we joined Ratatoskr, and now Elliot won't get to see his dream succeed... so let's make damn sure that we make it happen or we don't deserve to stand here!" Ashley screamed angrily.

All of the AST members charge at the Adeptus wizards.

Ashley gives a loud cry as she unleashes the Asura's additional arms and begins quickly flying past Adeptus 6, smashing them across her body before swinging her fists down on her face.

"Gah!" Adeptus 6 cried out.

Ashley soon grabbed her by the face and pulled her back.

"You're not! Going to! Get! Off! That! Easily!" Ashley roared, punching Adeptus 6 between words.

"Damn... damn you!" Adeptus 6 wheezed out.

The DEM wizard grabbed her sword and thrust it forward at Ashley, but she simply grabbed the sword, ignoring that her hand was bleeding from the energy blade burning into her skin. Adeptus 6 stared in shock at this.

"No matter what it takes... we won't lose here, not after everything we fought for to get this far!" Ashley shouted.

"This can't be happening!" Adeptus 6 shrieked as Ashley's other fist neared her.

Saya formed the Salamandra's shielding again as Adeptus 5 smashed two energy swords at her, bouncing her back from the force. Right afterwards, Saya used her own barrier to catapult herself forward and slashed her own sword forward.

Adeptus 5 put out her territory barrier, with Saya shouting loudly every second as the flames on her blade continuously burned hotter and hotter. Making Adeptus 5 struggle as she saw her barrier begin to crack.

"No... no way, this isn't possible! How can you children have so much power? How can you do this!?" Adeptus 5 demanded.

"Because we have dreams!" Saya shouted.

She put more force into her swing.

"Because we have the will to fight!" Saya shouted again.

Even more force.
"And because we have the hope for a better tomorrow, not the despair of giving into fate like your dumb ass of a leader!" Saya shouted once more.

"Master Westcott is no dumb ass, you're just brats who need to learn how this world works!" Adeptus 5 shouted angrily.

"We do! Well you can take those damn words and shove them through your gut like a sword, because that's how doubled edged your beliefs are! The proof stands before you, and in case you don't get it... do you remember the previous [Efreet]!?" Saya countered.

Adeptus 5 looked at her confused, wondering if she had gone insane.

"Yeah, so what!?!" Adeptus 5 demanded.

"I heard how she died, she was with [Nightmare], and Ellen, the bitch you call Adeptus 1? Lobbed her head right off her. Well then you should know, that girl was..." Saya answered.

Saya pushed forward a bit more, causing Adeptus 5 to gasp as it was about to break.

"...that girl was me!" Saya screamed angrily.

"What!?! That's impossible, you should be dead if that's the case!" Adeptus 5 panicked.

"But I'm not, still think the law of the jungle applies when you can shatter the walls of death!? I'm proof of that, and that proof is the hope that'll save this world!" Saya shouted.

Adeptus 5's barrier broke before the flames on Saya's sword exploded out, burning the DEM wizard with its blaze.

Adeptus 7 fired at Katie and Leonora as they swerved her laser fire, while Adeptus 8 zipped around, trying to slash electrified Maryoku daggers across Cecile and Mikie who danced around her attacks.

"Damn it!" Adeptus 7 growled.

"HOLD STILL YOU BASTARDS!" Adeptus 8 demanded.

Katie shifted her sniper rifle and grabbed something from the side, readying it.

"Sure thing, here!" Katie shouted.

Katie threw it, and soon a flash grenade went off before it produced smoke to cover Adeptus 7 and 8's views.

"They've blinded us, look out!" Adeptus 8 exclaimed.

Soon the DEM wizard turned as she heard Adeptus 7's screams, and as she looked around waiting for an attack, the smoke cleared to show... no one?

The confused wizard looked around, now feeling particularly paranoid.

"Huh? W-where are they? And where's... damn it, deploy territory!" Adeptus 8 stated.

"Territory Jamming Field on!"

Adeptus 8's voice gasped as she heard Cecile's voice from behind, and soon her territory fizzled
before she readied her daggers for an attack.

Unfortunately for her, she suddenly felt something cut across her as her she saw her backside bleeding... right where her space realizer that let her breathe was, causing some of her air to disappear as the damage made her have trouble breathing.

Mikie turned visible right behind her, making her look worriedly as Mikie gave her a sad face.

"I'm sorry, but... I can't let you hurt me friends." Mikie said with teary eyes.

Adeptus 7 was flung a bit further before she felt a rifle barrel to her back, and turned to see Leonora with a cold stare at her, she tried to move away, only for Katie to do the same on her front sight, locking her in place.

"No... no, you can't do this to me." Adeptus 7 whimpered.

"...You're forgetting we're fighting a war here in space right now, even if we didn't want to-" Leonora started.

"-This is the kind of place where you need to be willing to risk your life, and after losing one of our own, we're willing to take that risk so we don't lose another." Katie finished, her eyes closed to avoid bearing witness to what she was doing.

Adeptus 9-12 soon found themselves in a similar position as the other AST members all corner them. That was it, the AST had overpowered most of DEM's elite wizards.

- (*insert song end*) -

Ryouko breathed and looked towards where the Aries' debris was floating around, tears filling her eyes before they streamed down her face.

"...We'll live on, and keep fight for you. That's a promise." Ryouko said with determination.

Ellen and Artemisia begin clashing with one another, their blades clashing as the strength behind each of their blows manifested as a powerful force of wind recoil, the wizards nearby the two being thrown far away as they fly across the battlefield.

"Take this!" Ellen shouted.

Ellen fired off a beam from Caliburn's tip, and the large powerful blast of dark Maryoku rushed towards Artemisia. The Ace of Ratatoskr held her hand out.

"Territory Barrier, deploy!" Artemisia exclaimed.

She formed single sections of a territory barrier and instead of blocking them, used them like mirrors to reflect them towards Ellen!

The Adeptus 1 Wizard's eyes went wide as her own attack smashed into her.

"Nandaka!" Artemisia shouted, raising her sword.

"Caliburn!" Ellen shouted.

Their swords both glowed, and upon clashing, white streams of energy fly out as a bright flash occurred, causing everything nearby to be slingshot away from the two of them as they broke off and
then charged each other again, looking like clashing shooting stars.

"Not as easy as you thought, is it?" Artemisia asked.

"I'll admit, you definitely are giving me trouble... but I'm still the stronger wizard!" Ellen replied.

"We'll see about that!" Artemisia countered.

Artemisia turned her sword a bit, forming a beam shot that pushed Ellen away before being followed by multiple burst shots, Ellen dodged and slashed against them as the two charged again, creating a flash of their respective Maryoku in the sea of space.

Mana and Jessica continue their clash, with Mana yelling as she slashed the crystal blade she formed against all the artillery that Jessica fired at her, the Adeptus 2 wizard cackling almost like she was crazy as she fired off the Black Licorice's weapons without pause.

"NOW DIE!" Jessica exclaimed.

Mana suddenly noticed a flurry of hidden fire aim at her, and she threw her sword forward before shifting to the Yamai twins' colors and flying away, knowing she could only evade them this time. She looked at Jessica as she dodged.

'Look at her face, she almost looks like she's fallen to insanity? Damn... I think all those times I beat her plus that one time she technically succeeded has been slowing tearing down her mind.' Mana thought.

"Here I come!" Jessica declared, zooming after her.

Suddenly layers of territory barriers formed and Mana got trapped in one. Jessica prepared to fire, but Mana switched to Yoshino's powers, freezing the barriers before breaking free just in time.

"MANA!" Jessica roared.

"Damn, my Spirit Ascension's still not enough, that can only mean whatever power boost she was given was made to fight against Shiori and the other Spirits. She can't know Nia's abilities since she always managed to evade the DEM, but I don't how her powers work without Raziel." Mana said.

Mana sweated a bit.

"I'll just have to play smart then." Mana told herself.

"BEGONE!" Jessica screamed.

The Black Licorice fired off four beams, and Mana switched to Miku's powers before screaming loudly and defending with a sound wall.

"Time to die. Time to die! TIME TO DIE!" Jessica cackled crazily.

A storm of missiles fire with Mana barely escaping the barrage.

"Oh Mana! Mana Takamiya! No, I won't lose this time, I won't lose to you anymore!" Jessica said with a neurotic looking face.

Mana flew away from her attacks as she tried to get closer.
"As long as I have the Black Licorice, I can't be defeated!" Jessica cackled.

"How naive!" Mana stated.

Using Natsumi's power, she transformed and disappeared from view, Jessica looked around as Mana got behind her and changed into Origami's powers, firing a beam of light that smashed one of the Black Licorice's sides off.

Jessica was burned by the holy light, and she turned showing her eyes, nose, ears and mouth had starting to bleed to Mana's horror. When the Scarlet Licorice turned into the Black Licorice by applying Dark Maryoku into it, the process must have made it incompatible with Jessica's body, and now it was killing her to use it.

"She's killing herself, just to try and kill me." Mana whispered to herself.

"I'm still right here Mana! I've never liked you, did you know that!?" Jessica asked mockingly.

Mana breathed and soon shifted to Kurumi's powers.

"I did... I knew because I hated you in return, ever since the day you killed Uncle Isamu." Mana answered.

"Damn you! You, that stupid brother of yours and that other little girl... why didn't Master Westcott just kill you that day!? You've caused us all Hell, that's proof I was right!" Jessica screamed.

Mana closed her eyes and shook her head.

"You poor fool... when I think to that die, how close things came to Westcott's actions... just one wrong turn and I would have become the same as you. Even though I hate you, there's one thing I can say." Mana said sadly.

Mana rushed forward using Kurumi's shadow powers to shift through the Black Licorice's fire as Jessica just tried to fire forward at her.

"That's it, let me kill you... MANA!" Jessica screamed in joy.

"That doesn't mean you deserved this, no one deserves what's happened to you! So, the one bit of kindness I can give despite that I hate you... is to end your suffering." Mana said.

Mana shed a tear as she switched to Tohka's powers, and Jessica felt a crystal sword stab into her as the Black Licorice fell off her.

Jessica's body shook before it fell onto Mana's.

"...H-hey, Mana? O-one of your... allies is someone who died, right? Tell me... does... does that mean there is an afterlife? Can I finally see my mother again, right? I just want... to see her one last time."

"Yeah... I know you'll see her, you will!" Mana answered, her voice cracking a bit as she teared up.

"I... I hope I do... Mana-" Jessica answered.

At that moment, Jessica makes one final gasp before she goes limp, and Mana doesn't do anything but rest her dead body's head on her shoulder.

Even though they had been enemies, even if they hated each other... Mana didn't feel happy.
"If only... if only things had been different, maybe it wouldn't have had to end this way. Isaac Westcott, one day you'll pay for this and everything else you've done! I hope that soon enough you'll realize that!" Mana cried.

Karen screamed in pain and rage, rushing at Chinami as she collided her sword with Chinami's blade, she swung rapidly with both hands while Chinami only one of hers to parry with her own, making the Adeptus 3 wizard sigh.

"HOW DARE YOU! HOW DARE YOU TAKE ELLIOT FROM ME, I'LL DESTROY YOU!" Karen shrieked loudly.

"Such overwhelming rage, and yet still you lack the necessary power that you need to defeat me." Chinami replied.

Chinami's eyes focused before making a flash movement towards Karen and swinging her sword multiple times, and Karen's eyes widen as multiple cuts appear against her Valkyrie's wiring suit, with one deep slash cutting across her abdomen.

Karen keeled over briefly, but soon shouted as she focused all of her territory's power towards her wound, using it to keep it from opening up and start bleeding.

"Damn it... damn it! Don't you dare treat me like some weakling!" Karen roared.

Karen managed to rush at Chinami so fast, the Adeptus 3 wizard's eyes widened in shock as her guard was completely dropped.

And with that opening, Ratatoskr's second-best wizard slashed down on Chinami who grunted as she felt the blow hit her. However, right as she made it, Karen's eyes widened as she saw something.

"What the-" Karen gasped.

Suddenly her eyes widen before she coughs out some blood on her body, the sight of Chinami's sword striking through the front of her got was seen. The Adeptus 3 wizard's eyes incredibly dark and focused.

Worse, the realizer that let Karen breath in space had been completely shattered, and she quickly began to make gasping motions for air she couldn't get, unable to move her arms due to the wound in her abdomen.

"...You made a grave error with that move, and now we know who was right. It was me!" Chinami exclaimed.

Karen tried to choke out some words, but Chinami struck her hard, shattering her CR-Unit and weapon before raising her sword as it charged all the Dark Maryoku it could into one point.

"NOW DIE!" Chinami screamed.

The gathered power shot forward, and then became an explosion that encompassed Karen as she gave a silent scream, and the power obliterated her.

The Fraxinus crew, and by extension the AST due to the connection between their CR-Units', saw the readings for Karen's pulse fade away.
"No... first Elliot and now, and now..." Reine stuttered.

Reine shrieked before slamming her head on the control console, sobbing as she watched another old friend die.

She hit the same communications button.

"This is... Commander Reine to all ships, the Fraxinus... has just confirmed another death! We've lost... we've lost Karen Mathers!" Reine cried.

"...Karen." Ashley whimpered.

The members of the SSS quartet all cried a bit, back when they joined the SSS, Karen had been there and trained them into the wizards they had become. She was almost like a mother to them, especially Artemisia who had lost both her parents...

...and now she was gone, Chinami had extinguished her life.

"Damn it, that asshole! Westcott! Just how many more lives do you have to end before you're finally satisfied!?" Saya screamed.

In the spot where Artemisia and Ellen were fighting, the both of them stopped as the news reached them. While Artemisia's eyes shook in horror and despair, Ellen's expression... was just a smirk.

"Good riddance, that foolish sister of mine always believed in something that would get her killed, and now she's finally payed the price."

"...That's all she was to you." Artemisia asked.

Ellen looked at Artemisia like she was crazy.

"Of course, my sister betrayed me long ago by choosing to side with that Elliot bastard and now both have faced reality with their deaths. They're simply seeing what happens when you go against the laws of the world." Ellen answered.

Artemisia breathes heavily, as a certain event in her past rushes to the surface of her memories.

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In a Ratatoskr base stationed in England, various people were screaming as Ellen swung Caledfwlch down and attacked the base, heavily damaging the structure as everyone inside tried to run away. The defenses that had been deployed to defend the base from Ellen were all on the ground, having been killed before they even had a change to fight back.

Within the base, Artemisia's parents were running as her father held their 6-year old daughter's hands.

"Mommy, Daddy, I'm scared!" Artemisia cried.

"It's OK sweetie, we want you to be scared right now! Just keep running and everything will be-" Artemisia's mother replied.

"CALEDFLWCH!"

Suddenly a majority of the base's ceiling collapsed all at once, and everyone looked up at what was about to kill them all.
"Artemisia!"

Artemisia felt her father dive over her, and soon the collapsing ceiling had fallen over everyone. Most died instantly while others were left fatally wounded and would soon follow, Ellen looked at her work and smirked.

"And that's another area of those Greenhorn's organization destroyed, I think Ike will be pleased at the level of damage we've inflicted." Ellen stated cruelly.

Ellen flew off soon after, and within the base's rubble, Artemisia crawled out a bit, pushing off some of the rocks in her way. Once she got up, she looked towards her father who had shielded her from the debris... and saw he wasn't moving.

"Dad? Daddy, please wake up... please, daddy?" Artemisia asked.

She tried to shake him awake, starting to worry, she did a trick her father showed her about seeing if she could feel something when she touched part of someone's wrists. Upon putting her finger on it... she felt nothing.

Artemisia gasped before tears flooded out of her eyes.

"DADDY!" Artemisia cried.

"A-Artemisia?"

Artemisia gasped, and looked around to see her mother, her head was bleeding and debris was on top of her body... it was clear she didn't have much longer. Artemisia soon rushed over and kneeled by her mother.

"Mommy! Don't worry, I'll get you out, I'll-" Artemisia cried.

"Sweetie, I'm sorry, but... I don't mommy can hold on much longer, I... feel myself slipping away." Artemisia's mother sobbed.

"No... please, don't leave me behind like daddy!" Artemisia begged.

Artemisia sobbed, soon getting an angry look.

"I'm gonna find that bad lady, and I'm gonna hurt her! I'm gonna hurt her more than everyone hurt here together! I'll get-" Artemisia cried angrily.

"No Artemisia, don't... become the same as her... please." Artemisia's mother said gently.

Artemisia gasped as she felt her mother manage to move her arm enough to rub her cheek.

"Don't give in... to rage... or anger... or despair... and most of all, don't give... into your hate... that emotion is so ugly, and if... you lose yourself to it, there's no going back." Artemisia's mother explained.

"It's OK... to feel mad, and... sad, and to hate someone, but... don't let them consume you. Don't... let them become your whole... life. Please, stay the same sweet angel... I know, help others who... are suffering, give... give them hope!" Artemisia's mother cried with a smile.

Artemisia's lip quivered.

"But... that bad lady, what... what do I do if..." Artemisia asked.
"One day... she will hurt others, but... don't give in to your rage... don't do this for revenge, but... to make sure... she never hurts anyone again. Be the... guiding light for others, and make the kind... of world that Ratatoskr is fighting... for... my brave... little... girl." Artemisia's mother smiled.

At that moment, Artemisia saw her mother fall to the ground and collapse, and with it... she had passed on.

Artemisia's whole body shook before she finally cried at her loudest.

Artemisia's eyes widen before she takes a deep breath, and soon enough...

"Ellen Mira Mathers, how many... just how many people have you killed or wished to be killed?" Artemisia asked.

"Hmm?" Ellen wondered.

"I asked how many people have you killed or wished to be killed!" Artemisia asked again.

Ellen scowled a bit.

"I'll kill anyone who aims at Ike with the intent to kill him, why does that matter to you?" Ellen asked.

Artemisia eyes were shadowed as she looked towards Ellen.

"Do you remember around a decade ago, when you destroyed a Ratatoskr base stationed in England? How you killed everyone inside?" Artemisia asked.

"Yeah, and?" Ellen asked.

"There was a single survivor..." Artemisia answered.

Artemisia looks up at Ellen, with determined eyes.

"...Me!" Artemisia shouted.

Ellen showed surprise at that.

"I watched everyone I ever knew die, my father gave up his life to shield me, and my mother..." Artemisia continued.

"I see, so she asked you get revenge on me? How foolish, because I'll kill you before that ever comes to pass." Ellen answered.

"...No, my mother never wanted me to get revenge. She refused to let me fall to that path. What she did tell me, is to make sure I don't let you hurt anyone else ever again! The time I was brainwashed made me delay that promise, but now I intend to fulfill it!" Artemisia exclaimed.

"I will end your threat here and today! If you kill anyone who tries to harm Ike, then I'll break any sword you point at them! I am the barrier that will defend against your blade, and even if I fail, even if I die..." Artemisia stated.

Artemisia holds out her sword towards Ellen.

"...if I can even just cripple you to give someone a chance or silence your attempts to harm anyone,
I'll gladly risk my life here and now!" Artemisia declared.

Ellen's eyes tightened with an angry look.

"You're even more of an idiot than I realized." Ellen stated.

"I said we were going to prove who the strongest wizard really is, that's why... this is a fight to the death!" Artemisia stated.

"Fine then... come at me!" Ellen screamed with a bloodthirsty look in her eyes.

Reine saw Artemisia's determination, and once she did...

"Everyone, look at her... look at what she's fighting for! If she's willing to try and take out DEM's strongest wizard... then we should do the same and take out the Fraxinus' greatest rival, everyone... we're going to go after and destroy the Arbitel!" Reine declared.

All the people on the ship gasped at that.

"A-Are you serious!?" Tamae panicked.

"Commander, I know we've upgraded but so did they, are you sure we'll be able to do this? If we fall, then everyone on the ship will-" Kannazuki asked.

"Kannazuki, everyone... you saw what Westcott did to Elliot. If we just sit here and try to run, then we die regardless, so... if we aren't coming out of this alive, then let us at least fight so if we do die, then we'll have no regrets, and if we survive... to prove our victory was earned!"

Those words rang across the ship, and then...

"Yeah, what have we got to lose!" Nakatsugawa exclaimed.

"Before I joined Ratatoskr, I never found a place where we could belong, now everyone in it is like family to me!" Minowa agreed.

"Then let's fight as a family, and either survive or die as a family!" Kawagoe stated.

Reine smiled as the Fraxinus flew closer towards the Arbitel.

Westcott soon noticed the ship nearing the Arbitel, and soon hit a button to move his hologram projection to a nearby ship.

"James, destroy that ship and crush the last trinity of the Ratatoskr's hopes for good." Westcott ordered.

"I'll take great pleasure in that sir!" James smirked.

The Arbitel Necroma and the Fraxinus Anomala soon stare each other down as the former turns to face it, signifying the ship's third forms to initiate their greatest, and their final battle between each other.

The Arbitel's weapons all began to glow as it starts with the same attack that killed Elliot. Kannazuki puts on his usual headset and makes a serious face.

"Alright, ready the Laser Cannons Shiizaki! Mikimoto, move us out of the way!" Kannazuki
"Right, firing Laser Cannons!" Shiizaki replied.

The Fraxinus uses a territory to quickly spin out of the way before opening two spots on the ship to fire eight lasers at the Arbitel.

Unfortunately, the Arbitel created not one, not two, not even 5, but fifteen layers of territory barriers to defend against the attack. Shocking everyone on the Fraxinus' bridge.

"Do you all see that!?" Kawagoe asked.

"My god... I'm sensing Maryoku making them, but it looks like their wavelength is more like Dark Reiryoku. Did he create an inverse version of a wizard's power?" Matthew asked.

Mildred sweated a bit.

"Damn it, so this is why he had Marina gather them back when she was still with the DEM. Right now, the Fraxinus is like a Spirit trying to fight their own Inversion, and we all remember how hard that was during the Choronzon incident." Mildred stated.

"Incoming!" Hiroto warned.

The Fraxinus was suddenly pelted by a storm of Dark Maryoku shots coming from the Arbitel, and the DEM's greatest ship didn't even need to drop their barrier to use it. The Fraxinus put up a territory barrier, and everyone screamed as the shots pelted it and made it crack in seconds, causing a warning alarm to go off.

"Territory holding at 70%... no, 48%... now it's 12%!" Minowa gasped.

"Evade, we're to lose all our defenses!" Shiizaki exclaimed.

Reine grabbed some controls and shifted them to the left as the barrier was shattered.

"I don't think so, activate the dark ravagers again!" James ordered.

"Yes sir!" A crew member replied.

Once more, the Arbitel shot out the attack that killed Elliot, but this time it ripped into parts of the Fraxinus before they could evade it and everyone screamed as the ship took heavy damage and red lights flashed everywhere inside.

Reine looked to see some members of the crew had been injured, some of them bleeding, but no one was dead... yet.

"I need every field agent to get the injured to the med bay stat! We're not losing anyone else today if I can help it!" Reine ordered.

"Alright, come on guys!" Ai stated.

Mai, Mii, Tamae, Hiroto and a few others nod before they quickly grabbed the injured and move them onto medical tables to quickly rush them into the medical bay.

Warning, damage to ship is at 59%, another hit shall end with the complete destruction of the ship and all on board personal.
"Damn it, the ship's right... we won't survive another attack regardless of what it is..." Reine grunted.

"Then... what do we do commander?" Kannazuki asked.

Reine breathed.

"...Right now, our chance to die is 100%, so... I think there's nothing wrong with taking a risk that means we have a 50% chance of death, but a 50% chance to turn things around and survive!" Reine exclaimed.

"Commander, are you saying you want to use..." Matthew asked.

Reine nodded.

"I do... prepare the Harmonic Convergence Blaster!" Reine ordered.

Everyone gasped at that.

Shiori rushed forward, smashing through all the newly made debris formed by the destroy automatons and warships that Mukuro fling at her.

Mukuro looked at Shiori before looking at Michael.

"Michael, I think we need to bump up our power a bit more." Mukuro stated.

[Yes, it seems so. Make some of your Reiryoku Meteors and then let's toss a Jerez at him, are you ready Mukuro?]

Mukuro nodded.

"I am." Mukuro replied.

Mukuro spun Michael in her hands again, and aimed the Angel towards Shiori.

'She's about to try something new, here it comes!' Shiori thought.

"Rataibu - Unlock."

Soon the wormhole Mukuro created vanished before a larger one came, and solidified golden-yellow Reiryoku shot out in the form of meteors.

"She can make her Reiryoku turn into meteorites!" Mukuro exclaimed.

"Jerez - Solution."

Soon Michael shot out a focused energy wave and Shiori gasped before she moved out of the way, the energy wave hitting her while some of the meteors pelt her.

She shouted as she swung Copy-Michael to knock them away, and soon panted as she looked down, noticing that despite having a Limited Astral Dress overlaid on her clothes, the Jerez slightly melted some of it.

'I can't let something like that hit me again! Worse, I think I'm starting to run low on fumes now.' Shiori thought.
Mukuro readied herself.

"This shall be over soon." Mukuro stated.

"Not if I can help it!" Shiori declared.

Shiori rushed at Mukuro again.

"I do... prepare the Harmonic Convergence Blaster!" Reine ordered.

"The Harmonic Convergence Blaster!? Oh man... will it even work with the damage to the ship?" Mikimoto wondered.

> Damage matters little, what matters is if the frame is strong enough to support the power of every Spirit combined. This is the Seirei Armament's greatest weapon, but right now, all of you must decide if it is worth the risk. As of this moment, the DEM has won the jackpot in the lottery with said jackpot being our demise. So, will you flip a coin and try to reverse the situation, or do you want to try finding another way that may or may not exist? 

Everyone looked at each other, and then...

- (*Sonic the Hedgehog series - Solaris Phase 2*) -

"Preparing the Harmonic Convergence Blaster, sending all Reiryoku to the weapon matrix!" Shiizaki stated.

"Locking coordinates and aiming, we'll start charging on your orders Commander! Firing system is yours!" Kawagoe shouted.

Westcott noticed the ship charging anything from his hologram.

"Oh, a little light show? Try all they want, but all their weapons are too weak to destroy the Arbitel now." Westcott smirked.

"That's right, we've won! Victory is the Arbitel's!" James declared.

James pressed a button, and as the Arbitel readied the Dark Ravager again while summoning all the remaining Automatons to rush at the ship, the crew inside the Fraxinus readied the only weapon they had left to use if they wanted to survive and see tomorrow.

A small cube made of eight energy blocks held by a floating ring and five levitation prongs creating Maryoku rings. Reine motioned her hand to make the cube open and reveal a keyhole within it. She took out a key and put it in.

"Firing-Lock system, open!" Reine stated, turning the key.

> Charging Harmonic Convergence Blaster, please stand by until weapon charge is completed.

The cube turned red, and soon a secret lever formed before Reine grabbed it and focused forward. The ship began to charge all of the Reiryoku it had to one spot.

At that moment, everyone on the Fraxinus' bridge made a praying motion, because now... nothing they did would change what happened next. What mattered next was only one thing, would the ship be able to handle all the power, or would it self-destruct from it?
"This is it... either we live, or we die..." Reine stated.

And with that, the metaphorical coin flip deciding the fate of their lives was flicked into the air. The image of that coin flashed through everyone's minds.

The ship's body began to glow like it was overheating, and everyone felt the ship rumble.

'The moment of truth!' Reine mentally grunted.

'Please work!' Everyone thought.

The metaphorical coin soon landed, and...

Charge complete, the ship frame successfully contained the charge! Commander Reine, you may use it when ready!

"Yes!" Reine cheered.

Everyone cheered as well, the coin had landed on heads.

Reine grabbed the lever tightly before turning it, re-motioning its position before pulling it back.

"Get ready Westcott, your greatest warship... is about to fall!" Reine exclaimed loudly.

"HARMONIC CONVERGENCE BLASTER!"

The Fraxinus was pushed back as it unleashed a rainbow beam of Reiryoku, destroying all the Automatons before they even got near it, and slamming into the Arbitel's barriers as they were quickly destroyed in seconds.

"WHAT!?!" James shouted in fear.

"The systems are all going haywire, quick, get to the escape-" A crew member stated.

Unfortunately, the systems all soon exploded as the entire ship's systems went offline... including escape pods! The beam soon cut through the DEM's greatest ship and left a giant hole in it, and only three seconds after, explosions began forming across the entire haul of the Arbitel.

The members of Ratatoskr, the DEM, all of the Spirits and even Westcott stared in shock as they saw the entire ship finally implode as it met its final demise! James screamed as the fiery explosions neared him.

"NOOOOOOOOOOOO!" James exclaimed in horror.

Westcott's eyes shook as he saw nothing here the Arbitel used to be.

"That... that's impossible, how!?!" Westcott gasped.

- (*insert song end*) -

Using Westcott's shock as a distraction, the Fraxinus quickly retreated.

"We did it everyone... the DEM's flagship has been destroyed!" Reine cheered!

Everyone cheered in return, and soon Reine noticed an alert as Mana flew nearby.
"Mana? I thought you were fighting against Jessica, wait... does that mean?" Reine gasped.

"Yeah, my battle between Jessica is over for good. I was gone for a bit because I pitied her enough
to give her a funeral, but now I'm back, and I'm ready to continue the fight!" Mana answered.

She soon noticed the Fraxinus' damaged state.

"Whoa... boy does the ship look like it went through a meat grinder." Mana mentioned.

"We just beat the Arbitel, that's why." Reine replied with a smile.

Mana gasped.

"Say, mind coming inside and channeling Kotori's power so we can heal the damage?" Reine asked.

"Sure thing, I can do that." Mana chuckled.

_____

Around briefly before the Arbitel's destruction, Artemisia and Ellen's fight continued as the two
collided with one another, continuing to create the intense recoil winds they were at an even greater
level than previously.

"Is that all you've got!?" Artemisia asked.

"Far from it!" Ellen answered.

- (*My Hero Academia - You Say Run*) -

They rush at each other again, and this time Artemisia feels a slash across her abdomen, she cries in
pain as she holds her wound briefly.

Ellen smirked as she rushed at her.

"Time for you to die, with this all doubt to me being the world's strongest wizard will be destroyed!"
Ellen cackled.

"No... not today, and not ever!" Artemisia screamed determinedly.

Despite the wound she just received, Artemisia shrugged it off as she and Ellen fly even faster at one
another, both of them screaming loudly.

Each of them take out their swords and charged all the power they had into one last strike. Ellen was
about to swing, but right at that moment... the Arbitel's explosion happened, and a bit of debris flew
near her.

"What!?" Ellen gasped.

'This is it Ellen, because I... WIN!' Artemisia thought.

Artemisia soon focused all the power of her unique territory into Nandaka sword, and soon it began
to spark and crack from the overcharge of power inside it.

"SMASH THROUGH!" Artemisia exclaimed loudly.

By the time Ellen could react... she was too late, and Artemisia smashed the Nandaka into her body,
the sword broke as the power exploded out creating a cyclone of pure Maryoku where the two were
and catching everyone's attention.

Aside from Mukuro and Shiori, everyone turned the Maryoku cyclone as it shot out into everyone's view.

"What's happening? Where's all that Maryoku coming from!?!" Tohka gasped.

"Wait a second... isn't that where Artemisia and Ellen are fighting? Oh no, is Artemisia OK?" Origami wondered.

The AST all went wide eyed.

"Oh my god... that power." Saya breathed.

"That's the result of a battle between the strongest wizards in the entire world? Imagine what it took for them to create that much force..." Ryouko sweated.

Even Westcott himself looked with extreme worry, wondering what happened to Ellen.

The energy soon died down, and a bunch of smoke formed. Artemisia was pushed back, panting as she held the broken Nandaka in her hands.

- (*insert song end*) -

"Did I, did I... do it? Was that enough?" Artemisia gasped.

"Y-you... really think that was enough?" Ellen asked in a strange tone of voice.

Artemisia gasped as she heard Ellen's voice.

'No way... she survived that!?' Artemisia thought.

"I told you, I'm the greatest wizard in the world, no one is stronger than me... and nothing on this world can beat me because of that." Ellen continued, now sounding a bit hoarse.

Soon the smoke cleared, and Artemisia's eyes widened as she saw a raw red arm that was bent in a way it should have.

While only she could see it, Ellen... was clearly so badly injured that she didn't even seem to realize what kind of damage it took, and Artemisia soon sheathed her broken sword. Even if Ellen spoke like this, it was clearly over.

"For Ike's sake, I will... destroy anyone and anything that gets in his way... no one will ever defeat me, I can't lose and I won't lose. Do you get it you fool? I... can't be beaten, no matter what you do." Ellen cackled.

"My god..." Kurumi gasped.

Soon the horrible visage of the damage made itself clear. Ellen's skin had been so badly burned, it became a raw pink-red color with her left arm's elbow being bent away from the body, something it shouldn't be doing. Most of her hair had been singed, leaving it either back length, shoulder length or short depending on where it had been singed. Her eyes were distant, glassy, and shaky as they shrunk to the size of small dots.

Westcott seeing the state of Ellen went wide eyed in horror.
"Nia, is she... is she still alive? No, will she be staying alive?" Kotori asked in shock.

"I'm not sure, let me see... Raziel, what will happen to Ellen?" Nia asked.

It took only a few seconds for her to get the answer.

Looking at the others, she decided not to answer with words, and simply closed her eyes. Everyone gasped before Ellen's body soon fell over, and Westcott's voice trembled.

"No, Ellen..." Westcott whimpered.

"ELLEN!"

At that moment, Ellen's eyes closed as her body fell towards the Earth, and the brutal truth hit him before it finally registered to everyone else.

Ellen Mira Mathers, the strongest of the DEM Wizards, the one who held the title of Adeptus 1 for over thirty years... was dead.

"I... I won..." Artemisia gasped, crying.

"Dad, mom? Are you watching me right now? I... I finally did it, you can rest in peace... she won't hurt anyone ever again." Artemisia cried happily.

Artemisia herself soon collapsed, but Cecile caught her before anything else happened. Ratatoskr's... no, the world's strongest wizard looked at Cecile who gave her a teary-eyed smile, with Ashley and Leonora joining in, making a group hug happen.

"All forces retreat, we're pulling out now!" Westcott ordered.

All of the DEM forces look at their leader in shock, they still hadn't gotten anywhere near [Zodiac] and he called for a full retreat?

"I SAID RETREAT, NOW!" Westcott exclaimed with rage.

Not wanting to feel his wrath, all the DEM forces quickly vanished before portals to the Inverse Void formed and disappeared as they all entered them.

The members of Ratatoskr looked at them in shock.

"Huh? W-what just happened? Why did he call a retreat?" Yoshino asked.

"...I think I know, as evil and cruel as that bastard is, there was still a single bond he did actually have and cherish regardless of how hypocritical it is. Ellen was important to him, but why would that be?" Nia answered.

"I know." Tohka said.

Everyone looked at her, surprised by this.

"Elliot told me once... that Ellen was Westcott's wife, and he just watched her die." Tohka

"Wait, seriously?" Miku gasped.

"Wow... that's... that's heavy." Kaguya remarked.
"So that's why it seemed like tactical and more personal." Yuzuru mentioned.

Meanwhile back in the Inverse Void, Westcott locked all access to his office and made sure no noise could reach outside of it, and then... screamed loudly as for the first time in years, if he ever had at all, he cried. Sobbing over losing the only person in the world that mattered to him.

Chinami walked by, knowing how he felt without even hearing or seeing a thing.

"...We're the same now, we both lost those we cared for. Don't worry sir, I promise you I'll make them pay, all of them." Chinami declared as she walked off.

"Damn you Ratatoskr... how dare you kill her, that's it... I don't care what happens now. I will make you all pay!" Westcott exclaimed in both sadness and rage.

Shiori shouts in pain as she's blown back by Mukuro's flurry of attacks, skidding across the ocean of space as she focused on Mukuro again.

"She won't stop no matter what I try to throw at her." Mukuro mentioned.

[She's got some tenacity, just what has she had to go through? If it was anyone else... no, I don't think anyone else would go this far. What's pushing her so far?]

Shiori rushed forward, and Mukuro unleashed the remains of the debris through her wormholes as Shiori set herself on fire and burned through it.

At that moment, Shiori got almost directly in front of Mukuro.

"This is it! Now, I'll set you free... Rataibu - Unlock!"

[What!? Oh no, she's got a way to use your Rataibu, stop her now!]

Mukuro held up Michael in front of Shiori, making the latter gasp as a familiar attack charged on it.

"Alright have." Mukuro replied.

"Alhazma - Beam."

Shiori screamed as a beam hit her, and she was blown away.

Mukuro stared as Shiori was flung away, with the Copy-Michael flying off the opposite direction, and at that moment... Shiori smirked before suddenly.

"Psyche!" Natsumi exclaimed.

Shiori's body had smoke poof around it as she revealed herself to actually be Natsumi in disguise.

"What is this?" Mukuro stated.

[Huh, I don't get it... oh no, this was a feint! We've been tricked!]

Suddenly the Copy-Michael, which was behind Mukuro, transformed into the real Shiori and the real Copy-Michael as she thrust the tip of the key onto Mukuro's body.

Before Mukuro could turn and try anything.
"Rataibu- Unlock!"

Soon the flow of energy burst into Mukuro's body, causing Shiori's Triple Ascension to be dispersed as the Copy-Michael shattered and she changed back into Shido, and for the first time in 5 years... her blank face suddenly widened with an overflow of emotions as everything she had sealed away was freed.

She felt extreme anger at how Shido had unsealed her heart without his permission, fascinated by the plan he and Natsumi had implemented together, and most of all... a particular feeling that came from how he didn't hesitate to risk his own life for her sake.

"T-This it... I... I'm, what is... it's..." Mukuro mumbled.

Suddenly as her need to breathe was restored but there wasn't any air for her to breathe, she began to choke before she screamed as her extreme emotional fluctuation from having her emotions unsealed. Suddenly, her Reiryoku exploded out, and she was shot towards the Earth to Shido's shock.

"Mukuro!" Shido exclaimed before diving.

"Shido, wait!" Natsumi called out.

Shido's dive soon got him to the now unconscious Mukuro, and he grabbed her tightly. Taking the realizer that let him breathe, he adjusted it and wrapped it around both his and Mukuro's neck, allowing both of them to breathe before the latter suffocated.

As they continued falling towards Earth, Shido looked and realized he forgot something in his rush.

'Oh no, because I used the Triple Spirit Ascension for an Angel Fusion, I can't use it again for 5 minutes! At this rate, we're both gonna crash and neither of us will make it! I have to... I have to die something!' Shido thought.

Shido grunted as he tried to force out his power.

"Come on..." Shido begged.

They kept falling.

"Come on!" Shido begged again.

Soon, they began getting close to the atmosphere, if Shido didn't do something now, atmospheric reentry would burn them both to a crisp!

"PLEASE, I NEED TO SAVE MUKURO!" Shido screamed.

Within Shido's body, his mana core shook before suddenly... it exploded out, almost as if something within him leaked out.

Inside the Fraxinus, Mana gasped a little as the same feeling slightly shot through her.

Everyone looked at her in worry as she shook.

"Mana, are you alright?" Reine asked.

"Something's... something's changed in Shido, I can feel it!" Mana gasped.
"Huh?" Reine wondered.

Shido gasped as he felt his eyes glow brightly, and some of his skin had Spirit mana seep out of it.

The feeling was painful, but...

"Yes, I think I can do it! Now please, lend me your power... Camael! Zadkiel! Raphael!" Shido exclaimed.

As the associated colors were applied to his eyes and hair, Shido soon formed a fiery barrier around him as they hit the reentry point, soon creating an icy shell to protect Mukuro from the heat.

Before he felt himself slip into unconsciousness, he shouted as he had Raphael's winds blow away from the Earth's direction to slow their descent speed. At that moment, he blacked out while Mukuro surprisingly already regained consciousness.

"Huh? What, where is..." Mukuro wondered.

Mukuro soon saw through the ice and fire where they were headed and Shido's unconscious form.

After a long drop, the two crashed onto the Earth's surface only slightly away from the crater that held Tenguu City inside of it. Luckily, the icy shell alongside the winds cushioning the impact, both of them survived.

Shido's appearance had turned back to normal, while Mukuro looked at the boy who risked almost everything to save her... and suddenly she put a hand to her heart as a blush formed on her face.

"Shido... Takamiya... you did all of this, for me?" Mukuro asked.

Mukuro's face starts steaming up, and soon she formed Michael before she opened a wormhole and disappeared out of embarrassment, leaving the unconscious Shido were he was by himself.

Now that's one way for an epic battle to end. Shido unsealed Mukuro's emotions, saved her from smashing into the Earth and from burning upon beginning atmospheric reentry, and most of all... even though it was because Westcott forced all of the DEM to retreat, Ratatoskr has won the war! Unfortunately, both sides lost a lot of their veteran members just for it to happen. At the very least, Karen's with Elliot in the afterlife now, so they'll be reunited soon.

Pretty gutsy move I pulled there, killing off Ellen of all people, so I should explain why I chose to do that. As Tohka said herself, because Ellen was his wife, and as a result of that, she was essentially the small bit of morality he actually had, the possible part of him that could have him redeemed if Ellen herself was somehow redeemed. So, because I killed her... that's it, Westcott has now become completely irredeemable.

The first stage is finally finished, the Mukuro Space arc is now officially over, and the next part of Mukuro's story will begin as Shido tries to actually seal Mukuro's powers... too bad he's gonna learn the hard way that this will be as difficult as the first stage was. Well, let's hope he can handle it, because if he doesn't... the strongest Spirit's gonna let him have it and he might not survive ^^;

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^
-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)
Chapter 62

Welcome back everyone, the second arc of Mukuro's story is finally ready for action, and its name is Mukuro Quasar. Why did I choose this name exactly? Simple, because a quasar is an active galactic nucleus of very high luminosity made that exists within super massive black holes, and when ignited are released as bursts of energy.

One prominent part of Mukuro's powers is her ability to make wormholes using her Rataibu ability to unlock an opening in space, and a wormhole is sometimes just another name for a black hole. Since Mukuro's emotions have been unlocked, the name is reflecting the emotional burst she released that caused her to be shot towards Earth.

Since this part of her story focuses on her recovered motions, I felt it was the most fitting name I could use. Anyways, we've gotten past the craziness of the Mukuro Space arc and things are calming down... for now :3 *gives an evil chuckle* Well anyways, now that we've made it this far, it's time to see some interactions of romance between Shido and Mukuro.

Also, time to answer a guest review: "I know about Date A Bullet, but unfortunately, while I'd like to see it... I haven't been able to. So, while I know about Empty and her real name, I don't know enough about her character to actually use her in the story. If there was enough information, and it had appeared around the time I was doing the Kurumi arc... I might have been able to adapt it in."

"That doesn't mean I can't use Empty, but if I do then she's likely not gonna show up until Season 4 since I haven't fully planned it out aside from how Season 3 connects with it. However, I can't add her into the harem, the harem's only for the 10 Sephira Spirits, so Mukuro's the last addition that I'll be adding to it before I seal the deal. Also, I've already had a Mayuri arc planned from the start, that's the movie chapter that ends Season 3."

"Oh, and thank you so much for your two compliments ^^"

So, with all of that said... let's begin!

A/N: If anyone wants to see the actual statistics for the casualties on both sides, they'll be under the end notes below.

Chapter 62, S3: Mukuro Quasar, Part 5

About 2-3 hours after crashing into the Earth's crust, Shido grunted as he finally opened his eyes, his eyes readjusting to the light as he soon saw the sight of Tohka looking at him worriedly. Once she saw he was awake, it became a big teary smile.

"He's awake! You're OK, you're... really OK... Shido!" Tohka cried out.

"Tohka, what-" Shido asked.

He didn't get the chance to finish asking as Tohka instantly kissed him, surprising him by the timing.

The kiss was quick as Kaguya pulled her off, and the other Sephira Spirits began shoving each other
to try and get near Shido.

"Hey, no fair monopolizing the first kiss Tohka! Just cause you're No. 1 in the harem doesn't mean you always get first kiss!" Natsumi shouted.

"Of course it doesn't, it's because we're childhood friends turned lovers that I always get the first kiss!" Tohka stated.

"I'm up next!" Kotori exclaimed.

"No, I get to kiss darling next!" Miku complained.

Soon a fist slams down on each of their heads, making everyone rub the newly formed swellings as Marina's fist was shown smoking from dealing the blows.

"Oh good, I wanted an excuse to hit something. All ten of you are morons! Don't roughhouse around Shido while he's recovering unless you want him in here longer!" Marina yelled.

"Uh... Marina, I think that was too hard. You aren't a sadist... are you?" Maria asked.

"Oh no worries there, I'm only a sadist when it comes to Boycott and all his cronies in the DEM. I hate him so badly that it is so satisfying to hurt them." Marina smiled with a dark chuckle.

Maria shook in fear as she saw a metaphorical Oni mask face floating overhead of her older sister.

'I am officially worried about her future now!' Maria thought.

"You doing OK sweetie, what happened? Natsumi told us you dove after Mukuro and then you landed on the ground. We didn't see her, but we found you." Rinne asked.

Shido tried to remember.

"Hmm... oh yeah, Mukuro was falling towards Earth and I dove after her, and from there I realized I had just finished using a fusion attack with my Triple Spirit Ascension and was in a bad spot." Shido answered.

"I'm confused, why's that bad?" Nia wondered.

"If Shido uses three Angels at once, then he can't use any Spirit Ascension for 5 minutes. Since he was falling close to the atmosphere..." Mayuri replied.

Nia's eyes widened as she gave a flat frown of fear.

"Then somehow... I wished for a way to do it again to save us, and then... something happened. I was able to do it, but I blacked out before we even hit the ground." Shido explained.

"That must have been what I felt." Mana realized.

"Oh... wait a minute, if you didn't see Mukuro, then where is she?" Shido asked.

"We're not sure yet, she seemed to have left after you landed. I'm not sure what that means, but... thanks to your quick thinking, you saved her life." Reine smiled.

Shido sighed in relief.

"Well, now all that's left is to help you recover. You wanna rub my breasts to help with that." Nia
asked with a cat like smile.

"Oh my god Nia, will you stop teasing him? This is no time for a joke!" Natsumi stated.

Nia snickered a bit.

"Natsumi, I wasn't joking when I said that." Nia replied.

"WHAT!?" nearly everyone said.

Miku's eyes sparkled at that.

"Ooh, are you the Virgin Mary? Can I do it!?!" Miku asked.

"Uh... actually never mind, it was a joke." Nia said nervously.

Some of the others giggled at that, it seems even Nia wasn't comfortable with Miku's sexual orientation under that condition.

"Still, I wish we knew where Mukuro was." Shido stated.

Then as if right on cue, a wormhole opened up... and Mukuro popped her upper half from it to everyone's surprise. Once her gaze met Shido, she hugged him tightly... a little too tightly no less as he almost lost the ability to breathe.

"Shido!" Mukuro exclaimed.

"What the? When did? Where was? How did she... Mukuro!?!" Origami shouted.

"I... this is... OK, this was a complete surprise." Kurumi stated.

Everyone stared as Mukuro rubbed her cheek against Shido's, a complete 180 of what she had been like earlier while still in space and with her emotion's locked, that Mukuro had been cold, calm and collected with a strong focus and an unwavering will that wouldn't flinch to anything.

The Mukuro they were seeing now? This Mukuro was much more like Mildred had described her, extremely emotional and expressive about it, but admittedly also a lot livelier than she had been with her emotions locked away.

"...OK, this change is kinda hard to swallow." Kaguya mentioned.

"I can agree with that, it's almost as if the person we knew her as before had simply been someone else." Yuzuru remarked.

Shido soon managed to adjust Mukuro's grip enough that he could breathe in as much air as usual and gasped for it, soon turning his gaze towards the still particularly clingy Mukuro's face.

"Uh... Mukuro, not that this is a bad thing or anything's wrong with it, but why are you so friendly all of a sudden and wanting to get close to me?!" Shido asked.

"Huh? How could I not? I'll admit it, I was angry that you violated the seal on my emotions, but that amazing plan of yours, the determination you showed, and the willingness you took in risking your life to save mine." Mukuro answered.

Mukuro blushes as she sways her head a bit, blushing brightly.
"Such a paradox of feelings, and yet it all felt so wonderful at that last moment. I feel happiness and just want more of it, I don't know why Shido makes me feel this way but it feels so good!" Mukuro declared cheerfully.

"Uh... anyone feel like we're talking to a Tohka 2.0 here?" Rio wondered.

"Huh!?" Tohka exclaimed in shock.

Mukuro soon smiled as she hugged Shido's neck.

"Oh, and I accept your offer." Mukuro stated.

Shido was confused at that.

"Huh? What offer?" Shido asked.

"Don't be silly, the offer for me to be your obedient slave!" Mukuro answered innocently.

Reine, who was drinking her usual coffee, suddenly widened her eyes upon hearing that, and then spitting said coffee all over the med bay officer.

As for everyone else, they all exclaimed loudly at that, panicking a bit to the Dimensional Spirit's confusion.

"Hmm?" Mukuro wondered confused.

"She actually remembered that option Mildred made him say!?" Nia shouted loudly as her eyes bugged out.

"My ears... my ears!" Kotori whimpered as her pupils gained panicked spirals within them.

"Wait, why the hell are we panicking!? Someone explain this misunderstanding before it gets worse!" Natsumi screamed.

Mukuro blinked a bit.

"Misunderstanding?" Mukuro repeated.

"Y-Yeah! Shido didn't intend to say that at all, it was... it was... ah, it was a friend of ours wondering if something about you was different and she made Shido say something weird to verify! Not only is being a slave a bad thing, Shido would never want that from you or anyone else!" Tohka answered.

Mukuro blinked a few more times, before her cheeks puffed a bit and tears formed in her eyes as she started laughing harder than she could handle, soon falling backwards into her wormhole as she did.

She pulled herself back up with one hand before wiping a tear off her air.

"I don't get why, but I can't believe you said hello to me through a joke! Now I can't stop laughing!" Mukuro laughed.

"Oh my, she's even more naive than you are Tohka." Miku giggled.

"Hey!" Tohka exclaimed with a pout.

Everyone giggled a bit, and soon Kurumi looked at Mukuro.
"Hey Mukuro, 5 years ago you and I ended up fighting, but I don't remember that and had to learn it second-hand... did you by chance seal my memories on that day?" Kurumi asked.

"Hmm? Ooh! Yeah, I recognize you. I didn't do anything to your memories." Mukuro answered.

"You didn't?" Kurumi said in surprise.

Mukuro shook her head.

"I can't use Michael to lock a single memory, or lock someone's memories in general. If you forgot that day, it wasn't because of me." Mukuro confirmed.

"Seriously? Then how did I forget that?" Kurumi wondered.

"I bet it was Westcott, considering how he used the Cassiopeia on you, maybe he erased that memory so you wouldn't try to fight her and die. He needed you as his pawn after all." Nia suggested.

"Yeah... I guess that could be the case." Kurumi sighed.

Mana cleared her throat, getting everyone's attention, including Mukuro's.

"Hello there Mukuro, I'm Mana Takamiya. I'm Shido's little sister. Good to officially meet you."
Mana greeted, offering a hand.

"Nice to meet you Mana, hi there!" Mukuro greeted back.

Mana felt herself hake a bit as Mukuro shook her hand incredibly fast and forcefully. Mana grabs it, making her stop.

"Uh... OK, strong handshake there." Mana winced.

Mana shook the slight pain off.

"I hope you don't mind Mukuro, but my big brother's quite tired, exhausted and needs to heal up. Not only did you push him to his limits, but he just burned more power than he normally can within a certain time period and survived falling from the atmosphere. Do you mind coming back here in about... 4-5 hours?" Mana requested.

"Oh, I'm sorry! I didn't know it was that be! See you again soon Shido, bye!" Mukuro waved.

Mukuro retreated through the wormhole before it closed up... and then Mana's eyes widened as she face palmed.

"A-Ah man, I should have given Mildred a moment to talk with her... crap!" Mana groaned.

"...Dang it, you're right. No matter what I do, I'll never understand why the human body decided that it should make you forget the most obvious things you should do when you're pumping adrenaline through your veins." Nia sighed.

Shido chuckled embarrassingly, a sweat drop forming on his cheek,

"Well... I think I'm actually gonna get that rest now if anyone minds." Shido mentioned.

Rest as he tried to get rested, he suddenly felt something get into bed, and saw Tohka hugging him close.
"Uh... Tohka?" Shido asked.

"I'm not leaving you after what just happened to you Shido!" Shido pouted.

"Uh... Tohka, isn't this a bit-

Soon the bed shook a bit as Origami, Yoshino, Kotori, Kurumi, Natsumi, Kaguya and Yuzuru, Miku, and then Nia all ended up getting onto the bed the same way, barely squeezing enough room for all of them.

"Eh!?" Shido exclaimed.

"Tohka's right, do you know how much you scared us after we heard what you pulled!?!" Origami berated.

"I cried a bit... I was so scared." Yoshino sniffled.

"Seriously, did you want to give us a heart attack?" Kotori asked.

"You can be such a genius one moment, but an idiot the next." Kurumi sighed.

"Yeah, how did you forget the Spirit who had been almost right next to you?" Natsumi glared.

"Even I've never acted that crazy!" Kaguya exclaimed.

"I can verify that, she hasn't. Shido has officially topped my sister in insane stunts." Yuzuru confirmed.

"Darling, don't be so reckless!" Miku shouted.

"You really like to cause trouble don't you, well now the favor's returned." Nia smirked.

Shido sweats a bit and looks at his sister and the non-Sephira Spirits, giving a look that said: "please help me!" to them.

Unfortunately, Mana and Rinne look at each other, and then...

"Sorry Shido, but they're all the girls in your harem. You worry them, and you terrify them, you've gotta be the one to comfort them. Enjoy that nap." Mana giggled.

"Wait, don't leave me by myself! Guys!" Shido begged.

The other Spirits all leave the room, and soon Shido sighs as the Spirits all snuggle with him.

...'...Is it weird that this suddenly feels kinda comfortable?" Shido wondered.

Meanwhile in the Inverse Void, the remaining survivor of the Adeptus Elites, Chinami herself, was standing by one of the surviving DEM ship captains. He was wearing a sling as he handed her a report on the overall losses and casualties.

Upon seeing the report, Chinami paled a bit. It was enough to make her wonder if they had been fighting a losing battle, and Westcott calling a retreat had ultimately spared them from any more senseless sacrifices.

"No... this is, it can't be. We seriously lost this much and this many people?" Chinami asked.
"I'm afraid so, this entire war gained us nothing but loss. Most of our losses were of our weaker forces, but... to think we'd lose the entire Adeptus squad and the Arbitel. The strongest wizard and the most powerful ship we ever made, the centers of our technology and wizards are both gone forever." The captain said sadly.

Chinami gripped the report tightly.

"If I had to say where we stand now? Our strength compared to Ratatoskr used to be a mountain towering over the land, but now we're more like an adult standing over a teenager. Damn it, where did everything go so wrong?" The captain asked himself.

"...And I bet Sir Westcott's still broken over Ellen's death, guess I've got no other choice then. If Sir Westcott needs me tell him I'm going out." Chinami stated.

"Huh? Going out, where are you going?" The captain asked.

Chinami was seen putting on a long-haired wig, glasses with fake lenses, and a bulky hay before putting on some winter clothing.

"Back to Earth, until he's back in order I think I'll try keeping an eye out for anything related to [Zodiac]'s current status. Just because we lost doesn't mean things are over for us." Chinami answered with a determined face.

Chinami soon walked off, and before she left for Earth, she looked in one room of the DEM's storage and noticed a certain CR-Unit in a container. She put her hand on the glass containing her Lancelot, giving it a saddened look.

"...Lancelot, we're all that's left of the Adeptus wizards, so let's make sure we don't let their deaths be meaningless." Chinami said softly.

She rubbed the glass a bit more before she walked off, and soon walked through the portal as she headed towards Earth.

Reine was currently speaking with Japan's current Prime Minister, and once Reine had told him everything, he lowered his head slightly and gave a saddened look to the news he had just received from her. After taking a moment to collect himself, he spoke.

"So... Chairman Elliot was killed in a conflict to secure the safety of Zodiac, and you're positive he didn't somehow survive?" The Prime Minister asked.

"I'm afraid so, we monitored the pulse lines of everyone who had boarded the Fraxinus with us. Along with Karen Nora Mathers... his went flat. In space, with such an explosion coming from the vehicle he was personally piloting, there was no way to deny he didn't survive." Reine answered.

The Prime Minister sighed.

"I see... he was a good man, both he and his wife will be missed along with everyone else that was lost. We'll update the monument once offered to the Arusu siblings as a memorial to everyone in Ratatoskr this conflict's taken. Speaking of which, how bad were the overall casualties?" The Prime Minister asked.

Reine took out the report she had received from Matthew and examined it.

"This is only out of the forces we could send to the battle, but out of those forces... we about 80 ships
overall, at least 12 were owned by us here at Ratatoskr HQ, we have at least 200 estimated casualties and another 2000 were injured. I'm not sure how big of a hit the DEM took, but I feel they're still going to be a threat to us once they bounce back." Reine answered.

"I see, do you believe you dealt them a huge blow? Can you honestly say all the sacrifices to rescue the final Spirit were worth it?" The Prime Minister asked worriedly.

Reine breathes before smiling a bit.

"In regards to the former, Artemisia was able to end the threat of Ellen Mira Mathers, otherwise known as Adeptus 1. The entirety of the Adeptus Squad except for Adeptus 3 were taken out by the members of the AST. Most of all, the DEM's strongest warship, the Arbitel, was destroyed by me using the Fraxinus' strongest weapon." Reine answered.

Reine then pulled up Mukuro's emotional charts which showed the rapid fluctuation of the now very emotive Spirit.

"And... we can say without certainty that the sacrifices made today were not in vain. Due to our efforts, we managed to convince Mukuro Hoshimiya, the Spirit known as [Zodiac] to trust us and Shido will attempt to seal her powers once he recovers."

"That's good, I'm just glad we had some good news to come out of this. Considering the shock and the fact you hadn't decided a possible line of succession, I'll let you take the time needed to choose a new chairman. It may also help to decide a new council that won't make the same mistakes as the Round Table." The Prime Minister replied.

Reine nodded before saluting.

"Understood, Commander Reine out." Reine stated.

Soon the communication feed was cut, and Reine sat down on a chair as she looked at the ceiling. Tears welled up in her eyes, still have trouble accepting that Elliot and Karen were really gone.

She had been with them from the start, began Ratatoskr alongside the both of them... it was a loss too hard for her to swallow.

"I didn't think I'd ever feel such strong pain again after seeing Isamu and big brother die, please... let this conflict end soon, please." Reine cried.

"We all miss them Reine."

Reine soon turned to see Mildred walk in, making the former wipe her tears as she looked at her.

"Hey Mildred, I think by now you heard the news about your sister?" Reine asked.

"I did, she's the same energetic bundle I remember... still can't believe she just popped in like that, wish I had been there. Then again, she might have told me to leave." Mildred answered.

Mildred sighed.

"If it's any consolation, Shido thinks that Mukuro didn't say that out of malice. Mukuro doesn't seem to remember the official why she went into space, so if you consider that, the lack of contact and isolation may have led to indirect memory loss. It could just be possible she doesn't remember her family." Reine stated.
"Even if that's true, unless I get conformation, there's too much doubt for me to believe that. Can you really blame me after I ended up having cardiac arrest?" Mildred mentioned.

Reine sweated a bit at that.

"OK, I guess you have a fair point there." Reine admitted.

Reine put a hand on Mildred's shoulder.

"I'll make sure to have Shido ask her that and see for sure if she just forgot you." Reine smiled.

"Thank you." Mildred replied.

Near the area outside of the crater that housed Tenguu City, by the crash site where Shido and Mukuro had landed, marked by scorched earth, frozen earth and gashed formed by strong wings... the same two lights from the day before were seen.

The pair of lights struggled with all they had as they tried to form properly, but quickly started to flicker as one again, they began failing to manifest.

"R...n...e, mu..s... re..ch... a...d... warn... a...ut... He...v..."

"R...i...e, I... w...ll... re...u...n... y...v..."

And once again, their struggle was in vain as the lights compressed away and dissolved once more... but small spheres of light were still trying to reach Tenguu City despite that as they refused to give up.

They would make it somehow, no matter what it took.

It didn't take long for Shido's nap to end, and soon he was seen relaxing in a special bath made with a liquid that was yielded from realizers. The Maryoku based liquid had curative effects that could heal fractures and contusions, or alleviate fatigue.

"Whoever made this did a good job, this is much better than a medical capsule would be." Shido sighed happily.

As Shido soaked in the water, he wondered about what was going to happen next with Mukuro, the wielder of Michael was now quite friendly with him, but...

'How should I go about this? Even if I did ask Mildred about what Mukuro was like, how much has changed about her since they last saw each other? How much did having her emotions changed seal her, and... aw man, am I just nervous because this is the last Spirit I have to save?' Shido wondered.

"Worrying won't do you any good."

Shido blinked, soon turning to see Mana before she flicked him on the forehead.

"See? You didn't even realize who was behind you, normally you'd recognize my voice without having to turn and check." Mana snickered.

"Ow, guess I deserved that one." Shido winced, rubbing his forehead.

Mana chuckled with a smile, soon getting in the water herself before whistling with her fingers.
"Come on in girls, the water's great!" Mana shouted.

Soon the other Spirits all come in, making Shido go red at the sight before all of them were in the bath.

"Why does this seem familiar!?" Shido asked rhetorically.

"I see you're remembering the incident with the Yamai twins." Nia chuckling.

Shido sinks into the water slightly, and Rinne pats his head in an attempt to comfort her son.

"So, Mana says you seem to be a little worried about what you'll be doing next with Mukuro, am I right?" Rinne asked.

"Yeah, a little... I mean I know I should be, but this time things are different. I don't mean there are different stakes or Mukuro's gonna be trouble... I think it's the fact that she's the last Spirit before we've saved all of them." Shido admitted.

Rinne blinked in surprise, and soon started laughing to Shido's surprise.

"What? What's so funny mom, I'm being serious here!" Shido asked.

"I know, and that's why I'm laughing!" Rinne giggled.

"Huh?"

Rinne giggled one last time before ruffling her son's hair.

"Because you're focusing too much on tomorrow. Shido, there's nothing wrong with worrying with what's next, but you can't let that be all you focus on. Sure, you won't know what will come tomorrow, but you have to remember tomorrow is the result of today. Just like today is the result of yesterday." Rinne explained.

"She's right, we got this far focusing on what we are now, and where we are now. Come on girls, give him a reminder, will ya?" Mana requested.

Shido looked at the others.

"When I didn't remember who I was, you told me yourself you wouldn't reject me, and when I could feel the DEM getting closer, your kindness to me was enough I tried to keep you away from the battle. You still came, and you never considered if you would succeed or fail, you just did what you believed in." Tohka smiled.

"I wanted to die for so long, for when I thought I killed my parents. I told you to leave me, but you still came, no matter the threat or what I said to you, you still refused to let me die. You told me to live, and ever since I have." Origami smiled.

"I was only able to trust Yoshino, see him as my only friend. You helped me learn to be brave, and Yoshinon to be kind, and when Yoshinon returned inside of me... you were there by my side to help me stand up." Yoshino smiled.

"I had always been a cry baby, and I didn't think I could ever be strong, but you helped me realize to be strong isn't to be fearless or have overwhelming power, it's knowing what scares you and still being able to face it." Kotori smiled.

"I had been trapped in a lie, and years of my life, I became an unknowing puppet to Westcott's plans
and ambitions. The pain was so great I felt I deserved to die as many times as I let him reap a life, but you told me to keep Saya alive in my memories and gave me light in the darkness... and I got to see Saya again." Kurumi smiled, blushing a bit.

"I always doubted myself, felt I was something worthless, but when you stood up to those bullies and came to rescue me... for once I felt whole. Felt I was actually meant something, that's a happiness I'll spend every day trying to repay." Natsumi smiled.

"Yuzuru and I were faced with the horrible realization that one of us would die every day, and we couldn't find the way for our happy ending, but then..." Kaguya smiled.

"...You and Tohka both showed us it isn't over until you give up, and at the last moment, you gave us both the means to live." Yuzuru smiled.

"I hated men over one DEM member and Westcott's combined cruelty, and couldn't trust any human, all because I was hurt so badly I forgot who I was, forgot what my passion for music really meant as I became no better than the people who pushed me to the brink... and yet you still tried to save me. Showed me how honest your words were." Miku smiled.

"I was a brat, plain and simple. Yet you didn't hate me, you told me you understood me, that there was a light. I was able to believe again, and even more... I would have never learned Souji still remembered part of me if you hadn't made me willing to go back." Nia smiled.

Rio hugged Shido from the side.

"You're a great big brother, no matter what you've always stood strong, even if your doubt you didn't wield to the feelings of powerlessness." Rio added.

"Yeah, you touched all of us Shido." Maria replied.

"And by inspiring others, you help them inspire us, it was because you reached out to them they reached out to others and ourselves. That's how Maria was brave enough to confront me, and able to wake me from my delusions." Marina smirked.

Mayuri scratched her cheek as she blushed in embarrassment.

"And if you hadn't saved Kurumi, Rio would have never had the chance to find me and give me my life, and give me people I could call a family." Mayuri admitted.

"Not to mention, you refused to give up on me, even when I nearly sacrificed myself for you." Rinne mentioned.

"Look at where we are now, don't you get it Shido? That first day with Tohka nearly a year ago? You set tomorrow, but each time you were focused on the today with all of us, and you'll save Mukuro too. Don't think about that tomorrow, because you will make it!" Mana remarked.

Shido gasped as he stared his harem, friends, sisters and mother... and then smiled.

"Everyone... thank you, and I'll make sure that happens. No matter what!" Shido declared.

Everyone smiled at that.

"Good think you didn't make a pose or you'd just look stupid since we're in the bath." Nia snickered.

"What the... Nia!" Shido exclaimed.
Nia soon started laughing, causing everyone to sweat drop a bit at the now blushing Shido.

A portal formed within the Tengu Park forest as Chinami dropped into some bushes. Looking left and right for any signs of people seeing her, she quickly scurried across the street and then gave a sigh of relief.

"OK, doesn't seem like anyone's gonna bother me." Chinami stated.

Looking around a bit, Chinami motioned to adjust her glasses, making sure onlookers didn't notice her activating a hidden switch by the lens frames, changing activating her glasses vision change feature... but blushing a bit as she accidentally swapped it to X-Ray and saw everyone in their underwear.

"Oops, wrong one." Chinami chuckled.

"But..."

Chinami decided to stare at some guys for a moment, drool coming out of her mouth and giving a low-pitched giggle as she saw their muscles. After having her fun, she swapped to the correct vision mode, one that let her see remnant Reiryoku particles.

Soon enough, trails of golden-yellow particles were seen between the areas Mukuro had used her wormholes to teleport through.

"No doubt about it, [Zodiac]'s here... now let's see if any chance of an Inversion could happen. Maybe if I'm lucky... I might be able to play my cards right." Chinami whispered.

"After the heavy losses we took, I don't think there's much to lose if I alone am the one to gamble."

After the particularly odd bath session was over, Shido was in the Ratatoskr base's changing room as he chose clothing for the date he would attempt to get Mukuro to take with him soon enough.

"Are you ready Shido? Provided that Mukuro actually listened to your sister, she should show up any moment." Reine said via the headset.

"Honest answer? Not in the slightest, but then again, I haven't been ready for most of what the Spirits have thrown at us. If there's anything to learn from that, maybe that's a good thing." Shido joked.

Reine chuckled at that.

"Perhaps you're right. Just remember, even if she's friendly to you now, she's still dangerous enough she caused most of the damage to DEM forces in our last conflict. Not to mention I'd like to avoid the other theme we seem to have we Spirits this time." Reine replied.

Shido gulped at that.

"...Dear god, I don't wanna even think about her undergoing an Inversion." Shido stated.

"SHIDO!"

At that moment, a familiar portal opens as Mukuro jumps out and tackle hugs Shido to the floor.

"Ow!" Shido groaned.
"I'm finally back Shido, and I'm ready to gain some happiness from you!" Mukuro giggled.

Shido tried to get up, only for Mukuro's clingy hug to cause her large breasts to squeeze into his face and start choking him. He gives a muffled scream and hits the ground, making Mukuro blink before looking down.

Only after Shido's voice start to slowly vanish and his arm struggling to move did she put 2 + 2 together and scream, getting off him.

"I'm sorry!" Mukuro apologized.

"I'm OK... don't worry, I'm fine. That's not the worst thing I've ever gone through." Shido gasped.

Shido took a deep breath of air before clearing his throat.

"OK, in regards to the whole happiness thing... would you mind going on a date with me?" Shido asked.

"A... date?" Mukuro asked.

"You really don't know what that is? Uh... you know what hanging out is, right? It's the same thing, but specifically two people, only a bit more special." Shido explained.

"Oh, that makes sense. Sure thing, let's go!" Mukuro smiled.

Mukuro prepared to open another portal, but...

"Wait!" Shido screamed.

"Huh?" Mukuro wondered.

"Using your powers like that in public might get people into a panic. Not to mention you can't just go out dressed like that, you mind changing?" Shido requested.

"Oh, alright then." Mukuro replied.

Shido saw Mukuro dispel her Astral Dress, leaving her completely naked with only her long floor length hair covering her unmentionables. His face went red as he covered his eyes and screamed again.

"That wasn't what I meant!" Shido stated.

As usual, Mukuro showed confusion as a result of her naive mind.

"You didn't? Then what did you mean?" Mukuro asked.

"Uh... hey Michael, mind showing yourself?" Shido asked.

The key that was Mukuro's Angel formed in the air by Mukuro's side.

[Yes, you called?]

"Michael, didn't you ever tell Mukuro she can just change her Astral Dress into the appearance of clothes before?"

The angel went silent.
Shido groaned.

"Great... gotta explain that one to her, though I'm kinda glad you're being as friendly as you are right now." Shido answered.

[I apologize over that young boy, when Mukuro and I fought with you I had no ill intent, I only do what she asks of me because I want her to always know that she's not alone as long as she has me.]

Shido smiled a bit.

"You have a strong bond with your Angel Mukuro, it's kinda cute." Shido complimented.

Mukuro held her cheeks as she turned her head and blushed.

Taking out his phone, Shido checked around for something to use as a clothing reference, soon he found an old outfit of Kotori's he figured would be a good fit.

"Here, try this outfit." Shido suggested.

"Ooh, that looks cute! Give me a hand Michael!" Mukuro stated cheerfully.

Mukuro grabs Michael and holds up her hand, and soon the outfit materializes around her with her hair soon changing itself into a braid that wrapped itself around her like a situational scarf. Shido blushes a bit as she sees the change finished.

"How does this look?" Mukuro asked.

"...Wow." Shido blushed.

[I believe that's a yes, and how does it feel to have your old braid back in?]

"Feels refreshing, why can't I wear it in my Astral Dress form?" Mukuro wondered.

Michael went silent after that question was asked, the Angel having no answer to give her. It just disappeared to her confusion.

"Michael?" Mukuro asked.

"Uh... let's just go on our date now." Shido quickly said.

Shido took Mukuro's hand, and the Dimensional Spirit eternally squealed as Shido's hand touched her own.

Shido and Mukuro were soon walking around the city, with the Dimensional Spirits clinging to Shido’s arm as metaphorical hearts began flying off of her.

"OK, where should we go first?" Shido wondered.

Soon the sound of a stomach growling was heard, surprising Shido since that sound normally only came up when he was with Tohka. He looked around while Mukuro tried her best to not blush and reveal it was hear.
"Did you hear that?" Shido asked.

"No, I didn't hear any-" Mukuro replied nervously.

Soon the same sound repeated itself, and her stomach moved as if to scream "It was me, now feed me already!" to the world. Mukuro's face went fully red as she covered it.

"Mukuro, by chance has those 5 years without food finally started to catch up to you?" Shido asked.

"Don't look at me!" Mukuro cried.

Shido pat her back.

"I'll buy you some food, my treat." Shido offered.

"Really?" Mukuro asked.

Shido nods, and Mukuro smiles brightly.

Soon enough, the two ended up going to a fancy restaurant that some of Ratatoskr's members were stationed at, and Mukuro devoured what seemed like years' worth of food as multiple plates began to gather across the table.

Shido pulled the empty plates closer to him to make it look like he was scarfing, hoping to reduce Mukuro's embarrassment. After she had her fill, Mukuro groaned and rubbed her full belly.

"Too much?" Shido asked.

"My tummy hurts now." Mukuro groaned.

"Let's go visit some shops to walk that off." Shido offered.

The two soon went across the shopping district, and as they did, Shido quickly found himself understanding Mukuro's preferences.

Mukuro seemed to prefer lively, bustling locations, Chinese cuisine instead of Japanese, and classical ornaments to modern accessories... which made a bit of sense since Mildred did say the orphanage caretaker claimed she came from China.

Eventually, Shido decided to get her a gift.

"Hey Mukuro, considering this is a first date, how about I buy you a souvenir? Pick whatever you'd like." Shido offered.

"Really!?" Mukuro said.

Mukuro's eyes sparkled as she looked around, soon noticing a gold-outlined aureate fan on display in an antique house across the street, she quickly pointed to it so Shido would know what she chose. Shido chuckled as he went to buy it.

Eventually, the clock stuck 7 PM and the two were sitting on a bench.

"So, how was today?" Shido asked.

"It was... it was really fun." Mukuro smiled.
Shido briefly looked at his headset's data, Mukuro's emotional state was in the good area, there was a good chance her feelings would become high enough for him to seal her powers soon enough if he played his cards right.

Mukuro soon took his hand, making him look her in the eyes.

"Shido, do you... love me?" Mukuro asked.

Shido's face suddenly flushed, a puff of steam coming off of it.

"Reine, what do I say to that!? This is faster than I expected and I've been caught off guard." Shido asked.

"Just be honest, you're at least considering it." Reine answered.

Shido gulps a bit, taking a deep breath.

"W-Well... we haven't known each other that long, so I can't really say anything definite yet, but... I'd say that I'd be leaning more to the side of yes. Like, really leaning on that side, near the end marking even." Shido answered.

Mukuro blushed as she smiled.

"Shido, thank you so much. I just have one request for you in relation to that." Mukuro stated.

"What is it?" Shido wondered.

"As of this moment, I don't want to get close to any other girls ever again." Mukuro requested.

Suddenly, everything got quite as Shido and Reine went white, the slight sound of the wind blowing could be heard.

Mukuro blinked, wondering why Shido went silent.

"Shido, why are you suddenly all quiet?" Mukuro asked.

"I'm sorry Mukuro, but that's something I can't agree to." Shido answered honestly.

"EH!?" Mukuro exclaimed in shock.

Shido scratched the side of his head as he tried to think of how to explain this.

"Like I said before, I want to save every Spirit. However, the way I save them has led to me falling in love with most of them. Those I haven't are good friends, and a few are family members. The other have all realized they had to share me, and they've accepted that. I love all the Spirits I've sealed until now, and I'd honestly like for you to get to know them, it would make me really happy." Shido explained.

"I... see..." Mukuro replied.

However, what Shido hadn't noticed was the blank stare on Mukuro's eyes, almost as if he stepped on a landmine. He had heard Mildred's story... but unfortunately, there was something Mildred didn't know about why Mukuro reacted as she did.

Shido soon checked the time again.
"Oh crap, I better get home. Do you have a place to stay? If you want, I could-" Shido offered.

"No need Shido, I'll be alright. I can manage on my own. Well, I'll see you tomorrow, and when you do things will be better for all of us." Mukuro answered.

Mukuro soon summoned Michael before making a wormhole and vanishing through it.

Shido just stood there and blinked, and then... he sweated a bit as he saw the readings on his headset. Mukuro's uneasiness had become very high.

"...I have a bad feeling about this." Shido told himself.

From the top of a building in Tenguu City, Mukuro's eyes shook as she held Michael close.

"I... can't lose him, I... mustn't lose him... I can't risk him around anyone else. I must... make sure he won't leave me, I don't want... to lose him." Mukuro panicked.

[Uh... Mukuro, I think maybe you need to calm down a bit.]

"Michael, there's no choice... I need to use it." Mukuro stated.

Michael showed surprise at that.

[Mukuro, are you sure? I can't remember, but I swear we tried this once before... and it didn't go well.]

"I have, to I... I don't want to lose him!" Mukuro cried.

[Alright... no matter what happens, I'll stay by your side. Do what you think you have to.]

Mukuro nodded and raised Michael into the air.

"...SEGVA - LOCK!"

Uh oh! Mukuro just chose to lock something, and I think that last conversation between Shido and Mukuro is a good indicator of what she just chose to lock. What's going to happen next with Shido now that Mukuro's changed the rules of the game? Not to mention, Mukuro definitely seems to be suffering some memory loss, she and Michael don't seem to recall what she did 5 years ago and what it led to... I hope she's ready for what could happen.

I hope how I presented Mukuro works, based on what I see and feel about her character, she's a lot like Tohka if everything about her (except her appetite, though I think the Tohka Food Fight story might say otherwise... if I can ever read it ^_^;) was taken up to eleven. It seems kinda fitting, Tohka was the first Spirit to appear and Mukuro was the last, helps see the angle that Tohka could have gone through had she not been the first Spirit that Shido met.

Chinami's going solo, wanting to hopefully manage to aid in getting the last bit of Dark Reiyouk that Westcott needs, will she get involved or is she just gonna watch and wait for confirmation of things getting hectic? Yikes. Looks like Mukuro may have actually proven herself to be more difficult for Shido to handle, and once he wakes up... he might just realize how hard this is really going to be. This date has just gotten started.
Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

A/N: For the DEM's casualties, the numbers in parenthesis are the ones caused by Ratatoskr, and the rest being Mukuro's. Also, as was mentioned in this chapter, despite their larger casualties, the DEM still has the advantage, but they're more equal to Ratatoskr in strength now.

RATATOSKLR:
Destroyed Ships: Sagittarius, all the Zodiac based vehicles, over 70 additional ships
Total Death Count: Over 200
Total Injured: Over 2,000
Notable Casualties: Elliot Woodman, Karen Mathers

Overall Losses:
~ 33% of all machinery and tech destroyed
~ 10% of the members who joined the battle are deceased

DEM:
Destroyed Ships: Arbitel, Hyperion, Heptameron, Over 15,000 (Around 200) additional ships
Destroyed Automatons: All Automatons destroyed (Around 22%)
Total Death Count: Over 24,000 (Around 1,000)
Total Injured: Over 50,000 (Around 10,000)
Notable Casualties: Ellen Mathers, Jessica Bailey, James Paddington, Adeptus 4-12

Overall Losses:
~ 71% of all machinery and tech destroyed
~ 48% of the DEM's total members are deceased

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)
Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)
OK, before I do anything else... I forgot to say the arc emotion, again! Why do I keep doing that!? *sighs* OK, let's fix that up before anything else, the arc emotion is "Passion" since with Mukuro's emotions unlocked, we have the opposite of apathy as passion means to strongly feel emotion. If any Spirit is passionate about something, then I'd say the seriousness Mukuro has about love more than qualifies.

Well, here we are, Volume 15's infamous moment with Mukuro where she decides to essentially lock out Shido's existence from everyone's memories except her own. However, I'll say doing the exact same thing would pretty much make the rest of this arc go the same way Volume 15 did in canon, so there's a twist involved to avoid that. I'll have more to say at the end notes after it happens, but you'll see it soon enough.

Either way, now Shido has to try and get through to Mukuro and seal her powers without her finding out, otherwise she might lock his ability to seal Spirits or make herself unable to be sealed. Needless to say, right now Shido is... what's the idiom again? "Walking on Eggshells" I believe, then again considering Mukuro's level of strength, I think the eggshells might be a mine field in this case 0_0

Now to answer a guest review: "Yeah, Nia and Kurumi might be the only two Spirits in canon that could have a chance due to their powers, so that would mean Nia got two reasons to be nerfed aside from what her Angel could have revealed before it should be. Even then, I'd say they'd need to be stealthy and lucky for it to work because of major reason... if Mukuro could prevent Shido's Haniel from becoming Michael, she might be able to lock a Spirit's powers."

"If she truly does have the ability to do that, then we're really lucky that Mukuro never thought about actually using it against Inverse Tohka, otherwise she would have killed her before Shido could stop it. No matter how strong Kurumi is, it means nothing if she can't use her powers. *sighs* Aw man, I really wish a fight with Mukuro and Kurumi with their powers unsealed could have happened, but now the chances of that are pretty unlikely if they aren't zero."

Alright, that's it for today's start notes. Now it's time to buckle up and get this show on the road! You can do this Shido!

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Chapter 63, S3: Mukuro Quasar, Part 6

From the top of a building in Tenguu City, Mukuro's eyes shook as she held Michael close.

"I... can't lose him, I... mustn't lose him... I can't risk him around anyone else. I must... make sure he won't leave me, I don't want... to lose him." Mukuro panicked.

[Uh... Mukuro, I think maybe you need to calm down a bit.]

"Michael, there's no choice... I need to use it." Mukuro stated.

Michael showed surprise at that.
Mukuro, are you sure? I can't remember, but I swear we tried this once before... and it didn't go well."

"I have, to I... I don't want to lose him!" Mukuro cried.

"Alright... no matter what happens, I'll stay by your side. Do what you think you have to."

Mukuro nodded and raised Michael into the air.

"...SEGVA - LOCK!"

Michael glowed as a wave of golden-yellow Reiryoku shot across the city, and phased through everyone unseen as the effects of Michael's locking ability applied its affects in what would soon be a particularly troublesome way.

~December 24, 2051

As his alarm clock went off, Shido groaned as he pulled the covers off him and slammed his hand on it. He sighed as he got out of bed and walked to the kitchen. Once he walked in, the sight of Rinne trying to cook was seen before she noticed her son.

"Oh! Hey Shido, you woke up just in time for my special Christmas Eve Break-Ah!" Rinne smiled.

Rinne noticed the pancakes she was making starting to give off slight smokes signs, and quickly flipped them over before they went past barely singed and became outright burned. She sighed in relief at her save.

Shido chuckled at his mother's struggle with cooking.

"Mom, no offense, but I think you should stick with a microwave." Shido joked.

"Mu... Shido, that's not funny. This is the first Christmas Eve we've ever spent together." Rinne pouted playfully.

Tohka soon rushed out into view, smelling the pancakes and drooling slightly.

"I smell pancakes, where are they!" Tohka begged.

"Calm down Tohka, I'm still making them... and trying not to burn them." Rinne chuckled embarrassingly.

Soon the other all walked out of their rooms and joined the kitchen, Macaron soon stretched before walking by, looking at Shido oddly like he was seeing a stranger before hiding behind Kurumi in fear.

"Huh? What's wrong Macaron, do you hear something?" Kurumi asked.

"It is Christmas Eve, so there's probably already a few festive sounds going on outside he hears but we don't." Mana guessed.

"Hmm... I guess that could be possible, I hope he'll be OK for the rest of today and tomorrow if that's the case." Kurumi replied.

Kurumi picked up her kitty and pet him, trying to help relax him.
Mana smiled a bit, soon looking outside.

"You know, this Christmas seems like it'll be the best one yet. It was always me, Shido and Kotori most of the time, and now we have all of you, my little sister Rio and mom. Oh, I don't wanna forget Aunt Reine either... the only thing that would make it better is if they were both here." Mana said sadly.

"Mana..." Rinne whispered.

Rinne saw that look in her eyes, she and Shido both have it so often, even Rio occasionally gave a glimpse of the feeling. Seigo and Isamu... even she wanted them both to somehow come back, to hold Seigo in her arms again and see Reine smile at her greatest wish being realized.

Marina soon noticed something about the pancakes.

"Rinne, better take the pancakes off in the next few seconds or they'll start burning." Marina mentioned.

"Huh? Oh no, crap!" Rinne exclaimed.

Rinne barely managed to get the pancakes on the plate in time, sighing in relief.

Soon enough, everyone began enjoying the Christmas Tree shaped pancakes that Rinne had struggled to make. Not to long after everyone was seated, a knock was heard on the door.

"Who is it?" Rinne asked.

"It's me, Reine." Reine answered.

"Come in." Rinne replied.

Reine soon opened the door, soon walking in.

"Rinne, do you think I could get your advice about-" Reine asked.

Suddenly she looked at Shido, tilting her head confused.

"Anyone wanna tell me who this boy is?" Reine asked.

Everyone suddenly looked at Reine like she went crazy, while Shido did a spit take on himself and Mayuri choked on a piece of pancake as she tried to hit it out or properly swallow it.

"OK, real funny joke there Reine. Now what did you need to ask me?" Rinne asked.

"No seriously, who is this boy? I've never seen him before." Reine answered honestly.

A vein formed on Mana's head.

"Aunt Reine, that's not funny anymore. You aren't fooling anyone. You of all people would know my big brother, so stop with the odd Christmas humor." Mana requested.

"I'm not kidding, and what do you mean brother? You know very well Rio's your only sibling." Reine stated.

The next thing Reine knew, Rinne had suddenly grabbed her by the collar as she and everyone else but Shido (who had just gone white and frozen with shock) looked at her like they were ready to
murder her with their terrifying expressions.

Rinne's face touched hers directly as Reine felt her blood suddenly go cold, sweat trickling down her face.

"I know the son I gave birth to very well Reine, he was the first child I ever gave birth to. Saying I don't have a son? I'm not sure what you've been smoking to suddenly say I never had Shido and act like he doesn't exist, but say that again and I will strangle you!" Reine glared eerily.

"Uh... you know what, I think I'll come back later when you stop making me feel like I'll wet myself in fear... yeah! See all later, bye!" Reine answered shakily.

Before anyone knew it, Reine had disappeared and left a half-closed door behind her.

Everyone turned to the whitened Shido, the younger Takamiya sibling snapped her fingers and caused Shido to jump as he regained his focus.

"Huh!? What!?" Shido asked.

"Shido, what the heck is going on here? Aunt Reine is suddenly acting like you never existed before now!?" Mana panicked.

"I don't know! Hey, wait a minute, this is just hypothetical at the moment, but... what if it isn't just her?" Shido asked.

This suddenly made everyone gasp as they quickly got their phones and tried contacting everyone they knew, hoping to verify it.

"Hey Saya, do you recognize anyone named Shido Takamiya?" Kurumi asked worriedly.

"Who's that?" Saya replied via phone.

Kurumi paled as she unconsciously hung up on her best friend.

"Hey Ai, Mai, Mii, I think I heard there'll be a new student named Shido Takamiya joining your class." Origami joked.

"Oh really? Tell me more!" Ai replied via the phone.

'Oh no! She didn't call me out for trying to make a stupid joke, this is real!' Origami mentally panicked.

Soon enough, all remaining doubts were cleared...

...aside from all of the Spirits, the existence of Shido Takamiya has been effectively and completely erased from everyone's memories. Rinne went blue in the face, falling backwards before Rio caught her midair.

"This is... this is real, I think I'm about to have a heart attack..." Rinne breathed.

"What's going on here!? W-why can no one remember big brother, this doesn't make any sense!" Rio panicked.

Origami tried thinking for a bit, and then it suddenly clicked in her head. A certain pair of words that were spoken yesterday by a pair of siblings.
"I can't use Michael to lock a single memory, or lock someone's memories in general." Mukuro's voice echoed.

"The day afterwards, me and my parents felt like we had lost something, and suddenly most people we knew surprisingly forgot about us." Mildred's voice echoed.

Origami gasped.

"OH MY GOD!" Origami exclaimed loudly.

"Wait, did you figure something out Origami?" Nia asked.

"I did, but before I say anything about it, I need to make sure." Origami answered.

Origami turned towards Shido.

"Shido... try go outside for yourself for a moment, we'll watch and hopefully that will make me know if my theory's actually right or not." Origami requested.

"Uh... sure. Not sure why, but with how weird things are right now, I'm game with anything that can give us answers or a solution." Shido agreed.

Shido was soon standing outside, everyone waiting by the door as he walked across the street a bit, and then...

"Shido!"

As a certain voice sang towards him, Shido turned to see Mukuro appear via one of Michael's wormholes.

"Mukuro? What are you doing here so early?" Shido asked surprised.

"I came to make sure you were alright." Mukuro smiled.

"Uh... thanks Mukuro, but this isn't the best time. I'm trying to figure out why suddenly the people I know have completely forgotten I exist." Shido replied.

At that moment, Mukuro soon gave Shido a smile in response to his words. Upon seeing it, Shido suddenly got a bad feeling as he started to connect the dots.

'Wait a second, this is... don't tell me!' Shido mentally gasped.

"No one can take you from me now Shido, there's no need to worry." Mukuro smiled innocently.

Shido gasped as she said nothing to properly connect it, but confirmed the culprit with her own words.

"Oh my god. Mukuro, it was you... you're the one who altered everyone's memories!" Shido gasped.

"Don't be scared, you still have me." Mukuro replied.

Meanwhile by the door, Origami's eyes shook a bit.

"I knew it, it was her! Mukuro said the other day she can't lock the memory of a single person or event, but when I remembered Mildred's story, that's when I realized she never said she couldn't lock
away memories in general!" Origami exclaimed.

"Wait a minute... Origami, are you saying that-" Tohka asked fearfully.

"I am Tohka, remember when Mildred told us how the day Mukuro ran away, they found out everyone she and her parents knew suddenly forgot about them? That's exactly what happened here, Mukuro essentially locked Shido outside of existence, making everyone lose their memories of him!" Origami exclaimed.

Everyone gasped loudly at that.

"No way, she did it!? Hey, wait a second... then how come we all still remember?" Marina asked.

"Back when I used my powers on everyone, it didn't work on other Spirits, even if I was in my Inverse Form it wasn't enough if a Spirit was wearing their Astral Dress. I bet the same applies here, leaving us immune to the effects." Miku explained.

"Really? Oh man, then we're really lucky right now, I'm not sure what Shido would do if he had to do this by-" Marina replied.

She blinked as she suddenly realized something.

"Hold on, why are we still inside and just talking about this? Now that we know the truth, we've gotta call Mukuro out on this and make her undo the damage!" Marina exclaimed.

"Oh right!" Everyone replied.

Mukuro suddenly heard the door to the Takamiya household slam open, surprising her as the sight of the other Spirits, the other angry Spirits, ended up rushed around Shido and staring at her. This slightly confused her a bit.

"Mukuro, give back everyone's memory of our Shido!" Tohka shouted.

"Yeah, you had no right to make anyone, including his own family, forget him!" Kotori stated.

"P-please give them back." Yoshino begged.

Mukuro flinched slightly, taking a few steps back as she saw what she viewed as the impossible reality before her. Despite using Segva to lock everyone's memories of Shido, the other Spirits all still remembered him.

The people she wanted Shido to get away from most were still the closest people to him!

"H-How is this... this is... no way, you shouldn't be able to remember. How can all of you still remember?" Mukuro stuttered.

"Bad luck to you there kid, a lot of Spirit powers are useless on another Spirit. Whatever trick you did might have hit us, but it was as useless as trying to fight a whale with a feather, it won't leave a mark." Natsumi answered.

"No... no, no, no, no! This isn't what was supposed to happen, it wasn't!" Mukuro mumbled.

Mukuro's eyes blinked before a line began to spiral in her pupils to showcase her panic and paranoia, and everyone suddenly felt a sudden terrifying and cold chill blow off her like a blizzard, a strong aura of Reiryoku manifesting from her.
However, Rio noticed something odd from the wave of chills that were hitting them, before she could comment about it though...

"No, I won't... let you take... Shido from me!" Mukuro exclaimed angrily.

Mukuro summoned Michael as she materialized her Astral Dress, putting everyone on guard as they felt Mukuro readying herself to attack.

"You won't hurt my friends!" Tohka exclaimed in return.

Tohka formed her Astral Dress and soon Mukuro held up Michael as she swung down Sandalphon against her, causing their Spirit power to clash.

The two rushed at each other again ready to strike, but Rinne suddenly appeared in between them and caught their attacks with her hands. She gave each of them a fierce glare, making the two go white eyed and gulp.

[I-Is that you F-First Spirit?] Michael asked.

[Oh yeah, so shut and listen if you wanna live!] Sandalphon answered.

Rinne pulled Mukuro and Tohka closer to each other, the two still shaking a bit from the angry aura Rinne was emitting.

"I can't believe you idiots decided to do something like this! Fighting in the middle of the city when the alarm hasn't warned anyone about evacuating? Are you two trying to get someone killed!?" Rinne berated.

"S-Sorry ma'am..." Mukuro replied fearfully.

"I deserve that comment." Tohka admitted shamefully.

"Wow, she broke them by just talking." Nia said nervously.

Natsumi chuckles at that.

"Well she is the First Spirit, so I guess it isn't that different from a mom telling off her kids for misbehaving." Natsumi replied.

"Hey guys, you know that weird wave we just felt?" Rio asked everyone.

Upon asking that question, everyone shivered a bit.

"That was such a terrifying aura, I've never felt such a thing before. What kind of malice did she have in wanting Shido to herself?" Kurumi asked.

"It isn't obvious? Wants the guy for herself, willing to do anything to get him? Mukuro has to be a Yandere! Worse, that means we've likely going to be so very dead after this!" Nia replied in a panic.

Rio shook her head.

"It wasn't malice, or hate, blood lust, dread, animosity, vanity or a sense of ill will... it was fear." Rio answered.

"Wait, fear? You mean... Mukuro was afraid?" Kotori asked confused.
"That's... how can... why would... I'm so confused now, what's going on here?" Miku groaned.

Rio tilts her head, trying to think a bit.

"Mu... I don't know why, but whatever Mukuro's reasons for doing this are, I don't think it's because she hates us. Problem is I don't know what she's afraid of, I knew mom's worries about disappearing were as such because I was there to prevent it. Mukuro on the other hand, I've only just met her."
Rio explained.

"Which means we need to figure out what she's afraid of, if we do then we might be able to convince her to undo Michael's lock and restore everyone's memories." Yoshino replied.

Maria thinks a bit, looking at Rinne's direction as fist bumped the two Spirits on their heads, making slight swell bumps form.

After getting their focus, Rinne breathes before continuing.

"Since you two seem to want to fight and your reasons oppose one another, then we'll fight like this... the fight is to get Shido to kiss them first!" Rinne declared.

"Eh!?" Tohka and Mukuro exclaimed.

"EH!?!" Everyone else repeated.

Rinne winked her one eye at Tohka, and her eyes briefly widen as she realized Rinne planning something, and she needed to play along.

"Mukuro, you clearly want to be the only girl my son likes, right?" Rinne asked.

"Y-yes." Mukuro answered fearfully.

Rinne soon looks at Tohka.

"And you Tohka, you clearly don't think Mukuro's being fair consider you and most of the other Spirits have already been sharing him and you were the first one who even had to agree to the harem idea, right?" Rinne asked.

"Yes ma'am." Tohka confirmed.

Rinne put her hands on her hips and looks at both of them.

"Then since Shido's already involved, we should let him be the one who decides who's wish is stronger, and that'll be decided by the one he chooses to kiss. Therefore, we will have a contest to see who will get Shido to kiss his first. If Tohka wins, then things continue as they've been and you have to accept it Mukuro. Likewise, if you win, then you alone get Shido." Rinne explained.

Rinne's eyes focused, making them glow and causing them to look red.

"Do I make myself clear?" Rinne asked.

"C-Crystal ma'am..." Mukuro whimpered.

"Now, with that done... uh, how about you go wait by the bunch while me and the others discuss how we'll set things up and some ground rules." Rinne suggested.

"Yeah... I'll go do that, right now, please don't hurt me!" Mukuro whimpered.
Rinne blinked as Mukuro rushed to said bunch and sat, looking a little terrified.

"Wow... did I really manage to appear that scary just now?" Rinne wondered aloud.

"Mom, mind explaining what you just did?" Shido asked.

"I basically put us into a win-win situation." Rinne answered.

"You... did? OK, help us out a bit." Mana requested.

Rinne nods, clearing her throat as she began.

"OK, we know the problem here is that at the very least, Mukuro seems to have developed strong affections for Shido regardless of where you'd rank her feelings right now. Also, for some reason we still don't know, Mukuro doesn't want Shido to be involved with any other girls, so her solution was to make everyone but herself forget he even exists." Rinne explained.

"Yeah, that's the obvious part, so are you gonna tell us the whole win-win thing now?" Nia asked.

Rinne chuckled embarrassingly.

"Sorry about that. Well, she needed Michael to do that, so since we didn't lose our memories due to being Spirits, by having Mukuro do this contest... I've giving Shido two possible outcomes he can use to his advantage. If he kisses Tohka, then Mukuro has to accept she's gotta share Shido with all of you and we can convince her to drop the lock she put on Shido. Though if he kisses Mukuro..." Rinne answered.

Origami gasped as she realized it.

"Then Shido just has to use his Spirit Ascension and he can have Michael undo it! Because this Michael's made of her powers, she can't lock it because Michael would realize it would lock itself. If everyone remembers and Shido could just undo any attempts to restore the lock, it won't feel like a victory." Origami stated.

"Bingo Origami! Admittedly, the latter might make Mukuro a bit irritated and harder to seal, but with where we are now..." Rinne replied.

Nia's eyes widened, suddenly realizing the one thing that could go wrong.

"Oh no... Rinne, do you think Mukuro could actually lock Shido's ability to seal Spirits?" Nia whispered.

Rinne nods.

"I hate to say it, but that's a real possibility, as is her locking her ability to be sealed. We don't know what the limitations of her powers are, and if certain rules that apply to Spirits don't work since she's Michael's master. If Mukuro realizes something like this, then we're in trouble." Rinne whispered back.

"So basically, we need Mukuro to be sealed in order to avoid a worst-case scenario. At the same time, if Tohka did win, she'd likely keep her word because she wouldn't want to risk losing Shido by being a spoil sport... at least I think." Maria summarized.

"I guess it isn't like we've got any other options... I wonder though? Hey Rio, do you think this relates to why Mukuro was emitting fear from her aura?" Marina asked.
Rio thought a bit about that.

"It might be, but I don't know what else to think beyond that, we'll have to find out by seeing how this goes." Rio answered.

"Yeah, this is the best we can do, we're basically playing a game of chess to support Shido, and wrong move makes the game unwinnable before he even takes his first turn. That's why we've gotta be careful." Rinne added.

Rinne soon took out her phone.

"With that out of the way, try to think of some ideas of where they can go and some rules, I've got a call to make." Rinne smiled.

Reine was pacing around the base, biting on her nails lightly as she tried to piece together what had happened earlier. She had come over to the Takamiya household to ask Rinne a question, but upon arriving met an unfamiliar house guest alongside the usual residents.

Yet strangely, the moment she had said that, everyone had reacted with a synchronized rage to the claim, with Mana having even stated he was her elder brother. They had sounded completely crazy to her at that moment.

"That can't be right, can it? I know the only child my brother had with Rinne was Mana. Not to mention there's no way anyone who's a boy could have the power of Spirits considering their origin in the Spirit Dimension as an all-female species." Rinne mumbled to herself.

At least, that's what she wanted to believe... but the looks in their eyes, they burned with such seriousness and passion, it was if she was the crazy one. Though if they were telling the truth, then... why didn't she know about him?

"Something's not right here, and it seems like only the Spirits know about it so far. What happened?" Reine wondered.

"Commander, please stop pacing! I think you're starting to wear out the floor and I just cleaned it!" Mildred groaned.

Reine blinked and looked down and noticed a slight dark line on the floor, making her blush a bit.

"Oops, sorry about that Mildred." Reine apologized.

"Why are you so distracted anyways?" Mildred asked.

"Well... I saw this boy when I went to see Rinne this morning, one I hadn't ever seen before. Yet the moment I mentioned that, everyone suddenly freaked out and asked me how I could have forgotten him. They say he's Mana's older brother." Reine answered.

Mildred's eyes widened.

"Wait... Shido, was that the name you just said?" Mildred asked.

"Uh, yeah? Why?" Reine asked.

"Reine, I was intending to ask you about that, the system says we've had someone named Shido assigned to Ratatoskr as a member since April 10th! That was the same day Tohka's powers somehow got sealed!" Mildred answered.
Reine's gasped at that.

"Wait, April 10th!? No way... but then we would have... hey wait a second, now that I think about... what did cause Tohka's powers to be sealed? Not just her, how has every Spirit been sealed? We should know that, but somehow even after nearly 9 months I don't remember." Reine realized.

"I'm not sure, the last thing I remember is... I think it was about our plans due to Elliot and Karen's deaths during the last fight with the DEM." Mildred replied.

"OK, now something's seriously wrong. Missing bits of info, clear contradictions, and all the Spirits speaking of things we don't know... gather everyone here. I have a strong feeling we won't figure out the answers to this problem unless we have everyone gathered in one place." Reine reasoned.

"Got it." Mildred replied.

After about 5 minutes, everyone in Ratatoskr was gathered together in the base's main room.

"Alright everyone, you might be wondering why I've gathered you here. The reason for that is because there's been a few events today that have made me notice something... how did we get here? We know nine the Spirits have been sealed, and there's still one more out there, but... that's where the problem suddenly shows up. After talking to Mildred, I just realized I don't remember how they were sealed." Reine explained.

Everyone began looking at each other.

"She's right, how have we been sealing them?"

"Are we using a Realizer?"

"No way, that can't be it, the Spirits would trust us over that.

"Yeah, it's gotta be... wait, that can't be it."

Reine soon whistles to get their attention.

"We aren't gonna get anywhere like this, all we can know is for some reason there seems to be contradictions and holes in the info that lead us to this point. So, in order to fix this problem, the only thing we can do is gather all that info and try to fill in the blanks." Reine stated.

"This is where we'll begin, Mildred?"

Mildred nodded.

"Right." Mildred replied.

Mildred pulled up a picture of Shido and put it on the screen.

"According to our systems, this boy here is a member of Ratatoskr, I have no recollection of him. Yet what's strangest is it says he joined us on the same day that Tohka was sealed, but that's not the strangest part... it's what his name is." Reine stated.

Right as Reine was about to say it, she suddenly heard her phone ring, making her sigh as she answered it.

"Hello?" Reine answered.
"Yes, I got through!" Rinne cheered.

"Rinne? What are you doing, I'm in the middle of something important, we're trying to figure out why there's so many gaps in the info we-" Reine groaned.

"Let me on the screen and I'll be able to answer those questions. I know who Shido is after all." Rinne replied.

Reine suddenly went wide eyed.

"...Are you psychic!?" Reine asked.

"Nope, the situation just makes it obvious." Rinne chuckled.

"Alright, putting you on now." Reine sighed.

Rinne's face soon showed on a camera feed as she face-timed herself to everyone.

"There we are." Rinne smiled.

Rinne cleared her throat as she adjusted the camera screen a bit.

"Now, where are you so far on this filling in the blanks overview?" Rinne asked.

"About to reveal Shido's full name, just mentioned how we know the Spirits are sealed but now why, and how this Shido boy has been registered as member since April 10th despite we don't know anything about him." Reine asked.

"Good, that helps make explaining this easier. First off... Shido's full name is Shido Takamiya, my son, first child, and the only male in the world that possesses any Reiryoku." Rinne answered.

Reine recalled Rinne's violent shouting at her earlier, making her shudder a bit.

"Yeah... I think you screamed that at me, but how can I prove that your being honest about that? Not that I don't wanna believe you, but-" Reine asked.

"Here's a simple way to prove it, you claim that Mana was my first-born child, do you remember when Mana was born?" Rinne asked.

"Of course, she had her 15th birthday on December 5th a few weeks ago." Reine answered.

Rinne nodded.

"That's right, now... when is the date my first child was said to have been born?" Rinne smirked.

"Easy, ignoring the 20 years they were in time stasis 16 years ago on March 5th... wait a second, March!? Oh my god, a 16th birthday on March? If that's true, then that would mean-" Reine gasped.

Rinne smirked.

"Exactly, it means that Mana isn't the first child I gave birth to. That happens to be Shido's birthday. Mildred, is March 5th listed as Shido's birthday on his Ratatoskr membership?" Rinne asked.

"Let me see..." Mildred replied.

She checked and saw it was indeed listed as his birthday, making her gasp.
"It is!" Mildred answered.

"So, it is true... but how could I forget about my own nephew then? One of the children my brother left behind? Not to mention, how did you and the other Spirits all remember if we didn't?" Reine asked.

"To answer that, I'll ask another question. Mildred, do you still remember what Nia told us after we sealed her?" Rinne asked.

Mildred nodded.

"Yeah, I remember that she told us my sister Mukuro was the last Spirit." Mildred answered.

"Wait... huh!? What do you mean, I don't remember that!" Reine asked in shock.

Mildred gasped at that.

"Wait, you don't remember that?" Mildred inquired.

"No, not a bit!" Reine replied.

'So, Mukuro used Michael's it on herself too, for a naive and innocent girl, she's able to pay attention like Tohka can when she needs to. I wonder why Mildred still remembered though? Hmm... maybe she might know?' Rinne thought.

Rinne cleared her throat, getting everyone's attention.

"The reason for this is simple, and I think Mildred is aware of it well, this happened to her and her parents 5 years ago." Rinne explained.

"Wait, 5 years ago? That was... when... everyone..." Mildred mentioned.

She soon gasped, remembering that Mukuro had somehow made everyone forget her and her parents, the moment she realized that... the entire situation and the various contradictions became clear to her.

"Rinne... Mukuro did the same thing to this Shido person that she did to me and my parents, didn't she? We don't remember Shido because she removed him from our memories, am I right!?" Mildred asked.

Rinne nodded.

"Exactly Mildred, the reason none of you remember Shido is because Mukuro locked him out from everyone's memories, and based on what Reine said she likely did the same so no one knew she was a Spirit." Rinne answered.

"And the reason you and the Spirits all remember is..." Reine realized.

"Because it seems like with Miku's voice, this ability doesn't work on other Spirits, so we were all unaffected. I will admit I'm not sure how Mildred still remembers that Mukuro's a spirit when the others don't." Rinne confirmed.

"Hmm... I may have a theory on that." Mildred suggested.

"Really, what is it?" Reine asked.
Mildred scratched her head as she thought of how she should explain it.

"Let's see, the best way I can explain it? You know how the main point in a game of Jenga is to prevent the tower from falling? The concept with how some remember and forget in response to this is kinda the same. Removing a vital block on the tower can topple it, but if you don't the tower doesn't fall." Mildred explained.

"OK, based on what you just said... the more vital a memory is, the less likely it can be removed, with some being unable to be removed without risking some kind of danger or permanent damage?" Rinne asked.

Mildred nodded.

"Precisely. Because Mukuro's my sister, too many of my memories are tied to her, so if I lost those memories... well, at best I'd be in a vegetative state and at worst I could be brain dead. The mind, body and various things all have vital and non-vital parts, since Michael's trying to lock the memories, it likely can't interfere with anything that does more than lock them." Mildred answered.

"I get it, the others don't have Mukuro and Shido as vital in their memories so they forgot him, but you can't forget Mukuro without ripping too many memories away." Rinne realized.

"Exactly, it's how strongly the erased person is connected to someone that should matter. At least... that's my theory, I could be wrong. I don't exactly have a reference to use." Mildred admitted.

After a bit, Reine soon realized there was still something Rinne hadn't answered.

"Hey Rinne, what about the how the Spirits have been sealed, you haven't explained that to us just yet?" Reine asked.

"Oh right. You can thank Shido for that part, he's the one who can seal a Spirit's powers." Rinne answered.

"Wait... he's doing it?" Reine inquired.

Reine suddenly put a hand to her mouth as she thought about something.

"Wait... it says he joined us April 10th, the same day Tohka was sealed and joined us... oh my god, of course! If we can't remember him, then we wouldn't remember he's the one who's sealing their powers." Reine realized.

Rinne nods, but after she did that her eyes widen as she realized the main reason for Rinne's call.

"Of course, that's it! If you know Mukuro did it... then the reason you called us in the first place is-" Reine asked.

"Yeah, we need your help. I just managed to stop a fight between Mukuro and Tohka. We're trying to set up a scenario where Shido can seal her and undo the lock on all your memories, but we're trying to be careful because... we have no idea if Mukuro could lock Shido's ability to seal her powers."

Mildred gasps.

"If that happens, then..." Mildred stated.

"Game over, and unlike with your family Mildred, I doubt she'd undo the sealing lock, or we'd just
be repeating what we did in space over and over to get her back. That's why we need your help, we gotta figure out the right choices for how we'll proceed, and most of all...” Rinne explained.

"You need us to make sure the headset is functioning properly, since Shido shouldn't kiss Mukuro until her happiness level is enough to be sealed.” Reine reasoned.

Rinne nods, and Reine smiled.

"Alright, as clueless as we are... you seem to know most of what's going on. We'll help you out, I guess luck was on our side, or we might have taken days to realize this and have been way too late.” Reine sighed.

"Thanks sis. Now Mildred, you'll be our ace in the support area here, can you let us know what Mukuro likes and dislikes? Regardless of accuracy, it's the best we've got to go on right now.” Rinne requested.

"Sure thing, I'll even text it over to you so it'll be easy to remind yourself if you need to." Mildred agreed.

Unknown to the Spirits or everyone on the phone with Rinne, Chinami had been nearby and listening, and unfortunately for them... she heard everything.

"So, one of [Zodiac]'s abilities let her cut off most of the people who remembered this Shido Takamiya. To think if she had somehow used it on Westcott...” Chinami whispered to herself.

She felt her own head.

"To think my own memories have been affected, I had no idea I knew... that..." Chinami whispered slowly.

"What's going on, for some reason I feel... off?"

Chinami scratched her head, trying to figure out what the problem was, but soon shrugged.

'Never mind how I feel for now, what's important is I keep close watch. Hopefully if things go the right direction... [Zodiac] will undergo an Inversion. Though since everyone's gonna be following her... how exactly do I push it that way if things go too smoothly?’ Chinami thought.

Chinami began thinking, trying to get some ideas.

Around that same moment, she saw a shop with some hot chocolate and lost his focus.

"Ooh, hot cocoa.” Chinami said cheerfully.

Chinami went inside to buy some, right around the same time the Spirits all ended up heading off to start the contest between Mukuro and Tohka.

She came back out while sipping her hot chocolate, but once she did...

"...Wait, what was I doing again?" Chinami wondered.

"Aw dang it!”

Meanwhile deep within the DEM base, Westcott was seen coldly sitting on his chair, having spent
the last day doing nothing but shed tears over the death of Ellen in the previous fight when they tried to capture [Zodiac].

He had his head down while his elbows rested against his lap, and his hands clasped together in front of his face... finally, he reacted and raised his head. His eyes now bloodshot from the long period of tears shed from them.

"...I've viewed those bastards as mere greenhorns one time too many, and for much too long. That changes here."

Westcott said with no emotion.

Westcott stood up, and walked over to where he held the dark Reiryoku samples of each Sephira Spirit's inversion, staring deeply at the 9 samples he had already managed to obtain and the empty spot where [Zodiac]'s would hopefully appear.

Taking each of them out, he soon hit a switch on his desk, revealing a hidden panel with 10 slots, and said panel was styled after the Qliphoth. As Westcott looked at it rise into full view, he placed the 9 samples and their spherical containers onto all but the second in the middle row.

"Now is the time I start setting the steps to beginning my dream into motion."

"This is a new dawn for me, and now... I shall finally take back what should have been mine 30 years ago!"

Westcott exclaimed angrily.

The spots where the dark Reiryoku samples were place all suddenly were struck with some strange power, causing the power inside and their containers to start shaking as Westcott stared at them begin to change.

Finally, he shielded his eyes as a series of burst fired off, and then... he saw the result.

Standing before him stood a total of nine spheres resembling the Sephira Crystals, only much darker in color, and unlike the similar colored glow they had and the whitened ones from an Ethereal Form, these had dark glows matching the Inversion Taint.

"Yes... yes! I've done it, just as [Phantom] managed to do with [Watcher], I have done the same... no, exceeded it!"

Westcott cackled.

He had done it, Westcott had managed to do something that had seemed impossible, but he had learned thanks to a monster he had summoned around the beginning of Autumn. He had managed... to create his own set of Qlipha Crystals!

"All I need is [Zodiac]'s Inversion, and my Qlipha Crystals will truly be complete. Prepare yourselves Humanity, because soon, very soon... all of Earth will drown into chaos!"

Uh oh, it finally happened... Westcott's snapped himself into walking the point of no return, and he did it by doing what had been formerly claimed the impossible no less. Yikes! He only needs Mukuro's powers now, and one he gets it... *shivers* I think Marina's going to be horrified once she discovers this, because she's the only reason that Westcott managed to get this far.
As you can see, the Spirits weren't affected by Mukuro's memory locking because... well, they're Spirits. *chuckles a bit* Though that doesn't mean they weren't unaffected by it either. In the previous arc, when Mukuro locked Shido's communication probe, she somehow caused everyone with Reiryoku to faint despite she didn't use Segva on them. This time, she did use Segva on them, and it's done something... and none of them even know.

The good news for Shido is unlike canon, he's got some of Ratatoskr's help this time, even if only to have accurate headset readings. I personally feel if Vol 14 didn't have the story world, and Vol 15's first two chapters replaced the rest of Vol 14, then the rest of Vol 15 could have focused on objects like Mana's locket revealing their missing memories, while still having Inverse Tohka show up from the revelation.

Well, the stage is set now, Tohka and Mukuro are going to be competing to see who can get Shido to kiss them first, and hopefully get out of this without Mukuro realizing about Shido's sealing powers or something worse happening. Like I said above, they're walking on egg shells that happen to be a minefield in this case, and they only get one chance to make this work, so they've gotta hope for a miracle here.

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)
Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)
Chapter 64

Before I say anything else... *bows* I'd like to apologize for how long it took to update! Before resuming updates on this story, I wanted to update another story of mine first. Though unfortunately, that story ended up... facing some issues, and as such, I need to restart it. I figured before anything else, I should use the latest update of that story to tell all the readers about what's going on.

Don't worry though, this isn't going to affect this story in any way. If anything, the problem I ended up with in my other story was due to not doing what I did for this one and LOHD, and that's... using my seasonal planning format, alongside a few other additional problems ^^; *chuckles embarrassingly* I didn't expect it to be as long, so I didn't really plan it the same way, but now, I'm starting to think that may have backfired on me. If there's any good news to this, it's the fact this happened early in the planned story.

Though admittedly, that wasn't the only issue. Something I've noticed is that I've gotten a bit overzealous with some planned story ideas, and with some parts of the story. Adding onto that, recently, I've realized my writing style is kinda "fast", and I've missed out on potential scenes, like the one Encore chapter about Tohka moving in, which I could have done before Origami's arc. As a result, what happened has taught me to be more careful, especially in regards to avoiding having the overzealous issue overwhelm me.

But I promise you all, I won't let any of them keep me from continuing this story! That being said, I've now become a bit more aware of some of my weaknesses in writing, and luckily, a good friend of mine gave me a few things to practice on, pointed out where my writing's weak and strong, and helped me regain my confidence when it was shaken. Slowly but surely, I'm gonna be improving my writing, and finalize my writing style, but for now? For right now at least, I'm going to focus on finishing this story.

Also, I've got some exciting news everyone... this story has finally managed to hit 100 favorites! Thanks for all the support everyone, I'm really glad so many of you enjoy this story ^^

Now to reply to two guest reviews.

To Seeker213:
"You're right, that bit about the data removal was in the translation, but what you said about Miku's phone data is actually the very reason why I had the data on Shido's Ratatoskr registry survive. When I was preparing this arc, the Vol 15 half made me pay more attention than usual, including the example you mentioned about Miku's phone, and during the process of checking everything, this thought came to mind... did Mukuro know about the nickname?"

"Right after that, another thought came to my mind, what caused New Timeline Origami and Inverse Tohka to be unaffected by Segva in the first place? Thinking Miku's phone might be the vital clue to that, I checked every instance when Miku called Shido darling, and sure enough, I ended up discovering that Mukuro was absent each time she said it, meaning she didn't know of the nickname's connection to Shido."

"Due to realizing this, I think I figured out a vital weakness in Mukuro's powers,
her awareness. When Mukuro used Segva in canon, she didn't know about Inverse Tohka (if not the Inverse Form's existence in general), or New Timeline Origami. That's why the data for Shido's registration survived in this story, because unlike canon, I never had anyone mention Ratatoskr's existence to her, which made Michael unable to target any of their data.

To Fantastic:
"The only ones in Shido's harem, and the only ones that will be in it, are the 10 Sephira Spirits. That was my decision before I began this story, and I'm barely managing to handle this one, if I add any more people to the harem, I'm worry it'll backfire on me... *gulps* Also, no need to worry there, I already confirmed a long while back that there _will_ be a Season 4 for this story."

Now, all that's left is an announcement relating to Season 4... however, I think I'll share that at the end notes, you guys probably just want to read the chapter now, so let's begin!

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Chapter 64, S3: Mukuro Quasar, Part 7

When Rinne had gotten Mildred's text about her little sister's preferences, she knew that Mukuro's competition with Tohka would make things a bit odd, it was a given since they'd both be gunning to get Shido to kiss them, however...

"Here Shido, open wide!" Tohka requested loudly.

"No Shido, you'll eat my offering." Mukuro countered.

...Rinne, and all of the other Spirits, were all staring at the sight of the two holding the sides of Shido's hand with their non-dominant hand, trying to force a slice of strawberry cake into his mouth. Needless to say, all that was happening was Shido got cake on his face.

"It's official, I think I could have planned this better..." Rinne sighed.

Currently, the group was at a small maid cafe, one of the many things on the "like" half of the preference list Mildred sent over.

The cafe was normally tranquil, and the various girls working in it had done their usual greetings of "Welcome home, Master" upon them coming in. Unfortunately, due to Tohka and Mukuro's small conflict, that had quickly faded.

"We're really sorry, we didn't think they'd do this." Mana apologized, lightly bowing to one of the workers.

"Oh, don't worry too much, this is just one of those double date scenarios, isn't it?" The maid replied.

"Yeah, it's... kinda like that." Mana admitted.

Luckily, the little contest between the two Spirits wasn't considered bad enough to be a disturbance and get them kicked out.

"I've played a few dating sims like the ones Tonomachi's always got his hands on, but this is new." Kotori stated, sweat dropping slightly.

"Who cares, I'm kinda enjoying seeing that arguing." Marina smirked.
"You're enjoying this, Marina!" Maria exclaimed.

Marina gave a mischievous giggle in reply.

"Quick Shido, eat it!" Tohka stated.

Tohka quickly moved her arm to get her piece into Shido's mouth, but at that moment, Mukuro held up a finger, opening a wormhole that engulfed her fork. Tohka's eyes went wide as Mukuro ate the piece of cake instead.

"Hey!" Tohka complained.

"Mukuro, I said that either of you using your powers was cheating, did you not listen?" Rinne whispered, giving a strict looked at the Dimensional Spirit.

Mukuro sweated at that.

"Crap..." Mukuro whispered to herself.

"Do that again and you'll be disqualified, understand?" Rinne replied.

"Yes ma'am." Mukuro apologized.

Mayuri chuckled a bit, a sweat drop going down her face.

'Mukuro's terrified of Rinne, let's hope it stays that way.' Mayuri thought worriedly.

After that small debacle, Mukuro prepared her fork, only to see it was gone.

"Eh!?" Mukuro gasped.

"Yummy!" Tohka smiled.

Mukuro turned to see Tohka had taken her fork and eaten her pace, the former having never even noticed she had stolen it.

"Now we're even." Tohka remarked.

Mukuro pouted angrily at that, making Shido sweat.

'At this rate, this contest might kill me!' Shido mentally panicked.

While everyone was watching the odd scene, each giving their own reactions to it, the cafe door was heard opening up.

"Welcome home, Master." A maid greeted.

"Thank you."

Everyone recognized the voice, and turned to see Mildred walk in, the Ratatoskr engineer waving to them.

"Mildred?" Yoshino stated in surprise.

"Did you come because you were worried about Mukuro?" Kurumi asked.

"I'm her big sister, of course I'd be worried-" Mildred answered.
Mildred soon looks at the table her sister was at, confused by what she just saw.

"What're those two doing?" Mildred questioned.

"Huh?" Natsumi wondered.

Everyone turned, and saw the two were now forcing cake into each other's mouths, rather than Shido's.

"...I think they just made me a third wheel, all because they stole the cake piece the other was offering me." Shido mentioned.

Everyone sweat drops at that.

"Yep, Mukuro's basically a Tohka 2.0, this all but prove it." Origami joked.

"We ahn't aeyfin aike!" Both replied, their mouths fool.

"Don't talk with your mouths full, it's rude, not to mention disgusting." Nia stated.

Back at Ratatoskr, everyone gave similar reactions to the most recent scene.

"...Gross!" Ryouko commented.

"Sakura, Ren, your daughter's not one for manners, is she?" Matthew stated.

Tohka's parents both gave embarrassed chuckles in response, unsure of what to say.

"Uh... let's examine Mukuro's emotional state, please?" Reine begged.

Matthew types a bit, and the emotional graphs were shown, most of the readings were steady and showing Mukuro's feelings for Shido were still strong, but Reine noticed something... and it wasn't something she wanted to see.

"I don't like this." Reine remarked.

"Don't like what exactly, I don't see anything bad with these readings." Kannazuki asked.

"Well, Mukuro's happiness meter is rising smoothly, but what worries me is her uneasiness numbers are as equally high." Reine explained.

Reine sighed, soon crossing her arms slightly.

"With what Rinne's told us so far, any emotional reading that can be defined as negative or problematic worries me, and that's because we don't know what might happen if she's pushed far enough to act on them." She implied.

"Every Spirit's been a ticking time bomb, but this is the most powerful of the Sephira Spirits, so I guess that's justified... worse, from our experiences so far, it might be wishful thinking to hope nothing goes wrong," Ryouko sighed.

Reine soon looked at Mukuro's uneasiness readings again.

'There's still a bigger question throughout all this, and that's probably what frightens me most, we know she's uneasy, but... the question is what's making her feel that way?' Reine wondered.
After the little incident with the cakes between them, the sight of Tohka, and Mukuro, having the cake ingredients covering their faces wiped off by Shido. Needless to say, each Spirit blushed in embarrassment, knowing everyone was watching them.

"Honestly, you two need to calm down, neither of you two will win this contest if this continues." Shido sighed.

The two hung their heads down in shame, hearing Shido tell them that made the comment more hurtful than it would have been normally.

Seeing this, Rinne tapped one of the maid's shoulders, and whispered something to her, causing the maid to nod before she walked over to the table.

"Excuse me ladies, I believe I can help you out." The maid offered.

The two Spirits look at her.

"Being rude to one another will only trouble master, you need to feed the cake to him more delightfully, so let me teach you a secret spell to make it taste better." The maid smiled.

The two Spirits' eyes sparkle, while Rinne and Rio showed surprise to the maid's words.

"There's a spell for that!?!" Rinne gasped.

"Really!??" Rio exclaimed.

Nia sweat dropped at that, and then cleared her throat as she turned to them.

"No, that's just a placebo effect, making them believe is why it seems to taste better." Nia explained.

The two go wide faced, looking away and whistling in embarrassment.

At the same time, the maid motioned her hands like a heart.

"Put your hands like this and say: "become so yummy, become so yummy, moe moe aw!", just like that." The maid explained.

"Ooh, moe moe aw!" Tohka said excitedly, mimicking the maid.

"Uh... mew, mew..." Mukuro repeated, a bit nervous about it.

Surprised by Mukuro's sudden cold feet, Rinne looks at Mildred, giving her a "What just happened?" look.

"I think it might be because she's being asked to do that in public." Mildred replied, sweat dropping in worry.

Mukuro's face began to turn blue as she felt the pressure of everyone watching her, with Shido looking a bit concerned, and Tohka trying not to laugh at her. After a few moments, Mukuro simply hid under the table.

"Mukuro, are you OK?" Shido asked.

"...Please let me skip this part." Mukuro begged quietly.
Rinne chuckled at the sight, and checked Mildred's text again, seeing the next thing they could do together.

"Come on you three, we're gonna head somewhere else."

Chinami sweated, worry overtaking her as she tried to remember what she had been doing before she forgot while getting her hot chocolate, sipping the beverage heavily as she tried to keep herself calm.

"OK, I left the Inverse Void, and then I... crap! Hot cocoa, curse you for being so delicious and distracting!"

Chinami downed the rest of the tasty beverage, soon realizing she drank all of it.

"...And for making me not buy a cup of you in large size." She remarked, putting it into a recycling bin.

"Alright, we're heading to the movies next."

Recognizing that voice, Chinami's eyes went wide as she hid behind the recycling bin, peaking out to see the Spirits and Mildred all leaving the cafe.

"...Wait, now I remember! I was trying to keep watch over [Zodiac]!" Chinami whispered.

Chinami secretly followed them from afar, none of the others noticing.

Midway into their trek to their next location, the cinema, Mukuro turned to Mildred, having realized the Ratatoskr Engineer had been staring at her.

"...Why do you keep looking at me?" Mukuro asked.

"Uh, well... no real reason, you just look like someone I used to know." Mildred lied.

Mukuro tilted her head in confusion, and Mildred sighed, soon looking at younger sister.

"Hey Mukuro, you let your family know where you are, right? I doubt you want them to worry about you." Mildred stated.

Mukuro flinched for a moment, making Mildred stare at her.

"...I didn't need to, because I don't have one, I've been alone since the very beginning." Mukuro answered sadly.

Mildred's eyes widened a bit, and realizing Mukuro wasn't looking, used the moment to show relief on her face.

As Mukuro was still distracted by Mildred's question, the latter suddenly hugged her from behind, surprising her a bit.

"...I'm sorry Mukuro, I never meant to hurt you all those years ago." Mildred apologized, tearing up slightly.

Mukuro suddenly stopped for a bit, surprised by Mildred's words towards her.

'She's... sorry? For what, I don't know her... do I?' Mukuro thought.
She put her left hand over her right, feeling a familiar nostalgia for reasons she didn't understand.

"But then, why... why did that feel so familiar?" She whispered.

Shido soon noticed the headset reflect a change in Mukuro's emotional state, showing regret and confusion suddenly spiking up, confusing him a bit.

'Confuse and regret, why is she suddenly feeling these?' Shido wondered.

Eventually, the group reached the cinemas, and Shido sat with the two Spirits throughout the movie... although the whole time they were there, the two kept trying to get Shido to lean on their shoulders, so it didn't do them any good.

When the movie failed to give any results, they instead went to an arcade, while at first things were normal, Tohka eventually got Mukuro absorbed in a game of air hockey and they kept knocking the puck off the table, preventing either side from progressing the game.

And after that didn't work out, they went to a department store... although Mukuro quickly brought up she had no idea of anything romantic should could do there, and neither did Tohka, so they didn't stay very long.

Once outside of the department store, the group still unaware of Chinami stalking them, Rinne sighed tiredly.

"OK, this competition... not happening like I thought it would." Rinne admitted.

"It's like watching a game of ping pong that doesn't end." Yuzuru mentioned.

"Was that one of your many contests?" Miku inquired.

The Yamai twins chuckled, recalling the embarrassing memory.

"One of our 49 draws." Kaguya admitted.

As Rinne looked at the list, her and Mildred trying to figure out where to go next, Mukuro looked around and saw something in the distance, something that was familiar to her, even if she didn't know why.

"What's that?"

Everyone looked in the direction Mukuro was, soon seeing her eyes had locked onto Tenguu Tower.

Upon seeing it, Rinne was reminded of the time her powers went berserk while on it, and Mildred remembered this as the place where she unknowingly pushed Mukuro onto the path that made her run away from home.

"Oh, that's Tenguu Tower, it's a popular attraction in the city, and it isn't rare for couples to go there." Shido explained.

Shido soon blinked at his own words, and soon turned to Mukuro.

"You wanna check it out?" Shido asked.

Mukuro nodded.
"Yes, there's something... familiar about it, as if it's calling me." Mukuro answered.

"Alright then, off to Tenguu Tower it is." Shido declared.

"...Yay." Rinne cheered nervously.

The group headed towards Tenguu Tower, and Chinami soon walked into view and smirked a bit.

"Perfect, this is the chance I need." Chinami remarked.

Chinami soon crossed into an alley way, instantly summoning her CR-Unit, and then attacking a realizer to cloak herself from Ratatoskr's radar.

"It's go time."

Meanwhile, within the tower itself, the group was looking out the windows with excitement.

"Wow, you can see the whole city from here!" Maria exclaimed.

"The Fraxinus' view is nice, but from here, the view feels more natural." Marina mentioned.

Mildred looked around, only able to feel sadness as she looked at the tower's interior, but her focus soon changed as she noticed Mukuro looking a bit shaky.

"Mukuro, are you OK?" Mildred asked worriedly.

"I... I don't feel so good, where's... the bathroom?" Mukuro stuttered.

"No need, let me take you there, it's better you have someone help you there if you feel sick." Mildred offered.

Mukuro felt Mildred support her up with her arm.

"Hey guys, Mukuro's feeling a little ill, I'm gonna take her the bathroom real quick." Mildred called out.

"Alright, and Mukuro, we'll wait for you before we resume the contest." Shido replied.

Mukuro weakly nodded, and soon Mildred brought her into the bathroom, but the moment she was in.

"Guh!"

Mukuro suddenly collapsed to the ground, making Mildred panic.

"MUKURO!" Mildred screamed.

As Mukuro shook across the ground, her eyes tightly shut as something flashed through her head.

A fairly young Mukuro, who had only become old enough to be aware of her surroundings, ran around the outside of her homeland, the country of China.

Once she became a bit tired, she went inside, looking to see more of the strange bottles she always saw her dad holding. Once she got near the kitchen, she got closer and heard both of her parents talking.
"-do you even realize we can't pay for this house anymore, or anything for that matter!?" Her mother shrieked.

"Shut up woman, get off my back!" Her father shouted, smashing something on the floor.

Being too young to understand, Mukuro didn't realize the severity of what they were talking about, or even the darker side of her parents lives... until one fateful day.

Mukuro hummed as she stacked some blocks on the floor, only for the door to suddenly open up, and some people she only saw as black silhouettes came in.

"Uh... hello, who are you?" Mukuro asked naively.

The figures walked past her, and soon found where Mukuro's parents were, quickly starting a conversation with her, and the leader of the strange men soon spoke up.

"Is she the one?" He asked.

"Yes, get her out of our sight, that girl's not our problem anymore." Her mother stated coldly.

Mukuro blinked in confusion, soon noticing the men walking out, only for two of them to grab her arms and start pulling her away.


"...Get out of here you worthless piece of trash, we would have never been in this situation if you hadn't been born." Her father replied cruelly.

Mukuro started crying.

"Mama, papa, help me please!" Mukuro cried.

Her voice went unheard as they walked away from her, and soon she taken out the door, where the men began to pull her towards a car, marked with a symbol she didn't recognize.

Terrified by what was happening, Mukuro bit both of the hands holding onto her, making the them scream as they let her go, and giving her the chance to run away from them.

"That little bitch, after her!" The leader screamed.

From that moment, Mukuro did nothing but run, as fast as she could, and as far as she could. Eventually, she ended up falling into some strange crate, and her head slammed into the side hard, causing her to lose consciousness.

Before Mukuro even realized it, the crate was moved onto a boat, and the still unconscious Mukuro stayed inside. Eventually, the boat finally took off, heading towards the location listed on the side of the crate... "Tenguu City."

Mukuro's eyes widened open, and she felt her body sweating heavily as she tried to catch her breath, she looked to see Mildred as the latter stared at her worriedly.

"Mukuro, are you alright?" Mildred asked.

"I... I saw... I saw..."
Mukuro struggled to say anything, and soon Mildred noticed tears stream out her eyes, making Mildred gasp as she saw her younger sister suddenly start crying, completely unaware of the catalyst.

Not knowing what else to do, she hugged Mukuro close, letting the tears flow out of the troubled Spirit's eyes.

'I was... abandoned, by the people I thought I could trust, by... by my own birth parents!' Mukuro mentally sobbed.

Shido sat on a chair, waiting worriedly for Mukuro to come back, there had only been on instance when any of the Spirits had gotten sick, and even then, it wasn't really a genuine illness due to the situation.

That wasn't the case this time, so he couldn't help but worry over it, even if it ended up being nothing.

"Do you think Mukuro will be alright, Shido?" Tohka asked.

"I hope so, she's already been through a lot, she could... easily be..." Shido answered.

Shido began to grunt, holding his head in pain, and shouting a bit as a migraine suddenly razed through it.

"Shido!?” Tohka exclaimed worriedly.

"What's wrong, Shido?” Rinne asked.

Kurumi felt his head, but didn't feel anything.

"He's not hot, Nia, what kind of issues can cause severe head pain?” She asked.

"Let me see...” Nia replied.

She summoned Raziel, and soon checked to see what the problem might be, as that was happening, Shido's eyes widened.

Various images suddenly flashed out.

First, the sight of various elements, like raging wildfires, massive tsunamis, violent tornadoes, and more all appeared, taking the form of camera images as they quickly shuffled by, yet there seemed to be no apparent connection between them.

Then, the sight of a figure glowing came into view, standing before what seemed to be an earthquake stretching for miles, and a dangerous storm over the horizon.

However, the true surprise among the images came when Shido saw one other than Seigo, his own father, looking terrified towards something, but he couldn't tell what he was seeing because the image showed him facing towards him.

Only one image remained after that, Westcott, back in the days before he gained his current appearance, suddenly having his eyes go blank as she showed a crazy, face... that wasn't enough to prepare him for what he saw next.

A raging black explosion incinerated everything he had just seen, and soon glowing red eyes slowly
Shido gasped before he fell forward, prompting Tohka to catch him.

"That was..." Shido gasped.

"Shido, what happened? Are you alright?" Tohka asked.

Shido breathed, some sweat trickling down his face before he turned to Tohka, and the others.

"I saw... I don't know what I saw, there were these images, it looked like disasters, and... and during them I saw dad." Shido explained.

"You saw Seigo!?" Rinne gasped.

Shido nodded, but soon gave a worried look.

"He was seeing something, but... I don't know what, but he was frightened, and then I saw Westcott, but that wasn't the worst of it." He continued.

Shido breathed.

"The last thing I saw? It was, unnatural, a black explosion of flames with glowing red eyes, a mouth with the same glow, and... whatever it was gave this terrifying scream." Shido revealed.

Everyone looked at one another, unsure what Shido had just witnessed, because it didn't ring a bell to any of them.

They didn't have long to ponder it though, as Mukuro and Mildred suddenly came back, and when she saw Tohka holding Shido... her mind only came to one conclusion.

"You said... that you would wait until I came back to resume the contest, and yet you made a move on my Shido while I wasn't here!" Mukuro growled.

"wait, Mukuro, this isn't what you-" Shido panicked.

Mukuro stomped the ground, causing everyone nearby to fall over, and leaving a crater under her foot.

"You... cheating... little... bitch!" Mukuro screamed.

Mukuro rushed forward, causing the both of them to crash through the window, and fall towards the ground.

"TOHKA! MUKURO!" Shido shrieked.

"No, don't do this..." Mildred whispered, her body shaking with fear.

Mildred tapped her headset.

"Reine, sound the alarm, I think they're about to fight!" Mildred stated.

Hearing Mildred's cue, the alarm was instantly sounded by Reine, and the citizens of Tenguu City immediately began evacuating.

For those in the tower, Rinne motioned her hands as everyone began to leave.
"Come on, go, get to shelter as fast as you can!" Rinne shouted, a strong warning in her voice.

Shido watched as Tohka and Mukuro soon broke off in midair, both materialized their Astral Dresses, and took flight before they summoned their Angels.

Tohka grit her teeth, shifting her head to face Mukuro, an angry look on your face.

"Are you crazy!?" Tohka shouted.

"Shido... I won't let you take Shido, and for attempting to do so..." Mukuro said quietly, trembling a bit.

Mukuro's eyes looked at Tohka with an extreme intensity she had never used before.

"I will make you pay!" Mukuro screamed.

Mukuro teleported in front of Tohka, surprising the Energy Spirit with her speed.

"Alhazma - Beam!"

Tohka was smashed by Mukuro's beam attack, pushing her back as her Reiryoku automatically formed a barrier to protect her.

"She needs our help, come on!" Origami shouted.

All of the Spirits jumped out of the window, doing the same as the two clashing Spirits had, before flying after them.

Mana looked at Shido, and put a hand on his shoulder.

"Don't worry, we'll stop this big brother, now let's go!" Mana declared.

"...Right." Shido nodded.

Mana, followed by Shido, soon did the same and flew after the others, Shido transforming into Shiori as they did.

Mukuro turned as she saw the others near her, and soon scowled.

"I won't let any of you, get in my way!" Mukuro screamed angrily.

'I've gotta stop her now, here goes!' Nia thought.

Nia grabbed her pen and began writing: "seal Mukuro's movements" in her Angel's pages, but before she could write the Dimensional Spirit's name, she teleported in front of her.

'No, I won't make it!' Nia gasped.

Mukuro yelled as she slammed Michael's tip onto Nia, warping the point of contact as she was slingshot towards the building, Raziel shattering apart as she smashed into it.

Everyone saw the debris crash on Nia, and when the dust finally cleared, her upper half was barely out of the rubble, and her Astral Dress had been torn to shreds as she stared at Raziel's broken state.

"I'm... sorry everyone, this is... all I do." Nia apologized.
Nia cried a bit before she collapsed.

"Just... just one attack?" Kurumi gasped.

"Damn it, she knew Nia's abilities and realized her powers were a threat, don't drop your guard for a second!" Marina warned.

Everyone nodded, readying themselves as Mukuro zoomed at the rest of them.

Kurumi whistled, summoning her Nibellcole clones to bind her in place.

"Sorry, you aren't going anywhere?" Yuuki smirked.

"Alright girls, do it now!" Kurumi ordered.

The Arusu sisters fly to Mukuro's left and right sides, readying their angels.

"Opheniel!" Maria shouted.

[You got it, boss.] Opheniel replied.

"Sarufiel!" Marina shouted.

[On it, sir!] Sarufiel confirmed.

Maria shot the ground, causing a stalk of vines to grow from it and tangle Mukuro within them, the Nibellcole clones still holding on. Marina thrust her arm forward, unleashing a geyser of acid, infecting Mukuro with a debilitating venom.

"What did you... do to me?" Mukuro asked weakly.

"Everyone, attack her at once!" Mayuri shouted.

Mayuri motioned her hands, swirling a mass of liquefied metal into electrified steel spheres.

"Static Steel!"

Mayuri launched them forward.

"Megiddo!"

Kotori morphed Camael into its cannon form, and gathered flames inside it before firing.

Yoshino moved Zadkiel close, the Angel opening its maw, and then breathing out a fierce blizzard.

"El Kan'aph!"

The Yamai twins fired their combined arrow shot, while Kurumi flew behind it and fired as maybe shadow bullets as she could, the attacks all hit Mukuro, causing a cover of smoke to surround her.

"Next wave, don't even give her a moment!" Marina ordered.

Miku unleashed her sonic scream, and Origami motioned her pillars into position.

"Artelif - Crown Cannon!"
"Kaleidoscope - Metatron!"

Two sets of Metatron's Areletif formation fired off, Tohka shouted as she slashed an energy wave, with Rinne mimicking her and doing the same.

"Big sis, I'm ready!" Rio called out.

"OK, let's do it!" Mana replied.

Mana's hair turned red as she manifested Kotori's power, and unleashed a burst of flame at Rio, causing the latter to hold up Eden as she deflected the attack towards Mukuro. The second wave of attacks all exploded as they struck her.

However, a yellow flash soon pushed everyone back as Mukuro broke free, the Nibellcole all dissolving into shadows as they tumbled across the ground. As she watched from Shiori began to sweat as she saw Mukuro display her power again, while the others all were shocked she was still standing.

"No way, how can she still stand after all that!? Mana exclaimed.

"...Rataibu - Unlock!"

Motioning her Angel towards herself, Michael was created a small burst with a keyhole, and the venom in Mukuro's body was soon seen shot out as purple beads of liquid. With the poison now out of her system, Mukuro regained most of her lost vitality.

"You won't... stop... ME!" Mukuro shrieked.

Mukuro shouted as another burst sent everyone flying, using more of her power than previously, and soon spun around in the air.

"Jerez - Solution!"

A focused energy wave of yellow Reiryoku was fired out, hitting everyone as it melted through their Astral Dresses, and shattered their Angels. When it was over, Shiori watched in horror as all of the Spirits laid on the ground, vulnerable and too weak to restore their Angels.

Seeing her chance, Mukuro flew into the air, preparing another attack.

"Mukuro, no!" Shiori screamed.

"Now, it's time for-" Mukuro yelled.

Before either she or Shiori realized it, an energy wave flew at her, knocking her to the ground.

"What!?" Mukuro gasped.

Tohka soon dropped from the sky, landing on the ground as well.

"Mukuro, this fight's not over yet!" Tohka declared.

"How, how are you still standing!?" Mukuro demanded.

Tohka smirked.

"When you began spinning, something in me told me to get away, so I launched myself into the sky
and avoided your attack." Tohka answered.

Mukuro gasped at her claim, and Tohka held Sandalphon towards her.

"I'm not the smartest girl there is, but I trust my instincts, and it paid off here!" Tohka shouted.

"Damn you!" Mukuro screamed.

Mukuro unleashed another beam at her, but this time, Tohka swung Sandalphon across the ground, splitting it in two before it pushed Mukuro back a bit. Once she shattered the energy wave, Mukuro stared at Tohka angrily.

"My god... with all the damage they're doing, I hope they don't breach the shelters." Shiori said to herself.

"I can't believe this, after all this time, to think that you'd push me to use 100% of my power, Michael!" Mukuro shouted angrily.

[Understood!]

Mukuro's eyes focused as the ground shook beneath her, and then broke apart as her Reiryoku's full aura was unleashed.

She rushed forward, knocking Tohka back as she smashed Michael's tip through her, the force sending Tohka ripping through dozens of buildings as she skids across the ground before she slammed down Sandalphon.

Once she regained her ground, she formed Sandalphon's throne and shattered it, manifesting her Angel's strongest form.

"Halvanhelev!"

Tohka yelled as she swung it down, the explosive force ramming into Mukuro, sending her flying as she screamed through the air, crashing into a building and causing it to fall backwards to Shiori's horror.

The Energy Spirit rushed ahead, flying towards Mukuro before ramming them through the building, growling at Tohka, she teleported below her.

"Alhazma - Beam!"

Tohka's eyes widened before she was blasted upwards, making the Dimension Spirit smirk before a bunch of stones suddenly rose around her.

Motioning her hands down, Tohka caused the stone slabs to shift, making the ground below Mukuro collapse before the slabs fell on her. She raised Halvanhelev high, and screamed before slamming it down, her Reiryoku exploding upon contact.

"Stop it Tohka, if you push things too far, she's going to die!" Shiori warned loudly.

"No, if I don't push it this far, she'll end up killing me." Tohka replied.

Shiori blinked in surprise, and Tohka soon felt a burst of Mukuro's power fling her rocky prison away, flinging Tohka across the air before she rushed at her.

'...Oh no, now I get it, Tohka's barely managing to face her.' Shiori gasped.
As Tohka smashed the ground with her foot, glowing purple cracks formed in the ground as stalagmites shot out to pierce Mukuro, but the Dimension Spirit simply smashed through them before firing a beam at Tohka.

'Even if she survived her earlier attack, Mukuro still managed to beat everyone else on her own, if only I could heal the others so they could help her!' Shiori mentally screamed, gritting her teeth in frustration.

Tohka unleashed an energy slash in response, and the two attacks collide as an explosion of yellow and purple Reiryoku burst out, flinging Shiori across the landscape a bit before she regained her footing. After the dust cleared, Tohka and Mukuro were both seen panting.

"To think that you'd be able to match me, even at my full strength... you're truly no normal opponent Tohka." Mukuro breathed.

'She's starting to struggle, I might be able to win this, I've just gotta hold on a little longer...' Tohka thought.

Mukuro gripped Michael tighter and soon shifted her grip on it, holding it like an axe, surprising Tohka a bit.

"However, I'm afraid that's exactly why you're going to die..." Mukuro stated, a dark glare in her eyes.

"...Shifuru - Release!"

Mukuro screamed as her body began to flare up, and her Astral Dress changed, becoming more like a warrior-princess version of its original appearance, but with a pink and black color scheme. Meanwhile, in her hands, Michael's key like form morphed into a halberd.

As Tohka and Shiori stared at this transformation, the other Spirits slowly came to, turning to see Mukuro's current form in shock, while Nia looked horrified as she recognized.

'No... this is bad, she's actually using it!' Nia thought, horrified at what might happen next.

"What?" Tohka breathed.

"This is Michael's true form, and my true power, be prepared Tohka... because in the brief time I use this ability, I've gone beyond 100%." Mukuro revealed.

Everyone, with the exception of Nia, had their eyes widen at this declaration.

As this thought processed through Tohka's mind, her confident face shattered entirely, one of fear and horror replacing it.

'...I never stood a chance against her!' Tohka thought, her entire body freezing up.

In an instant, Mukuro appeared in front of Tohka, and struck Michael's tip onto her stomach, launching her into the air before she could even react! Without wasting any time, Mukuro appeared before her, her Reiryoku flaring out of her body, burning Tohka from the close proximity.

"Jerez - Solution!"

Mukuro screamed as she blasted Tohka with her most dangerous attack, smashing her into the ground as her Astral Dress was as torn as the others' now. Mukuro hovered near her, Tohka weakly
looking at her in fear.

Seeing her weak state, she aimed Michael at her, and charged a familiar beam.

"No, I beg you Mukuro, please don't kill her!" Shiori screamed in horror.

"...This is your end, now goodbye." Mukuro said coldly.

Mukuro's beam prepared to fire, with everyone unaware of someone running towards them.

"Alhazma - Beam."

"Mukuro, stop!"

At that moment, everyone looked in shock as Mildred rushed into view, and pushed Tohka out of the way... only for the beam to fire through part of her lower abdomen, leaving a hole through it.

Everyone looked in horror, their faces contorting to one of silent shock, but the strongest reaction came from Mukuro who had her eyes widen larger than ever before, a slight sound escaping her mouth before a sudden jolt shot through her mind.

---Flashback Start---

Mukuro slowly looked at Mildred, not saying a word.

"I'm here because my family wants to adopt a child, so... would you like to be my little sister?" Mildred asked.

Mukuro's eyes widened slightly, and Mildred kept smiling.

At that moment, Mukuro slowly reached out her hand to Mildred's, who took it in return.

"What's... your name?" Mukuro asked.

"My name is..." Mildred answered.

---End Flashback---

Mukuro continued staring as Mildred's body fell to the ground, the thud sounding louder than it should have been to her ears. At that moment, the jolt faded, and Mukuro's senses fully returned to her as she looked at Mildred's body.

No, at her sister's body, bleeding out a puddle of blood underneath her unmoving form.

- (*One Piece - Ace's Death*) -

"Mil...dred?" Mukuro breathed.

Mukuro dropped her Angel to the ground, kneeling closer to her sister's body, tears starting to well in her eyes.

"I remember now, everything I forgot, what I did back then... how you, mom, and dad got angry at me... yet despite that, you still cared enough to find me here and now?" Mukuro said shakily, barely holding herself together.
"So why, why did this happen?" She asked.

Mukuro's tears began to leak out, her face showing one of genuine sadness and pain.

"WHY DID I HAVE TO END UP KILLING YOU!?!" Mukuro shrieked loudly.

Everyone began to tear up as well, crying over Mildred's sacrifice, while Rinne noticed something and held out her hand, attempting to do something without anyone noticing.

"Please, come back, don't do this to me! I never wanted this! I didn't, I'm sorry, I'll be good, I'll never do anything like this, just please come back... please! Just don't... don't die, and make me live guilt I killed you... for the rest of my life!" Mukuro begged, screaming at the top of her lungs.

...but it failed, no matter how much she screamed, no matter how much she begged, Mildred didn't move.

- (*insert song end*) -

Clawing at her face, Mukuro lowered her head, and then... she shot it back up, screaming at the top of her lungs her eyes slowly turning into two yellow pools of darkness, instantly making Shiori's eyes widen as she saw it.

The eyes signaling a Spirit's inversion.

'Oh no, she's inverting!' Shiori gasped.

Suddenly, Shiori felt a pain in her chest, and a cold dark feeling began to well in her body.

"W-what's happening to me!?!" Shiori stuttered, fear overtaking her entire being.

It wasn't just Shiori either, Mana, and all of the other Spirits, even the non-Sephira Spirits, all gained the same feeling.

"This feeling, what is... oh no!" Rinne gasped.

- (*Date A Live - Hanten Tohka*) -

Once the other Spirits all felt the feeling overtake them, Rinne did as well, but rather than her own, it was a fusion of everyone else’s.

Shiori and Mana both feel a dark cyan mist emit off them, darkening their hair and making their eyes glow brighter, but soon quickly regained their bearings as the feeling faded away.

"This feeling, it's... oh my god, no!" Shiori gasped, turning towards the others.

Back at the Ratatoskr base, the warning alarm literally echoed as it sounded itself multiple times, almost to show this was a threat among threats, leaving everyone in a rush as they tried to figure out what was happening.

"What's happening, I've never see the alarms act like this before!?!" Reine demanded, a look of terror on her face.

"Commander Murasame, it looks like a category E, some of the Spirits must have undergone an Inversion!" Minowa replied.
Reine sweat a bit at that.

"Can anyone confirm anything, if there is more than one Inversion, someone figure out how many!" Reine shouted.

"I think I've got it, the readings state..." Sakura answered.

Sakura gasped, her body trembling at the number she saw as her hands hovered over the keyboard, Reine saw this and shook in fear.

"Sakura, please... tell me how many." Reine asked.

Sakura slowly turned, her eyes still embedded with a look of horror in them.

"The total number of Inversions is..." Sakura answered.

Sakura shook, and said the dread number.

"18!"

Everyone gave looks of shock and horror at that number, almost as if they had gone deaf at that moment.

"1-18, but then that would mean..." Kannazuki paled.

"You're right, if you count Mana and Shido since they're at least Half-Spirits..." Reine stated.

She looked towards the static on the monitor, only imagining what she should be seeing, and it wasn't pretty...

"...then 18 readings can only mean one thing, all of the Spirits have undergone an Inversion!" She exclaimed.

You heard that last part right, it wasn't just Mukuro who entered her Inverse Form, they all did! How did this happen? Well, remember when I said in the previous chapter's end notes that Mukuro's use of Segva had a side effect on the Spirits they weren't aware of? That's right, you're looking at it, but I should clarify what the exact effect was to avoid any misunderstandings with it.

What happened was quite similar to how when Shido seals a Spirit, there's a path indirectly linking them, but with Mukuro. Also, rather than her powers, they had a link to Mukuro's Sephira Crystal. Due to this link, when Mukuro began her Inversion, the taint of her Sephira Crystal caused the others' crystals to have their taints overtake them, while also infecting the non-Sephira Spirits who lacked it before now.

Also, time for the big surprise before I reveal the news about Season 4, this arc... is over! That's right, you heard me right, Mukuro's story still has one more arc, and I don't think I need to tell everyone what the focus is about. There's some shocking revelations that are about to happen, but this time, you won't get all of Season 3's mysteries until we get to the Mayuri Judgment movie arc!

Now, time for the news about Season 4, and that news is... *starts a drum roll* That it's the final season of this story! All good things have to come to an end eventually, and after long
consideration, I've come to realize that there's no way for me progress this story beyond a fourth season without trying to stretch everything. So, there you have it, after the crossover chapter, the last season of this story will begin, so to everyone who sticks with this story until the end... thank you.

Before we close up though, I'm just gonna say I waited for Vol 17's illustrations before I submitted today's chapter, and... the mystery about Mio Takamiya and Shido's powers? HOLY FREAKING CRAP!

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Inverse Mukuro, Code Name: [Supernova]-

Demon King: Belphegor - Michael's Demon King counterpart, and just like Michael's the most powerful Angel, Belphegor is the most powerful Demon King. Belphegor takes the form of a staff designed as a key like its counterpart, but much more demonic in design, and the same black it assumes when Mukuro uses Shifuru, only entire black and gray.

However, unlike Michael, its powers don't work in a divine manner, but a nightmarish one. Some of the ways it manipulates space when warping the fabric of space-time are fully unstable, and worst of all... Belphegor isn't limited by Mukuro's understanding, only being hampered by what she chooses to use and not use it on.

- Alternate Form: Cuihui, "Destroy" - The inverse counterpart of Segva. While it keeps its counterpart's ability to limit or disable whatever Mukuro chooses to target, it has an added ability it can use on anything that's non-living. The power to destroy, shatter, break or any similar form of action that can damage an object. Against living things, this ability can at best give a short minute of pains.

- Alternate Form: Huifu, "Restore" - The inverse counterpart of Rataibu. While it keeps its counterpart's ability to free or unseal something, regardless if it was locked by Segva/Cuihui or not, it can also recreate, repair, fortify or any similar form of action that can enhance or fix an object. Unfortunately, this power is limited to non-living things, and can't be used to restore the dead, or save someone who's dying.

- Alternate Form: Fahui, "Unleash" - The inverse counterpart of Shifuru. Like its counterpart, Fahui enhances Mukuro's strength beyond her limits, transforming Belphegor into its true form as a demonic halberd-like weapon, while changing her Inverse Astral Dress. However, it's considered a worse ability compared to its counterpart (a rarity for an Inverse Form ability), as it gives a greater boost at the cost harming the user, and it doesn't last as long.

- Alternate Form: Yanmo, "Annihilation" - The inverse counterpart of Jerez. Like its counterpart, it decomposes Dark Reiryoku and the bonds holding molecules together, allowing Belphegor to create a focused energy wave. However, unlike its counterpart, Yanmo doesn't work by trying to melt the target... but destroy it. Luckily, the cost for this more destructive force is that it can't destroy living things.

- Alternate Form: Jiguang, "Laser" - The inverse counterpart of Alhazma. Like its
counterpart, it focuses Mukuro's powers and warps spatial energy around the tip of Belphegor's key, firing a beam of Dark Reiryoku. However, unlike its counterpart, it loses its piercing ability, instead replacing it with an anti-Maryoku and anti-Reiryoku (regardless of its form) effect, allowing it to destroy attacks and defenses that possess it.

- Alternate Form: Waqui, "Distort" - By releasing Belphegor into the air and letting it spin in place, Mukuro can essentially use psychic abilities, but mixed with her usual spatial manipulation powers. If truly pushed far enough, Mukuro can compress someone into a distortion prison, though if they're strong enough, they can easily escape.

- Powers: Compared to most Inverse Forms, Mukuro is a unique case, as while she does have some improved abilities, many of her other abilities lose their destructive power, and become more refined, with one actually gaining a negative drawback her normal form lacks. Despite this, Inverse Mukuro is still one of the most dangerous Inverse Forms with many powers that are perfect counters to other Spirits and Wizards. However, Rinne theorizes these wouldn't work on Light Reiryoku.

Risk Factors: SSS

Spacequake: AAA

Spirit's Astral Dress: AAA

Demon King Rank: SS

Strength: 250

Consistency: 217

Spiritual Power: 274

Agility: 200

Intelligence: 123

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)
Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)
Alright everyone, we're finally hear, the last arc of Season 3! *sighs* I still can't believe we're here, all that's left is the Mayuri Judgment movie arc, the crossover, and then... Season 4's gonna end this fanfic. *sniffles a bit* Sorry, I know I should be happy this story's finally going to finish, but I'm a little sad that after almost half a year, this story will finally be finished. You know what they say, all good things must come to an end.

So here we are, the Sephira Fury arc! Before I say any more, here's a little trivia about the arc name I'd like to share. My original intent was to name this arc the "Dark Spirits" arc, but decided not to because I felt it was too plain and obvious, not that anything's wrong with that, but considering the previous arc... well, the problem was I felt the name was spoiling the end to those who were still reading Mukuro Quasar.

Before we begin, let's reveal this arc's emotion, and it's: "Courage", something that Shiori and Mana will need a lot of to prevail what's coming next and for two other reasons I can't mention due to spoilers. The second? Despite that Vol 17 was released yesterday, many of the reveals that came out with it can actually work with my story, and I decided to add them all in, so I figured I should give you all a spoiler warning for this arc, starting with this chapter.

As such, just to be sure everyone sees it...

WARNING! MINOR TO MAJOR SPOILERS FOR VOLUME 17, READ AT YOUR OWN RISK!

Now to reply a guest review.

To Guest:
"I can see where you might have had a misunderstanding there, so allow me to clarify that. Europe's destruction wasn't the result of Shido's inversion, but from any attack by Choronzon, which is the Demon King that would have been Rinne's if she had an Inverse Form. While she has one now, she didn't have it back then, so that Choronzon was made from the Reiryoku sealed inside Shido at the time."

"This time, the only Reiryoku that's powering his Inverse Form is his own, so even if he wanted to, Shido can't reproduce the same level of power that the mutant Choronzon had. In fact, the only reason they managed to win that fight was because of Tohka discovering the Ethereal Form, if she hadn't managed to use it, then Choronzon would succeeded in destroying the world."

To Seeker213:
"Oh, really? Then happy late birthday Seeker! I guess it's a good thing I waited to see if Vol 17 came out before I posted the chapter, I guess you got two birthday presents because of that ^^ *giggles* Yeah, that was something I planned for a while, and like I said above... the fact we're nearing the end is making me sad too."

"Can't say much about what you said the rest of your review due to spoilers, but I can at least confirm Shido and Mana are still in control, that's why I mentioned they quickly regained
their bearings last chapter. While I can't say anything about the others, I can say that one needs to remember Chinami's nearby, and with the creation of new Inverse Forms..."

Well, if there's anything left to say, it's this... let's get the first of today's two Inverse data sheets, and then we can let the chapter begin!

-Inverse Rinne, Code Name: [Tyrant]-

Demon King: Choronzon - Uriel's Demon King counterpart. Choronzon is a one-handed sword similar to Nahemah, but with jagged edges that give the blade the shape of a withered tree branch, with ten gems that look like serpent eyes, representing the colors of the Qlipha Crystals. The only difference between it and Uriel is that it borrows the elemental powers of the other ten Demon Kings by lighting up the respective colored gem on the blade.

- Alternate Form: Chaotic Divergence - The inverse counterpart of Harmonic Convergence. There's but there's very few differences between them. The main variation is that it uses the powers of the other spirits' Inverse forms, making the exponential amplification of power higher, and causing it to be much stronger. Also, after using it once, Rinne can't use it again for another 90 minutes, and she can't use it in general until she spends an hour in her Inverse Form.

- Powers: Due to the nature of her Inverse Form's creation, Rinne basically has the same powers as before, simply enhanced by the Inversion's use of Dark Reiryoku, though she now has some defense, being able to shrug off attacks she previously couldn't. However, there does seem to be something different about her Inverse Form compared to the others.

Risk Factors: XX

Spacequake: X

Spirit's Astral Dress: SSS

Demon King Rank: SSS

Strength: 300

Consistency: 270

Spiritual Power: 310

Agility: 275

Intelligence: 240

Chapter 65, S3: Sephira Fury, Part 8

Clawing at her face, Mukuro lowered her head, and then... she shot it back up, screaming at the top of her lungs her eyes slowly turning into two yellow pools of darkness, instantly making Shiori's eyes widen as she saw it.
The eyes signaling a Spirit's inversion.

'Oh no, she's inverting!' Shiori gasped.

Suddenly, Shiori felt a pain in her chest, and a cold dark feeling began to well in her body.

"W-what's happening to me!?" Shiori stuttered, fear overtaking her entire being.

It wasn't just Shiori either, Mana, and all of the other Spirits, even the non-Sephira Spirits, all gained the same feeling.

"This feeling, what is... oh no!" Rinne gasped.

- (*Date A Live - Hanten Tohka*) -

Once the other Spirits all felt the feeling overtake them, Rinne did as well, but rather than her own, it was a fusion of everyone else's.

Shiori and Mana both feel a dark cyan mist emit off them, darkening their hair and making their eyes glow brighter, but soon quickly regained their bearings as the feeling faded away.

"This feeling, it's... oh my god, no!" Shiori gasped, turning towards the others.

Back at the Ratatoskr base, the warning alarm literally echoed as it sounded itself multiple times, almost to show this was a threat among threats, leaving everyone in a rush as they tried to figure out what was happening.

"What's happening, I've never see the alarms act like this before!?" Reine demanded, a look of terror on her face.

"Commander Murasame, it looks like a category E, some of the Spirits must have undergone an Inversion!" Minowa replied.

Reine sweat a bit at that.

"Can anyone confirm anything, if there is more than one Inversion, someone figure out how many!" Reine shouted.

"I think I've got it, the readings state..." Sakura answered.

Sakura gasped, her body trembling at the number she saw as her hands hovered over the keyboard, Reine saw this and shook in fear.

"Sakura, please... tell me how many." Reine asked.

Sakura slowly turned, her eyes still embedded with a look of horror in them.

"The total number of Inversions is..." Sakura answered.

Sakura shook, and said the dread number.

"18!"

Everyone gave looks of shock and horror at that number, almost as if they had gone deaf at that moment.
"1-18, but then that would mean..." Kannazuki paled.

"You're right, if you count Mana and Shido since they're at least Half-Spirits... then 18 readings can only mean one thing, all of the Spirits have undergone an Inversion!" She exclaimed.

Reine sweated heavily, soon tapping her headset to contact Mildred.

"Mildred, status report!" Reine begged.

...Only static was heard.

"Huh, Mildred? Hello... are you there?" Reine asked worriedly.

- (insert song end) -

At that moment, everyone held their heads as a jolt shot through them, making them all gasp as their stolen memories began to return.

"Whoa, that was... hey wait, I remember now!" Ren commented.

"Just like that? That doesn't make sense, unless the Inversion is undoing every lock she's made before now." Sakura wondered.

Sakura turned to Reine.

"Commander, what do you think-" She asked.

Suddenly, everyone saw Reine holding her head, her eyes shaking heavily as a heavy pain seared through it.

"Commander!?!" Kannazuki exclaimed in worry.

"The time to remember is near, the key has nearly been found."

'W-what's going on, what am I... I...'

Similar to Shido before her, images began floating through Reine's mind.

First, the sight of a brought light surrounding a girl, her hair untied and flowing around her, being the only cover her body had. Then the sight of Isamu petting her, and then Seigo smiling at her, causing the girl to slowly smile for what felt like the first time.

Coming after that, visuals of what looked like the Spirit Dimension before its destruction were next, and the sight of 10 swirls that turned into spheres.

Next up, a slow-motion picture of a hand reaching out to the girl, and then something hidden in a white light appearing before Seigo, who listened to the words it spoke next.

"When the time comes, and-*static*-you will find your way, and-*static*-when that happens, find the key."

Seigo looks at whoever the being was, his face full of confusion.

"Only you can-*static*-I know you can do it Seigo. For now, I'll be-*static*-so please don't-*heavier static*-the key!"
Finally, the last image that appeared before her was the shine of a white water-like texture, soft blue eyes looked towards her before a blue smile opened up, and hummed a pleasant melody to her.

Reine soon gasps, regaining her senses as she shook her head, looking towards everyone as they stared at her with worry.

"...Don't worry everyone, I'm alright, I think the jolt of memories just more intense for me." Reine reassured.

"Alright, if you say so Commander, but are you really sure nothing's wrong with you?" Kannazuki replied.

Reine nodded, breathing a bit until she regained her breath.

'I don't get it, those images I saw... they don't make any sense, what's happening to me?' Reine wondered.

Reine clears her throat, soon straightening herself.

"Alright everyone, since we're not sure what's going on out there, for now, focus on restoring the visuals!" Reine ordered.

"Yes ma'am!" Everyone replied.

As Shiori turned to the others, a mass of Spacequakes go off, causing the two to be slingshot across the city ruins before sliding into a building.

"What's going on, why is everyone entering an Inversion? Most of them don't even have an Inverse Form!" Mana asked, having to yell to be heard.

"I don't know, how could this-" Shiori replied with a yell.

Shiori suddenly stopped, and remembered what happened to everyone when she locked the probe she spoke through, gasping a bit.

"The probe!" Shiori exclaimed.

"Huh!?!" Mana asked loudly.

"Remember when Mukuro tried to lock the probe, but it caused all of us to pass out!?!" Shiori asked loudly.

Mana nods, recalling how caught Shiori before collapsing shortly after.

"There's only one explanation then, something similar must have happened when she tried to erase me from everyone's memories!" Shiori answered loudly.

"What!?!" Mana exclaimed.

"Her lock didn't erase our memories, but somehow linked us, which I think Mukuro's inversion somehow spread it to the rest of us, and since the Inversion happens to a taint..." Shiori explained normally, the background noise having died down.

Mana gasped, connecting the dots that Shiori's words gave her.
"She gave that taint to Mom, Rio, Mayuri and the Arusu sisters, and gave them the ability to Inverse!" Mana realized, her eyes shaking.

At that moment, another wave of the Dark Reiryoku shot out from the Spacequakes as they died down, and one by one... they were reintroduced to the Inverse Forms of the Spirits once more, as well as six they were seeing for the first time.

The first they noticed was the Spirit who had started the entire wave of Inversions, Mukuro, who strangely possessed a sad look on her face despite the more unstable expression that everyone had normally come to see on Inversions.

It had become black where it was once pink, and a menacing neon yellow where it was white, and ironically... white where it was once black. The cut that previously exposed her cleavage now went so far down, it eventually exposed her belly button. The flaps protruding from the side split into three triangular ends, making them look like claws, and the starry patterns on her hair ribbons were replaced by a swirling vortex pattern, and had glowing yellow dots that looked like eyes staring at the two.

Next was Rio's, now wearing her original Astral Dress' robe in dark black, with the previous magenta color being where the white used to be, and the gold having turned silver. Compared to before, her Astral Dress had tatters, holes and shreds all across it, and the two extensions on her back now moved, looking similar to snakes. Topping it off was an oriental headpiece of sorts, resting over where her ribbon used to be.

Then came Maria, who had a physical appearance change, her hair becoming a dark-gray that was nearly black, with dark blue tips at their ends. Her current attire was a mix of the Astral Dress that she and Marina wore when still AIs, only in black and brown, and with a visor over her eyes. Next to her, Marina was the same, but with the dark blue tips replaced by dark yellow ones, and the brown on her outfit a glaring magenta, and a spikier looking visor.

A more drastic change was seen once Mayuri came into view, her Angel like wings had become the bat wings often seen on demons, while all the gold on outside was replaced by a spiky copper/bronze with cyan lining, and her skirt outright absent. Also, her hair was sparking as it floated straight up, with her eyes having transformed into a menacing dark purple.

However, it was Rinne's Astral Dress that ended up being almost nothing like her original outfit. Most of her skin across her abdominal area was exposed, only covering her vital spots, and even then, just barely. Rather than a cape of sorts, her outfit had two floating objects like shoulder guards with attached clothes, dropping like unfolded wings, flapping as they showed their majesty to the world, a ghostly white veil covered her face, with her golden regalia now silver, and hidden behind the veil? Pure black eyes, with her whitened pupils as a Spirit making her children feel they were more terrifying than any eyes they had ever witnessed in their life.

"Oh, my god..." Mana breathed.

"...Everyone?" Shiori asked worriedly.

As Shiori looked at them, she noticed Tohka's eyes were shadowed, a sign she had seen once when Miku took control of everyone.

While unsure what her eyes meant in this case, Kotori raised her axe, and slammed it down, making Shiori rush as she grabbed Mana, and avoided the wave of fire that shot out of the ground. Once
landing on her feet, the two looked at the Inverse Spirits in worry.

"Tch! How annoying, I missed."

It may have been Kotori's voice they heard, but it was clear to them that at this moment, the ones standing before them, Kotori included... were NOT the people they knew as their friends.

Her mind reached back, remembering after the battle with Choronzon, where everyone told her what they learned about the Inversions, and she realized exactly who she was really looking at right now.

"...I know who you are, you're the dead souls of all the Spirits in the Camael region, aren't you!?” Shiori asked, as if she had already been answered.

Asmodeus cackles loudly at that.

*[Oh, look here, the Half-Human trash are smart asses!]* Camael mocked.

Shiori pales at that, for Asmodeus to have a different voice, not to mention label Humanity negatively, her suspicious had to be true.

"That's right you disgusting Human, aside from those few that you don't classify as "Sephira Spirits, we're the collective essence of all the regret, sorrow, fear, anger, and hatred of all the deceased Spirits of our respective regions, the Spirits your kind killed!” Inverse Kotori answered.

"No, that wasn't us, the only human who killed you was Westcott!” Mana shouted.

Mana's face froze as she saw a fireball barely miss her, completely incinerating the building behind her, leaving naught but ash.

"You dare make excuses!” Inverse Kotori screamed.

"We trusted all of you who fell to our world, believed in that man who tainted Rinne's mind, and all you did to repay us was murder us!” Inverse Miku said venomously.

"No matter how little or how large, it was human hands that killed us, so your entire species must be held responsible!” Inverse Kurumi said, sneering a bit.

Shiori panicked as they all glared at them.

"This is your crime, and you are guilty.” Inverse Origami said monotonously.

"So, it's time you finally pay up, by paying us in full!” Inverse Natsumi snickered.

"Humanity... must face extinction like we did, and you will be first.” Inverse Rinne stated, holding out her hand.

"Choronzon."

The Takamiya siblings gasped at the name, and the sight of the true form of Uriel's counterpart, the real Demon King with the name of Choronzon, manifested into view.

"Belial!"

Inverse Rio summoned a shield with razor blades around the rim, and they soon proved they weren't for show as they spun like a saw blade.
"Leviathan!"

"Mammon!"

The two had their gauntlets form, with Maria's Leviathan looking like Opheniel if it had broken pieces and spikes jutting from it, and Marina's Mammon having markings resembling that of data chips, but more jagged.

"Abaddon."

A demonic looking version of Kerubiel manifested itself, and soon Shiori and Mana both watched in fear, the sight of their own friends with the intent to destroy them due to their Inverse Form personas taking over.

'There's just too many of them, we can't fight them and expect to win, we're just too outmatched!' Mana thought in horror.

'No, it can't end like this, I'm sorry everyone!' Shiori thought, closing her eyes.

Inverse Rinne rushed ahead first, and Mana hugged her sister as they expected the end, only to hear a clang as something blocked Inverse Rinne's strike, surprising the Inverted First Spirit.

"What are you doing, why are you protecting them!?' Inverse Rinne demanded.

The two opened their eyes, and soon saw standing before them, Nahemah held out with her left hand, was none other than Inverse Tohka!

At that moment, with her still shadowed face unmoved, Inverse Tohka grit her teeth.

"Let's get one thing straight..."

Inverse Tohka raised her eyes up, her eyes flickering between them and Tohka's eyes.

"We're not your puppets, and if all of you want to destroy an entire species, when many of their kind had nothing to do with your demise..." She said, an angry look on her face.

"...Tohka?" Shiori gasped.

At that moment, Inverse Rinne was knocked back, crashing into the others as the white gradient in Inverse Tohka's hair faded, and her eyes changed back to Tohka's, as the sight of purple Reiryoku shards few off her.

"THEN COMPARED TO YOU SPIRITS, ALL OF HUMANITY IS BETTER THAN YOU!"

Inverse Tohka, no... Tohka screamed loudly.

All of the Inverse Spirits stared at Tohka in shock, feeling Tohka's aura flare out like small gale, while Shiori teared up a bit.

"Tohka... you're still in control, aren't you!' Shiori asked, smiling a bit.

Chinami lands after having watched enough of the fight from the safety of high in the skies, and after taking a moment to register the strange development before her, she smirks slightly.

"So not only did [Zodiac] inverse, but she managed to cause the others to do the same, including those who couldn't, and with the First Spirit having an Inversion..." Chinami said to herself, smiling.
Chinami tries to call Westcott, and after waiting a while, hears him pick up.

"Ah, quite the surprise Chinami, you disappeared the other day, am I to assume your call relates to this little sneak out?" Westcott asked.

"It is, I thought I should keep a watch on [Zodiac], and I was right to, she's undergone an Inversion, have you noticed Marina's special dart draw in some of her Dark Reiryoku as a sample yet?" Chinami answered.

She waits a bit before hearing some laughter, giving her an answer.

"Oh, don't thank me just yet, it seems she did something and I just saw the impossible... [Ruler], [Phantom], [Synthesis], [Matrix] and [Watcher] were all given an Inverse Form as well." Chinami continued.

"...Chinami, just to make sure I didn't hear a funny joke or have a drunk dream, did you just say-" Westcott asked.

"You're both awake, and your ears are fine." Chinami confirmed.

Chinami soon smiled as she looked towards the battlefield.

"If I recall, wasn't Choronzon the closest we were able to get on obtaining Dark Reiryoku from [Ruler]'s powers?" Chinami inquired.

"You are correct, am I hearing, what I think I am?" Westcott questioned in response.

"Not only is this a second chance with a purer form of it, now we have even more to gain, so how about I gather it for you?" Chinami answered, smirking a bit.

Westcott's unseen face smirked.

"Chinami, gather them all." He stated.

The Adeptus 3 wizard saw a special sword summoned to her CR-Unit's side, and she soon unsheathed it, looking at it.

"I'll do more than that, I'll finally kill [Angel], once and for all!" Chinami exclaimed.

"No way, that's impossible!" Inverse Nia gasped.

"H-How can this be, the conscious of the Sandalphon region's spirits should be in charge, how did she do this!?" Inverse Kaguya exclaimed.

"Someone explain this, now." Inverse Yuzuru demanded.

Inverse Yoshino scowled at her, but soon got a chill, and shook a bit, getting the attention of the others.

"H-her rage, I've never s-seen... such pure anger before, did she s-somehow... exceed the rage of the souls t-trapped within her Crystal?" Inverse Yoshino stuttered.

This made the other Inverse Spirits show shock, Tohka managed to prevent Inverse Tohka from using her body, just because she was angrier than her?
"It seems we underestimated this one girl, but that also means the moment her rage falls, she will lose control and take revenge on Humanity as she should, we just need to help the process complete." Inverse Mayuri realized.

Inverse Rio laughed, almost sounding a bit snake like as she did, and looked at Inverse Mukuro.

"She's still not the strongest we could have worried about, so this will be easy, go get her Inverse... Mukuro..." Inverse Rio ordered.

Mukuro, who everyone only now realized hadn't moved from her spot since she Inverted, shook a bit before tears poured out of her eyes like waterfalls.

"...Eh?" Inverse Rio blinked.

"Don't die Mildred, please!" Mukuro screamed.

Everyone felt a wave push them back, Tohka putting up her Reiryoku barrier to protect her, Shiori, and Mana.

"Belphegor!"

The demonic and darker version of Michael appeared before Mukuro, and she grabbed it before tossing it, causing it to spin in place as it floated.

"Waqui - Distort!"

"What the hell? What are you doing, we're your-" Inverse Kurumi yelled.

Unfortunately, she and the others minus Tohka, and the Takamiya siblings, were suddenly slingshot across the environment, area within her immediate radius being pulled and twisted apart, causing a swirling mass of debris to fire off around her.

"Wait a minute, is that..." Mana gasped.

"Yes, it has to be, Mukuro's the one in control! It must be because her Inversion was caused by her own feelings of despair!" Shiori realized.

Tohka looked at Mukuro, seeing the tears in her eyes.

"...Guys, is Mildred truly dead yet?" Tohka asked, her face straining as if to keep an angry expression.

"Huh?" Mana asked.

"As long as... Mildred still has a pulse, then... it's not over, maybe we can save her! Realizers can do a lot... of impossible things, right?" Tohka answered.

Mana gasped at that, realizing they had seen Mildred get shot, but never verified if she actually died yet.

"Well... the chances are almost zero, but it could work." Mana replied.

"I'll go get her body, hang tight you two!" Shiori stated.

Shiori rushed ahead, but at that moment, Inverse Kotori flew out of the debris she had crashed into, making Shiori's eyes widen as she charged at her and swung Asmodeus down.
"Time to die you stupid Human-" Inverse Kotori screamed.

Tohka appeared beside her, shocking her as she slammed Nahemah onto her, knocking her across the landscape, and giving Shiori the chance to get to Mildred's body.

She put her ear next to Mildred's heart, and... a slowly vanishing pulse could be heard.

"She's still alive, but not for long!" Shiori called out.

Mana rushes over.

"You stay and help the others, I'll get her to Ratatoskr and see if they can save her!" Mana offered.

"Mana?" Shiori said.

"Even if we're... uh, partly inverted right now, I don't think I'll be able to do much compared to you or Tohka, so I think it's best I take care of Mildred." Mana explained.

Shiori nods, helping Mana get Mildred into her arms.

"Alright, we'll keep their attention off you, just be careful." Shiori replied.

"I will." Mana smiled.

Mana shifts her legs, channeling the power of the Inverse Yamai twins before racing forward, looking for the nearest Ratatoskr entrance she could find among the rubble.

As that happened, Shiori hears Tohka scream a bit, and turns to see her on her knees in pain.

"Tohka!" Shiori called out worriedly.

She kneeled near Tohka, and soon saw her eyes briefly flash towards her Inverse Form's coloration.

"Tohka, oh no... are you losing control of yourself?" Shiori asked.

"I'm... only able to... keep control because of my anger, if... I let my Inverse half's rage overtake mine... I won't be able to keep my free will!" Tohka breathed out, struggling to keep control.

"No way, so any moment you could-" Shiori gasped.

Tohka grabbed Shiori, turning her head to look at her.

"Shiori, listen... to me, go help... Mukuro!" Tohka requested.

"But Tohka, you can't fight everyone on your own, you-" Shiori reasoned.

Tohka slaps Shiori across the cheek, surprising her.

"Don't you get it? Right now, you're the only one who can help her, if I couldn't beat her normal form in my own, then my Inverse Form will end up the same against hers!" Tohka exclaimed.

Shiori's eyes widened, and at that moment she realized it... no matter how she looked at it, Tohka was right.

"Dang it... if only we knew how you could enter your Ethereal Form again..." Shiori remarked.

"Please Shiori, she's out of control right now, and unless I can get some of the others out of their
Inverse Forms to help you, this is our only chance to make it out in one piece!" Tohka begged.

Shiori looks at her, and soon nods.

"Alright, just know I believe in you, you saved me back when I was trapped in Choronzon, so I
know you won't lose to yourself." Shiori encouraged.

"I'll win, that's a promise!" Tohka replied.

Tohka rushed ahead, raising Nahemah as Inverse Kotori got back up, and surprising the Inverse
Flame Spirit before she swung down, gouging a slash into the ground as she was thrown back.

"Damn you!" Inverse Kotori screamed.

"Come on, show me what you've-" Tohka declared.

Suddenly, Tohka felt a jolt go through her head, and fell to her knees as her eyes flashed again.

"No, I can't... let it win!" Tohka grunted.

"Oh?" Inverse Kotori noticed.

She smirked, and whistled to the others, inverse Rinne sliced Choronzon against the debris covering
her, soon raising her head as she energized the other Inverse Spirits back onto their feet.

"Everyone, she's slipping, let's help push this fake back where she belongs!" Inverse Kotori smirked.

"So, we need to crush her resolve, very well then." Inverse Origami stated.

Inverse Rinne held her Demon King out, and gave a dark look.

"Attack her, to the brink of death if needed." Inverse Rinne ordered.

All the Inverse Spirits fly ahead, and Tohka slowly got on her feet as she saw them coming.

Within Tohka's own mind, she pants briefly, trying to keep her focus as her Inverse Form rushes at
her and tries to attack her, causing her to hold up Sandalphon to parry her attack.

"Damn you, once again I had a chance to enact our revenge, and once again you're still trying to test
me!" Inverse Tohka growled.

"And I still can't believe how you think this is even right, to kill off an entire species for just what a
single person did, and one who's likely insane no less!" Tohka countered.

Inverse Tohka grit her teeth, knocking Tohka back before slashing Nahemah across her, shredding
part of the latter's Astral Dress as she did.

"Shut your mouth, all I need to do is overpower you, and then I'll be free to do what I want!" Inverse
Tohka shouted.

"No, much more than that... if you've already opposed me this much, then why should I even give
you the opportunity to do it again? There's only one solution..." She continued, glaring at Tohka.

inverse Tohka tightened the grip on her Demon King, and pointed it at Tohka was she gave a
murderous look to her other half.
"...I'll kill you and make this body mine forever!" Inverse Tohka screamed.

Tohka gasped at that, soon gripping Sandalphon tighter.

"No, I won't let you!" Tohka shouted, rushing ahead.

"You don't have any say in this, now die!" Inverse Tohka screamed, doing the same.

Their swords clashed, creating a surge of purple and dark purple across the mental landscape, and with it... the battle for control of Tohka's body began.

Shiori ran towards Mukuro's location, choosing not to fly so she'd be harder for the Inverse Spirit to notice, but before she got anywhere near her, she was forced to stop as she heard her headset ringing.

"Did Mana arrive?" Shiori wondered.

Taking the chance to rest up a little, she dove behind some debris, and then tapped her headset.

"Hello?" Shiori answered.

"Oh, thank goodness, we managed to get through, are you alright Shiori?" Reine asked.

"Wait, if you know who Shiori's is, then does that mean..." Shiori gasped.

"It does, we don't have any proof, but we think when all of the Spirits began to Inverse, it caused Mukuro's lock on our memories to be undone due to the shift in her abilities." Reine answered.

"That could work, when Kotori first entered her Inverse Form, she revived from a single arm due to stronger regeneration abilities." Shiori suggested.

Shiori gasped.

"Oh yeah, has Mana managed to reach you guys yet?" Shiori asked.

"No, but why exactly, and better yet... what exactly happened out there? We lost video feed around after Mukuro began using more power." Reine questioned.

"Well..." Shiori answered.

Reine, and the other members of Ratatoskr, all listened closely as Shiori began to reveal what had happened.

"Right when Mukuro began using more power, everyone, except for me and Tohka, got taken out of commission." Shiori explained.

"And because I had to make sure I could seal her later, Tohka had to fight her alone, and while she was ultimately struggling the whole time, she managed to at least hold against Mukuro's onslaught." Shiori sighed, her look soon telling everyone she was about to share the bad news.

"Even though she was at 100% of her power, Mukuro seemed weakened due to the efforts of the others, but then she revealed a power that let her go beyond that, and Tohka wasn't able to do anything, and right as Mukuro tried to kill her..." Shiori explained.
She began to shake, closing her eyes as the gruesome image resumed in her mind.

"...Mildred pushed her out of the way, but she was hit herself, and shot right through part of her lower abdomen." She revealed.

Everyone in Ratatoskr gasped, with Reine's eyes shaking.

"No, it can't be, Mildred is... dead?" Reine gasped.

"Calm down, she isn't gone, at least not yet. She still has a pulse, and while it's weak, we might be able to save her." Shiori corrected.

Reine gasped a bit.

"Of course, that's why Mana's trying to find us, isn't it?" Reine asked.

"Yeah, she's trying to find one of the secret entrances among the rubble, and hopefully get her back before it's too late to save her." Shiori confirmed.

Reine breathed a bit, her face still slightly worried, but at least mildly hopeful.

"Thank god, but I'm guessing Mukuro jumped to the same conclusion we did, and because of that..." Reine mentioned.

"Yeah, at that moment Mukuro finally remembered Mildred, and the thought of living with the fact she killed her is what brought her to despair." Shiori verified.

Reine nodded in understanding.

"Shiori, do you by any chance know why every Spirit suffered an Inversion then, including those who didn't even have the taint?" Kannazuki asked.

"Yeah, or at least I have a theory, it's like what happened when Mukuro locked the probe and knocked every Spirit unconscious, her attempt to erase our memories seemed to have linked us in a way that let her Inversion spread." Shiori answered.

Reine's eyes widened, and bit her nails slightly.

"Of course, if it spread, that means the Inversion taint had to have spread." Reine grimaced, sweating slightly.

"And worse, unlike the first time the others entered their Inverse Forms, the souls of the deceased Spirits have manifested in everyone, though Mukuro seems to be the exception since she Inverted naturally." Shiori stated.

Reine sweat even worse, starting to pale at the revelation, making Shiori sweat drop as she cleared her throat.

"Things aren't completely bleak though, since me and Mana are only Half-Spirit, we got the power of an inverse Form, but not the unstable mindset." Shiori explained.

"So, we've got the both of you still fighting on our side, at least that's one relief." Matthew sighed, slightly at ease.

"Actually, Tohka's still in control as well." Shiori remarked.
"Huh, she is?" Reine asked, surprised by the claim.

"Yeah, it seems Tohka's so mad right now, she managed to keep herself in control, but she's worried she could lose it at any moment." Shiori admitted.

Shiori turned, noticing Mukuro nearing the area, still crying loudly.

"Never mind that for now, Tohka needs some help, and I need to seal Mukuro before her indirect rampage gets too worse!" Shiori stated.

"We'll send most of the AST to help, and the rest to help Mana get to Ratatoskr, good luck Shiori." Reine replied.

Shiori smiles.

"Thank you, and I'm glad you've got your memories back." Shiori smiled.

"H-hey..." Reine blushed embarrassingly.

Shiori hangs up, and Reine soon turned to the others.

"Alright, you heard me, ready yourselves for deployment AST!" Reine ordered.

"Ma'am, yes ma'am!"

Everyone began rushing to find the functioning secret passages, while Artemisia looks at Reine.

"What about me Commander? While I still have Bahamut, my weapon is still under repairs."

Artemisia asked.

"Bahamut won't be as effective without your Nandaka, so I'll clear you for temporary use of the Saurian, summon it with this." Reine answered.

Artemisia holds out her hands as Reine threw something to her, catching a clear card in them.

"Thank you, Commander, I won't let you down." Artemisia smiled.

Reine nodded as Artemisia followed the others, while Reine soon turned back at the screen, watching the fight Tohka had against the other Inverse Spirits.

"Someone get me any stats we can about Rinne's inverse Form, there's something I want to check." Reine requested.

Shiori left the cover she was behind, soon rushing towards Mukuro before stopping close underneath her.

"MUKURO!" Shiori shouted.

"Huh?" Mukuro wondered.

The crying Inverse Spirit turned to see Shiori, and as she did, tears still streamed down her eyes before she screeched loudly and held out Belphegor.

"No, don't get near me, just go!" Mukuro screamed.
"Cuihui - Destroy!"

Shiori noticed the ground and buildings near her, causing her to back flip out of the way as the debris all aimed towards her.

"Don't help me, I don't deserve it, I never did!" Mukuro cried.

"Huifu - Restore!"

To Shiori's surprise, the ruinous Tenguu City was restored to what it was like before the battle she started in her normal state began, but considering what she just did...

"Oh no, this is bad!" Shiori gasped.

"Cuihui - Destroy!"

And just as Shiori had guessed, the restoration of the city had just been a means of having more debris to make using the dark counterpart of her Segva ability, and then an entire maelstrom of destruction rained down towards her.

Mukuro cried as she watched the devastation smash into Shiori, and she soon turned, planning to return to space and face solitude forever.

"I. Will not. Let you go, Mukuro!"

Mukuro turned in shock, soon seeing Shiori with both Sandalphon, and Camael, in hand. Shiori rushed forward, soon taking to the sky as she began to chant.

"No, stay back!" Mukuro screamed, holding out Belphegor.

"I call to the power of the many Spirits living within this world, shatter the boundaries of eternal darkness, and grant me your divine strength." Shiori chanted.

"Jiguang - Laser!"

A dark golden-yellow beam of Reiryoku fired off Belphegor's tip, smashing into Shiori as the Inverse Spirit panted.

However, Shiori flew forward, surprising Mukuro as she continued to near her.

"Let us overcome the impossible, go beyond the limited, and exceed the foundations of my reality to create the miracle of today!" She continued.

Shiori soon got close to Mukuro, making the crying spirit hold her Demon King defensively.

"I beg of you, loyal Angels of the Sephira, come together and lend me your strength, so I can save Mukuro!" Shiori begged.

At first, nothing happened, but then...

[We hear your voice, Shiori!]

Tohka summoned Nahemah's throne, and smashed it apart before swinging her Demon King behind her, preparing an attack.
"Oh shit, out of the way!" Inverse Yoshino warned.

"She wouldn't!" Inverse Natsumi gasped.

The shards of the silver throne transformed the Demon King into the dreaded Paverschlev, causing Tohka to give a loud scream as she swung it.

All of the Inverse Spirits are blown back by the force of exploding energy, though Inverse Rinne zoomed through and slashed Choronzon forward.

"Ghh!" Tohka grunted.

"You don't have the strength to go against us, everyone, swarm her now!" Inverse Rinne demanded.

They all smirk, preparing to rush at Tohka, only for them to suddenly be frozen in place, and clearly showing signs they couldn't move despite their attempts to.

"What the, how did they just freeze up?" Inverse Rinne asked in shock.

Suddenly she sees Choronzon shake, with Tohka seeing the same with Paverschlev, and then a burst forcefully pushed the two apart.

At that moment, the Sephira Spirits all had sphere of Reiryoku, and not their Dark Reiryoku, exit their bodies and begin flying off somewhere. Inverse Rinne soon noticed Choronzon released one as well, confusing her.

"What's going on?" Inverse Rinne questioned.

'Shiori, don't tell me you're about to do "that", are you? Tohka thought.

Shiori turned, smiling as the lights near her, with Inverse Mukuro panicking as she floated back slightly.

"W-what is this?" Mukuro stuttered fearfully.

Shiori held out her hand as the pink sphere flew out towards her, and soon Rinne's version of Uriel formed in her right hand, right as she summoned her own version in her left hand, one by one the other spheres neared the two combatants.

"Thank you, all of you." Shiori smiled.

One by one, the spheres showed the silhouettes of the Angels, with Shiori holding the two Uriel blades together as they enter their respective gems.

The gems on each Uriel lit up, and soon the only two that were blank were the spots for Michael and Sandalphon, with the latter's form as the purple sphere hovering near Shiori as if it was worried.

[Shiori, are you sure about this?]

"I am Sandalphon, there's no other choice, to save Mukuro I need to do this." Shiori answered.

[But... without Michael, you know of the risk, don't you?]

Shiori went silent, closing your eyes.
[To do this, you'll be giving up your Humanity, you'll be as true of a Spirits as your mother, and you'll be bringing your sister into this too!]

"I know..." She replied.

[Then shouldn't she get a say in this? Shiori, if you run out of time, you'll fall to the Inversion's influence and then turn against us, not to mention eventually you'll die! I beg of you, don't-]" 

"I trust you, big sis!"

Both Sandalphon, and Shiori, show shock as they heard Mana's voice through Shiori's headset.

"Mana?" Shiori stated.

"If we don't do anything, our friends will be trapped by their Inverse Forms forever, everyone we know will be at risk, and this whole world itself will be in danger, including to whatever Westcott might pull next!" Mana shouted.

Shiori listened closely, surprised by her sister's words.

"That's why I trust you sis, do what you have to do, because we're all going to make it back alive!" Mana smiled.

"Mana... thank you, for believing in me." Shiori smiled, shedding a few tears.

Shiori looked to the purple sphere that was Sandalphon, and nodded her head, showing her resolve to go through with this.

[Alright, then I guess there's no going back, let my strength become yours for this one moment!]

Sandalphon soon entered the Uriel blades, and once she did, they both glowed like the sun as Shiori screamed loudly.

Mukuro stared in shock, seeing Shiori's transformation, while in another location, Mana felt her chest contract as less flashy experience happened to her. As Shiori feels the experience overwhelm her, she grits her teeth, trying to bear the pain.

"I swear, right here and now..." Shiori grunted, every muscle in her body burning.

Her eyes widened.

"...THAT I WILL SAVE EVERYONE!" She screamed.

Whoa... so Shiori's about to give up the remnant of her Human side and fully evolve into a Spirit, and Mana's given her approval for it despite it pays the same cost for her, just how much power does she need to handle Inverse Mukuro? Well, all I'll say is this won't make Shido be stuck in his form as Shiori, but that's it.

Actually, I can say one more thing, recall when Shido managed to use the Spirit Ascension despite he wasn't able to due to so he could save Mukuro back in Mukuro Space? This is related to that, I even had to hide a scene that happened during the Mukuro Quasar arc because it would have spoiled this scene, but now that I can reveal it, the answers will soon be revealed.
Looks like Mildred hasn't kicked the bucket yet, but don't get your hopes up, just because I said she's alive here doesn't mean she'll survive. My justification for her not instantly dying comes from how despite the Fraxinus crew saying he didn't register a heartbeat, Shido still survived being shot. Also, a character in another series (I can't say which due to spoilers) got a similar wound, but they managed to be healed and they survived.

In fact, I'll admit it... the truth is I'm actually not sure if I want to kill Mildred off, or have her survive Mukuro's attack, as of right now. This is my way of leaving both options open depending on what my choice is. Ultimately, her fate will be decided by what I feel the next few chapters make me feel I should choose, so it can honestly go either way.

Looks like Reine's gotten a visage of memories like Shido did, but not the same ones, and once again there's mention of Seigo and the "key". Just what is this key exactly, why's it so important, what do Seigo and Isamu know about it, and why did Reine see those images and words in the first place? Most of all... why hasn't Seigo spoke of them the few times he's manifested?

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Inverse Rio, Code Name: [Serpent]-

Demon King: Belial  - Eden's Demon King counterpart, which takes the form of a razor shield. Belial takes Eden's defensive abilities, adding some new ones like shock absorption, limiting the damage she can receive from physical attacks, and impact dispersion, spreading out the force of any magical or long ranged attacks that hit her.

- Powers: Due to the nature of her Inverse Form's creation, Rio basically has the same powers as before, simply enhanced by the Inversion's use of Dark Reiryoku, though she now has some offense, with her Demon King having razor blades she can use in close range combat. Unfortunately, this is incredibly risky as it briefly negates Belial's shock absorption and impact dispersion.

Risk Factors: S

Spacequake: AAA

Spirit's Astral Dress: B

Demon King Rank: S

Strength: 147

Consistency: 132

Spiritual Power: 263

Agility: 112

Intelligence: 94
-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's angry)

Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)
Chapter 66

Before we begin, time to sound the same warning as in the previous chapter.

WARNING! MINOR TO MAJOR SPOILERS FOR VOLUME 17, READ AT YOUR OWN RISK!

OK, now we can officially initiate the start notes. Last chapter, we had the threat of the Inverse Army appear as due to the forced Inversions, the same threat that was born in the Choronzon arc with the Inverse clones as manifested in the girls, and now the angry souls of the deceased Spirits are intent of hunting the Human race to extinction.

Mildred's revealed to have not died yet, but we're still on the wire, and she could still go either way at this rate. With only himself as Shiori to save Mukuro while the struggling Tohka tries to face herself and the others, Shiori has decided with approval from Mana to pay the ultimate sacrifice and play the ultimate gamble, now... we're about to see if luck's on Shiori's side, or if the Human race is finally going to meet their end.

Now to reply a guest review.

To Seeker213:
"Yeah, and ironically, I'd rank this danger as only second to the threat that the mutated Choronzon brought. This is because while wiping our Humanity isn't exactly a good thing, they're not trying to blow up the Earth like Choronzon had. Although, in terms of an actual threat if you generalize it... then this actually is the greatest threat this series has introduced."

"And you are right, this is indeed a massive gamble, the seriousness of what Shido's doing was pretty much implied by Sandalphon being the only Angel who was afraid of even trying this. Worst of all, if he takes too long that it ends up failing, and then Tohka's inverse side takes her over the world is pretty much... I'm not sure if I can actually use the f-bomb in a T-Rated story, but that's pretty much what the world will be."

"That's actually a good question, and the answer to it? They'll likely stay, similar to the reason I'd be keeping their abilities. Aside from that, I don't expect us to see more Inverse Forms aside from Kurumi's for a while, and this story is near its end. If I ever need to have the others' Inverse Forms in another story, then I'll probably do that, provided I'm trying to stay close to canon, like with the Date Another Origin stories."

"OK, I'll say this about those suggestions, those are amazing, especially the first! Why have I never heard of this before! (Please, recommend more music, I honestly need to hear some new songs) Even better, the first one I can play almost immediately in this chapter! As for the last bit about the second song... yeah, I think it's pretty obvious at this point there's going to be at least one, isn't it? ^^;"

Well, we're about to see just what Shiori did, so hold on for the ride because... *pulls the start lever* here we go!

-Inverse Maria, Code Name: [Antinomy]-
Demon King: Leviathan - Opheniel's Demon King counterpart. It takes the form of its Angel counterpart, but if it had broken pieces, and spikes jutting from it. The only difference between it and Opheniel is that the plants it commands are withered, and incredibly untamed, not to mention unsafe for any species' consumption.

- Powers: Due to the nature of her Inverse Form's creation, Maria basically has the same powers as before, simply enhanced by the Inversion's use of Dark Reiryoku. Though due to the plants she makes being withered, they harm the environment more than they rejuvenate or restore it, not to mention they allow her to form a lot of dust.

Risk Factors: A

Spacequake: A

Spirit's Astral Dress: AA

Angel Rank: AA

Strength: 119

Consistency: 122

Spiritual Power: 198

Agility: 127

Intelligence: 121

Chapter 66, S3: Sephira Fury, Part 9

Shiori looked to the purple sphere that was Sandalphon, and nodded her head, showing her resolve to go through with this.

[Alright, then I guess there's no going back, let my strength become yours for this one moment!]

Sandalphon soon entered the Uriel blades, and once she did, they both glowed like the sun as Shiori screamed loudly.

Mukuro stared in shock, seeing Shiori's transformation, while in another location, Mana felt her chest contract as less flashy experience happened to her. As Shiori feels the experience overwhelm her, she grits her teeth, trying to bear the pain.

"I swear, right here and now..." Shiori grunted, every muscle in her body burning.

Her eyes widened.

"...THAT I WILL SAVE EVERYONE!" She screamed.

"This... this power!" Mukuro gasped fearfully, shielding her eyes.

Deep within Shiori's body, the small bit of her Reiryoku began to shift and move fast, soon rippling at an accelerated rate.
Eventually, the Reiryoku within her surged through, finding any traces of her Maryoku and compressing into it, with the power of the other sealed Spirits' Reiryoku converging with it around Shiori's mana core and beginning to flash between every color.

Tohka screams as she swings down from the sky, taking Inverse Rinne's brief distraction as a chance to knock her back. Luckily for the Inverted First Spirit, a bunch of withered tree roots created by Inverse Maria cushioned her landing.

"Ugh... how annoying you are, it will give me great pleasure to finish you soon enough." Inverse Rinne glared.

"You'll never... win against... me, so try and... fail!" Tohka panted.

Inverse Rinne grunted at that, and soon readied Choronzon again... only for her to hear some screams, and turned to see the others all holding their heads, their spirit auras all flickering a bit.

"What is this!?" Inverse Rinne gasped.

Soon, she felt the same pain and held her own head, a flashing between her usual form's pink and rainbow colored Reiryoku surrounding her.

Tohka looked at everyone in surprise, noticing her own purple aura, but not feeling any pain.

"This is... could it be?" Tohka wondered.

As everyone's spirit auras flicker, some of them began to change, with the non-Sephiria Spirits feeling something in them burn.

Rinne's rainbow Reiryoku slowly vanished, Mayuri's began shifting to cyan, and Maria's began turning brown.

As Mana flew through the air with Mildred still in tow, and no member of the AST in sight, as she did, she began feeling her cyan aura fluctuate as she sensed her big sister's actions start resonating to her.

"It's happening, you can do it." Mana whispered, encouraging Shiori.

The color of Mana's aura soon shifted into a soothing violet.

Back in the Ratatoskr base, as everyone began watching, Reine suddenly held her chest, grunting as she felt a sudden pain.

"Commander Murasame!?" Shiizaki shouted worriedly.

"W-what's happening, why am I... feeling like this?" Reine gasped out.

Reine coughed heavily, collapsing onto her knees.

"Remember."

'Remember... what? I know who I am, don't I?' Reine thought, somehow calm compared her body's
Within Shiori's mind, the sight of her form as Shido and Shiori both appeared, floating around something of a singularity that connected to her understanding and a link to her mana core as it began to shine slightly.

'Mom... Dad... Mana... Rio... Tohka... Kotori... Origami... Maria... Marina... Yoshino... Kurumi... Mayuri... Natsumi... Kaguya... Yuzuru... Miku... Nia... Mukuro... and everyone else, I will gladly make this choice without hesitation!' Shiori thought.

Soon enough, the representations of Shiori and Shido overlaid, and the Reiryoku within exploded throughout her body, soon moving away from Shiori's mana core, and revealing the sign that she was no longer Half-Human, Half Spirit, but a full Spirit...

...a clear colored Sephira Crystal replacing the spot her mana core used to live.

"...This is it." Shiori declared.

Outside of her body, Shiori's glow faded as her golden eyes shined more than ever, and heavy, nearly crystalline ripples, that represented her clear colored Reiryoku surrounded her. The Astral Dress that formed around her was based on an extraordinary, exquisite and unique tomboy outfit. As she stood before her, Mukuro uncovered her eyes and saw it.

"What did... you do?" Mukuro asked, tears in her eyes.

"I was always different from the other Spirits, I had been a Spirit, but part of me was human. However, the Spirits that exist now are no different than humans who have just evolved... and so I took both halves and made them one." Shiori explained.

Mukuro's eyes widened slightly.

"As of this moment... I am truly a Spirit, one who's power represents the bonds with everyone I care for!" She exclaimed.

"This is the sacrifice I've made so I can save you, Mukuro!" She shouted.

Mukuro gasped, shaking a bit as she gripped onto Belphegor tighter.

"Save... me?" Mukuro whimpered.

Mukuro screamed, and soon enough, Shiori felt herself flung across a building as the Dimensional Spirit used her Waqui ability against her.

Once she got herself on her feet, her aura briefly flowed orange before turning both Uriel blades into the Yamai twins' Raphael bows, and launch herself forward, surprising Mukuro as she got close again.

"You're in pain, so much pain you can only think of running away like before, but this time... I won't let you feel you're alone and claim you don't deserve happiness!" Shiori screamed.

"No... go away... alone... I should stay alone, that's all I deserve." Mukuro cried, raising Belphegor up.

"Fahui - Unleash!"
Mukuro's body assumes an Inverse version of her Shifuru technique, but to Shiori's horror, she screamed in pain the moment it manifested... it was like this version of the ability was harming her, and she was letting it harm her!

Mukuro, still under the excruciating pain, aimed Belphegor in its halberd state towards Shiori, and this time Shiori saw she was crying tears of blood.

"Yanmo - Annihilation!"

"Mukuro... I get it now... why you're so insistent on hurting yourself." Shiori whispered.

As the wave of decomposed Reiryoku flies after her, Shiori dispels the two Raphael bows and to Mukuro's surprise, manifests Rio's Eden to block the attack. As the Angel was considered a living thing, the attack couldn't break it.

"You're just so innocent, you could never understand right or wrong between your actions, all because you just wanted to feel love. The reason why..." Shiori stated, a sad look in her eyes.

She formed Raziel and after whispering a question, the Angel showed her Mukuro's memories.

"Because the people that should have showed you love never gave you it, and you felt you lost it with your adopted family, so much you never realized they felt more in the wrong for realizing you just didn't know, and now... you feel you don't deserve love you're punish yourself, hurting yourself even." Shiori stated, tears in her eyes.

"I will not let you feel it, not anymore, do you hear me Mukuro!?" She exclaimed.

Mukuro shook a bit, crying more, but she shook her head.

"I don't deserve it, not after what I did!" Mukuro screamed.

Mukuro fired more beams at Shiori, causing the newly evolved Spirit to rush around the volley of attacks, trying to near her.

"That's not true Mukuro, and I'll make you see it, because..." Shiori shouted.

- I won't let you make that face again! -

Shiori slashed through another beam using Camael.

"...I will not reject you!"

Mukuro’s eyes shake at that, but she soon shakes her head, unable to believe it.

"I want to believe you, but... I just can't!" Mukuro cried.

"Then I'll make you believe, throw everything you can at me, but know this... there's no way I won't make it to you!" Shiori exclaimed.

- I won't let you cry again! -

Shiori held up her hand, freezing some debris Mukuro flung at her.

"Because I'm here to save you!" She shouted

- I won't let you feel alone again! -
"And like I said one for, because just like everyone else... I love you!" She screamed.

Mukuro’s eyes go blank at that, the declaration echoing in her ears.

"That’s why, I’ll prove that no matter what happens, I’ll reach you!"

- (*insert song end*) -

Shiori rushed at Mukuro, the shocked Inverse Spirit holding Belphegor shakily, but as Shiori neared her...

"Guh!" Shiori gasped.

Shiori suddenly covered her mouth, slightly vomiting some blood as slight Dark Reiryoku began to pour off her body, making Inverse Mukuro gasp.

'Oh no, it's happening... what mom warned me about!' Shiori thought, coughing as she did.

---

**Within the earliest week of everyone's training before the attempt to contact Mukuro, the Takamiya siblings were both looking at their mother as Rinne, with Rio watching from the side as she ate a large rice ball.**

"Wait, you're saying that I could make me and Mana become full-fledged Spirits?" Shido asked in surprise.

"Really?" Mana replied.

Rinne nodded, looking at the two closely.

"While I didn’t start as one myself, the Spirits have pretty much become evolved humans, I myself gained a touch of emotion via Rio when she saved me and boom. Although, I guess that I'm not that different, so that could be just my view." Rinne answered.

"Mom, focus." Mana interrupted, a sweat drop on her face.

Rinne blushed, chuckling a little.

"Sorry about that. OK, my main point is the mana core in each of you is pretty much like an infant Sephira Crystal, and since Shido has a mass amount of Reiryoku in him, he could have the other spirits channel it to help the core mature into one." Rinne explained.

"And... how does that work with me exactly?" Mana asked confused.

"Because of the link you have with Shido being his Spirit Ascension, that indirectly connects the process to you." Rinne answered.

Mana's jaw dropped, leading to Rio to close it.

"Whoa... that's kinda nifty." Mana responded.

"However, I should warn you, I don't feel entirely safe with you doing this. At least, not before we seal Mukuro, without all 10 Sephira Spirits there's a huge worry I have." Rinne sighed, beginning the bad news.

Rio raised her hand, getting Rinne's attention.
"What is it, Rio?" Rinne asked.

"I'm confused why we have different classifications, don't we all have Sephira Crystals?" Rio asked.

Rinne blinks at that.

"Uh... hey Reine, did you never explain the Tree of Life to Rio!?" Rinne called out.

"No, I kept forgetting whenever she ran off while in her younger form, and then I just forgot entirely!" Reine shouted back.

"OK!" Rinne shouted in return.

Rinne chuckles, blushing in embarrassment as she looked at her youngest daughter.

"Well Rio, this is kinda related to why you and I don't have Inverse Forms, or Mayuri, or the Arusu sisters." Rinne answered.

"You see Rio, the Sephira Crystals belonging to Shido's harem are more special cause they weren't born within us, they were transferred to them, and they represent a concept in the human world known as the Tree of Life, namely the Sephirot." She explained.

Rio blinked, and soon Mana pulled up a picture on her phone, showing her.

"That's a tree?" Rio asked.

"A representation technically, but the Angels they have match these circles, which are called the Sephira."

"...Oooh! I get it now, that's why we call them that." Rio smiled.

Rinne giggles a bit, soon clearing her throat.

"OK, re-railing the train of thought here, the reason why I'm worried about you doing this before you seal Mukuro is because, well... because your Reiryoku would be something like yours and theirs at ones, so if one of the girls entered her Inverse Form..." Reine continued.

"...We could do the same?" Mana finished.

"Yeah, not instantly, maybe around 20 minutes or so, but you most likely would. I don't know if you'll ever need to actually use this, but if the situation ever does, promise you only use it as an absolute last resort." Rinne reasoned.

Rinne held out both hands to her older children.

"Deal?" She requested.

"Deal." Both replied, shaking them.

Shiori wiped the blood away, regaining her bearings.

'I can feel it, the Dark Reiryoku's starting to take over, I've only got 15 more minutes before me and Mana will end up like the others, and then Tohka's gonna be on her own... if she loses to the will of the Spirits within her we're toast.' Shiori thought.
'I have to do it, within the time left, I will save Mukuro and everyone else!' She thought, filled with determination.

Shiori summons both of Zafkiel's guns, and began rushing at Mukuro.

Mana soon feels the same effects as Shiori, and quickly lands as she coughs out blood as well, quickly shaking off the effects of some dark violet Reiryoku ebbing off her body, wearing an astral dress similar to Shiori's, bit a bit more girly since she didn't have a male persona to switch between.

"Dang it, I don't think I can make it back like this, I can't find any secret entrances. No choice, I'll have to let them come to me instead." Mana said to herself, tapping her headset.

"This is Mana here, can't find my way back, I'm not feeling so hot and I can't find an entrance that still works, I need the AST to come to me instead." Mana stated.

Mana blinks, tapping her headset again.

"Sorry, we're here!" Kannazuki screamed.

Mana holds her ear from the sudden volume.

"Why'd you scream in my ear, and what made you take a while to answer anyways?" Mana winced, rubbing said ear.

"It's the Commander, she just suddenly collapsed!" Kannazuki answered.


"We don't know, but we-wait, why were you contacting us?" Kannazuki replied, then questioned.

Mana's eyes widen.

"Oh right! Well, you might have noticed, but Shiori did what my mom told her about becoming a full Spirit, but the process has started to weaken me, I need the AST to come over or I won't be able to get Mildred help in time!" Mana explained.

"The others have had trouble getting out too, the entrances were all blocked off form the debris, we're looking for a spot where we can force a hole outside without causing a collapse on us, try to wait just a bit longer, OK?" Kannazuki replied.

Mana sighs, then nods.

"OK, but just know I only have less than 15 minutes, otherwise the AST's gonna face me in my Inverse Form, and have them bring the medical equipment with them." Mana answered.

"Right, will do!" Kannazuki replied.

As he hung up, Mana sighed a bit... only to suddenly widen her eyes as something passes by her, slashing across her back as she fell forward.

'What... just... happened!?' Mana gasped.

Mana collapsed on the ground, with Chinami smirking once she got to cover behind a building, looking at the dark violet sample of energy on the special extraction sword she held in her hand.
Closing in on the edge of the destruction, the glowing lights from before slowly got closer, and while still failing to form as usual... this time they refused to flicker out and stayed strong as they got closer.

"R..n..."

The one light slowed down, but soon grunted before pushing forward to go faster.

"Rinne... I'm coming, please... Rinne!"

"Reine..."

The other light followed, supporting the one in front of it.

"The time is near Reine, the truth... I hope you can understand it..."

Kannazuki turns to the others, everyone looking at Reine, her face showing signs of a fever as she laid near-unconscious on the floor for reasons no one could understand.

"I don't get it, what's wrong with her?" Haruko wondered.

"She's looking flushed, but her temperature's normal, none of the medical equipment says anything is wrong, and yet..." Ren added, biting the nail on his left point finger.

Reine breathed heavier, coughing more as she laid on the ground, and Artemisia soon ran by and saluted.

"We've found a safe structure to blast through, we're intending to go aid Mana and Tohka now!" Artemisia stated.

"Alright, we'll watch over the commander." Minowa replied.

"Get some medical equipment and take it with you, I think Mana implied we don't have the time to bring her back here anymore." Kannazuki brought up.

Artemisia nods.

"Right!" Artemisia replied.

Artemisia rushes to the others, and as that was happening, something else raced through Reine's head.

"I'm so lucky you're my big brother, and so glad I got to meet you."

'Why does that line... sound so different now?' Reine thought.

Tohka rushes forward with a shout, swinging down Paverschlev and gouging into the city as the other Inverse Spirits all attack her at once, countering the attack before her attack's Dark Reiryoku dispersed, making her grit her teeth.

"You're at your limit, just give up!" Inverse Rinne demanded.

"No, I'll never give you what you want, I won't lose to you!" Tohka screamed.

At that moment, Tohka felt herself shake again as her eyes flashed, starting to pant as Inverse Rinne
frowned.

"You say that, but the evidence speaks the contrary." Inverse Rinne scolded.

'No, don't let it take over Tohka, you can... you can hold on!' Tohka panted, tightening her grip on Paverschlev.

Inverse Rinne turned to the others.

"End her charade, this farce has gone on long enough." Inverse Rinne ordered.

Tohka readied herself, but was suddenly constricted as Inverse Mayuri constricted her in some kind of metal bindings, making her realize how close she got to some of the debris. Inverse Mayuri zoomed at her, and soon put a hand out, and Tohka screamed as she was electrocuted with the powerful lightning.

Wobbling a bit, the Energy Spirit coughed before she saw the others rush at her. Inverse Origami and Inverse Yoshino blasted their respective elements at her, and Tohka was thrown across the ground before Inverse Kotori appeared above her.

"Time to burn, you bitch! Inverse Kotori shouted excitedly.

Tohka screamed as the fiery axe of Asmodeus slammed down on her, leaving a crater where she was hit. Inverse Kotori jumped out of the way before the Inverse Yamai twins fired Adramelech’s arrows at her, making the pummeled Spirit scream even more.

'I... I need to... regain my ground-' Tohka thought.

Suddenly, she felt her inverse half trying to manifest again, and once again she forced it back with her rage.

Using that opening, Inverse Miku releases a Sonic scream, and Inverse Maria creates a withered plant wall so Tohka has to take the entire attack without the recoil lessening it in the slightest.

"Now, fall once and for all, ha!" Inverse Rinne yelled.

Tohka was shot through the withered vine wall, her eyes losing their light as the force of the attack send her flying and onto the ground, and then went still.

"...She's lost consciousness, her fight against us has failed, now let's take care of those two Half-Human bastards." Inverse Rinne declared.

"I'm sorry, but I don't think so.

The Inverse Spirits all turned to look for the source of the voice, and before any of them could react... Inverse Rinne, the Inverse Arusu sisters, Inverse Rio and Inverse Mayuri all suddenly had a slash appear on one of their two sides, and keeled over slightly.

"What!? Who did that, show yourself!" Inverse Rinne growled.

Chinami however did not listen, hiding behind part of the building debris with good cover, and looking at the sword holding the Inverse samples she had collected.

'I've got them all, and based on what that one brat did, I don't even need to get hers, Westcott should be able to make it himself as long as I have the others.'
Chinami tapped her headset.  
"Sir Westcott, this is Chinami speaking, I've completed my mission with one additional sample."
Chinami alerted.
"Oh, how did that happen?" Westcott answered.

Chinami chuckled a bit.
"It seems that we can't say there's 16 Spirits and two Half-Spirits anymore, but 18 Spirits. Seems those two brats did something to shatter that half status." Chinami answered.

"I see, then you must have one-" Westcott commented.

"No need, based on what I gathered, as long as we have the other 17, you can make your own. It probably wouldn't work unless tailored to the individual." Chinami corrected.

Westcott hummed over the phone.

"Alright, I'll take the samples you have now, keep watch the area." Westcott stated.

"As you wish, I'll keep an eye out on-" Chinami answered.

Suddenly, part of her CR-Unit beeped, confusing the Adeptus 3 Wizard as she took a look at it.

"...Seems you made a right call, I think my previous report may have a slight error if this isn't a malfunction I just received." Chinami said, glaring at the info before her.

With Tohka's mind, she feels herself flung onto the wall before Inverse Tohka smashes Nahemah into her, shattering her Astral Dress, and breaking Sandalphon to pieces, before she tumbled onto the ground, only shreds of her destroyed Astral Dress covering her.

Seeing she had one, Inverse Tohka walked up to her normal counterpart, and raised her Demon King into the air.

"It is over, and now we must end this." Inverse Tohka stated, giving a fierce look as she prepared to murder Tohka.

Nahemah's blade began to have Dark Reiryoku swirl around it.

"You've gotten in my way enough times, and now I can finally end it, finally purge you and take your form to enact our revenge." Inverse Tohka spat out.

"Is that... really all you can think about, killing people who were never involved?" Tohka asked, struggling to get up.

Inverse Tohka grit her teeth.

"Shut the hell up, or I'll make this slow and painful!" Inverse Tohka sneered.

The inverse counterpart raised her blade, ready to do the deed.

"Finally, I'll be free of your restraint forever!" Inverse Tohka shouted.

"So, are you saying you know that this body will still survive if you kill me, is that it?" Tohka asked.
Suddenly, Inverse Tohka stopped her swing inches from Tohka's face, a look of surprise on confusion on her face.

- (*Stella Glow - Alto's Determination*) -

"...What?" Inverse Tohka asked, sweating a bit.

"How do you know that if you kill me, this body won't die with it? I may be a Spirit now, but it's because of the Sephira Crystal, this body was born human, so no matter what you do... that is an irrefutable fact!" Tohka exclaimed.

Inverse Tohka's eyes widened, and her body shook as the undeniable truth stood before her, as Tohka had just said to her, the very reason Tohka had even become a Spirit and have given her the form she had now? It was because she had been born a human who could accept the crystal.

Seeing her chance, Tohka got up, and her Astral Dress reformed, scaring the Inverse counterpart as she held up Nahemah defensively, only for her to notice Tohka didn't call Sandalphon out alongside her Astral Dress.

"What are you doing, stay back!" Inverse Tohka stated nervously.

"More than that, the only reason you're even still living is through the Sephira Crystal bonding to me, all the dead souls making you would never get to experience being alive again." Tohka stated, a determined look on her face.

Inverse Tohka sweats a bit, suddenly losing all her confidence and courage.

"But most of all, when Rio gave all of us the Sephira Crystals, there was something she always did... she asked us after telling us the danger, and we accepted that fact!" Tohka shouted.

"We never had any reason, but we still chose to take that burden, and yet you still want Humanity to die when by all means it was us who let you even get to live again!?" Tohka asked, glaring deeper.

Inverse Tohka's eyes widened heavily, Nahemah dropping to the ground as the words rang through her body like a shot to the heart.

"I... no that, it's... don't talk like you know me or what we've all been through, you're just a naive fool!" Inverse Tohka screeched.

"...Yeah, I am." Tohka admitted.

"Huh?" Inverse Tohka wondered.

Tohka breathed, and looked at Inverse Tohka, and at that moment she realize something from the expression she was showing her.

"However, even if I am naive, stupid, dumb or just an idiot who doesn't know what she's doing, I know this much... your face, it looks so sad." Tohka said in a sympathetic tone.

Inverse Tohka flinched a bit, and stepped back further as if to deny it.

However, Tohka refused to let her, for only one reason...

"You saw it once before, Shido's father was a Human who showed you a way, and he fought for you, and for Rinne, when Westcott took all your lives and realized he himself was nothing more than a pawn in his schemes!" Tohka exclaimed.
Inverse Tohka tried to reply, but was stopped as Tohka's eyes silenced her, her eyes showing no fear and scaring her info silence.

"There's always a chance to start over, to become better than you were the day before!" Tohka shouted.

"I... I..." Inverse Tohka muttered.

- You are not a slave to your hatred! -

Tohka breathed in, and shouted louder.

"You've lost your way, because you don't know what else to do, but that doesn't mean someone can help you, and you don't have to be alone anymore!" She hollered.

- You are not a slave to your despair! -

"Because... because even if the entire world rejects you, that doesn't change the fact that "I" accept you!" Tohka exclaimed, echoing Shido's words.

"W-why... why would you say something like that, what would make you accept someone like me, someone who's tried killing you before now!?" Inverse Tohka shouted angrily.

Inverse Tohka suddenly gasped as Tohka had gotten right in front of her, and before she knew it... Tohka hugged her, causing her expression to show confusion.

"Don't you get it, you are me, we're both Tohka Yatogami, not accepting you, not accepting what's become my darkness... is no different than refusing to accept myself." Tohka answered, smiling.

Inverse Tohka's eyes shook, surprised at what she heard.

Up until now... she had tried to murder Tohka, make her suffer, gave her nothing but pain, technically fought against her through Choronzon and even tried to make her become who she was, and yet Tohka refused to hate her.

Looking towards Tohka, her face now seemingly without the anger born of her hatred, a single question escaped her mouth.

"You really... you really won't reject me, even after all I've done to you?" Inverse Tohka asked, her voice trembling.

"Just like Shido did for me when I lost my memories, no matter what, because I know you're not like Westcott, nor was everyone who made you."

With that, Inverse Tohka's eyes finally began shedding tears, she had won when it came to swords... but Tohka had hit her with an even stronger weapon, the feeling of acceptance.

She couldn't hold onto her hate anymore, and she hugged Tohka back as she sobbed out 30 years of tears that never got to be shed.

- (*insert song end*) -

"I don't get it, how can... how can people like you exist, people willing to forgive!?" Inverse Tohka asked, still crying.
"Because, we keep moving forward, and now you can to." Tohka smiled.

Suddenly, within Tohka's mental landscape, she notices a familiar shine she hadn't seen for a long time.

"That light... can it be?" Tohka gasped.

"I remember that, it's the same light that appeared when you faced Choronzon." Inverse Tohka stated.

At that moment, Tohka gasped.

She had finally realized it, why she's never been able to use the Ethereal Shift since the first time.

"I get it now..." Tohka breathed.

"Huh?" Inverse Tohka.

"The form may have been of hope, but just like I never Inverted of my free will... it wasn't just my hope that mattered!" Tohka exclaimed.

Tohka looked at her Inverse Form.

"The taint of Inversion, and the imbuing of the Ethereal Shift, both of them are part of the Sephira Crystal... you too needed hope! Shiori, Mana, everyone... hang on, because I finally have a chance to save us all!" Tohka smiled.

"Huh?" Inverse Tohka blinked.

Tohka looked at her confused Inverse half, and held out a hand to the latter's surprise.

"Come on, let's reclaim our future, and make sure Westcott can never hurt anyone else like he did to you." Tohka offered.

Inverse Tohka looked at Tohka's hand, and slowly moved it near her, after hesitating slightly... she accepted the hand.

"...I believe in you, so show me that I'm right to, Tohka Yatogami." Inverse Tohka stated.

Inverse Rinne and the others never noticed Chinami, and she soon grit her teeth.

"Forget this, we've got something that actually matters to take care of." Inverse Rinne stated.

"Yeah, let's get that Half-Human filth, she's not long before she ends up on our side!" Inverse Kotori smirked.

Shiori rushed after Mukuro, holding Sandalphon and Eden in her hands.

"I can... make it, there's still enough time left." Shiori panted.

She was on her last 2 minutes, and Mukuro's attempts to fight against her seemed to have had the Dimensional Spirit begin doubting her actions, causing her to close down.

Taking the chance, Shiori flew forward and morphed back to Shido, intending to finally do the deed and seal her powers... only for a bunch of withered vines to grab his legs to his horror.
"I'm sorry, but we can let you do that." Inverse Maria stated.

"Oh, and we're not risking waiting 2 minutes, so I think I'll just hit... fast forward!" Inverse Kurumi shouted.

Inverse Kurumi fires a bullet, accelerating time around Shido and expending the rest of his time limit. Shido began to scream, Dark Reiryoku coming off him as the Inverse taint's power began to overwhelm his senses and take over.

"No, I didn't make it, I'm... sorry everyone!" Shido apologized, before he started slipping away.

Mana waited by Mildred, panting a bit as she felt the effects catch up to her.

"Come on, you can make it, please..." Mana pleaded.

Soon enough, she turned to hear the sound of an engine running, and turned to see Artemisia, Mikie and Katie drive into view in the Sleipnir, the car carrying the medical equipment in the back.

"Hey Mana, are we too late!?" Katie called out.

"They're here, just in time..." Mana smiled, still panting slightly.

They land by Mildred, and soon notice the wound.

"Oh my god, that's bad, and she's still alive after that!?" Mikie gasped.

"Yeah, but not for long, and there's a good chance she'll need a good jolt to the heard." Artemisia added.

"I've been using my powers to try, I'm not sure how much it helped, but hopefully it gave her a chance..." Mana stated.

Mana got up, starting to slowly walk somewhere else.

"Mana?" Mikie questioned.

"It's just out of safety, I don't know if-" Mana answered.

Suddenly, Mana's eyes widen, screaming as she held her head to the others' surprise, and then the sight of Dark Reiryoku began ebbing off her.

"Oh no, this isn't good, I'll try to knock her back to reality while you treat and protect Mildred!" Artemisia warned.

Artemisia put the clear card to her head, summoning the Saurian CR-Unit which had the appearance of bulky green and armor, actual wings for the flight realizer, a sword designed like a brontosaurus's head and neck, and the left-handed cannon weapon looked like a mouth.

Mana began to growl, breathing heavily as she turned around to look at Artemisia, her eyes having turned from gold to a dark red color as her hands cackled with unstable looking violet energy, and Mikie noticed it looked like Rinne's but more erratic.

"Mana, this is gonna hurt me more than it hurts you, and probably because it will barely nick you." Artemisia apologized.
Artemisia opens up the Saurian's arm cannon, and fires a blast at Mana, the inverted Takamiya held out her hand with the unstable energy, and the strongest Ratatoskr wizard paled as she saw the attack be annihilated, causing a small ring-shaped mark from the recoil around Mana.

"What... the freaking... hell!?!" Katie asked shocked.

"I think she has an element now, but which one?" Artemisia wondered, gulping a bit.

"...It's the opposite of her mother's, it looks just like hers but unstable, and if her mother can create using the element of Ether, then what's opposite of that?" Mikie answered, and then questioned.

Katie thought on it, and then gasped.

"Void, which can also be called Annihilation!" Katie sweated in fear.

"And I intend to destroy you filthy Humans with every bit of it." Inverse Mana said darkly.

Inverse Mana gathered Reiryoku into her hands, preparing to attack.

As the Inverse Spirits watch Shido fall to his Inversion's influence.

"And now all have turned against Humanity, our day is now-" Inverse Rinne stated, smirking at the sight before her.

Tohka's foot stomped on the ground, catching Inverse Rinne's attention as turned around.

Tohka's eyes were shadowed, and she slowly walked towards the group.

"Oh, it seems you've finally woken up, I hope you're ready for-" Inverse Rinne asked.

"Rinne, I think you should know something about Humans." Tohka answered, suddenly smiling.

Inverse Rinne's eyes widened at that, showing surprise.

"Huh, what's with you, why are you suddenly interested in humans?" Inverse Natsumi asked.

"Yeah, unless it's how you can torture or brutally kill them, then we're-" Inverse Nia added.

Inverse Rinne held out a hand near them.

"...What's going on, why haven't you lost control of your form yet!?" Inverse Rinne seethed.

The other Inverse Spirits all looked in shock as Tohka raised her head, revealing her eyes were still her own, rather than Inverse Tohka's... or so they thought.

- (*Fairy Fencer F - Full Contact, Instrumental*) -

Tohka giggled a bit, causing all of them to look at her oddly.

"Why would I lose control, when..." Tohka asked, beginning her shared response.

"...we're one in the same." Inverse Tohka finished.

Inverse Rinne's eyes widened in surprise and disbelief, recognizing Inverse Tohka's voice.

"What, why are you aiding her!?" Inverse Rinne screamed.
"Because... I want to believe in her, she told me she wouldn't reject me, I can't find it in myself to hate Humanity when its them that's allowed us to live once again!" Inverse Tohka shouted.

"And now, it's time we fight together, Shido... don't worry, your effort wasn't in vain!" Tohka exclaimed.

Tohka raised Nahemah into the air, and within her mind, both halves of Tohka slowly moved into the same spot, soon glowing brightly.

"Our power together, as one!" Both exclaimed.

"Ethereal... SHIFT!"

At that moment, Dark Reiryoku escaped from Tohka's body, before changing from dark purple to a bright purple as it changed into Light Reiryoku, causing everyone who saw it to gasp in shock at the sight.

Tohka screamed as she floated into the air and transformed, illuminating the area. As she did, the Dark Reiryoku being emitted by Shido suddenly broke away, and he felt his mind regain its grasp before turning to see Tohka's transformation.

"That light... Tohka, is that what I think it is?" Shido gasped.

Artemisia was struck back, the Saurian smoking at the heavy damage it took from Inverse Mana's attacks, and soon she felt herself grabbed by the face as the inverted Takamiya prepared to deal the final blow.

"...Huh?" Inverse Mana wondered.

Suddenly, Inverse Mana screamed as the Dark Reiryoku powering her slowly faded away, causing Mana to return to normal, blinking at the scene before her.

"I'm... back in control, what just happened?" Mana wondered.

"What happened?" Katie wondered.

Mikie looked to the side, and gasped as she saw something.

"Look over there!" Mikie shouted.

The four looked, seeing the bright light Tohka was creating.

Everyone in Ratatoskr stared, and Shiizaki soon noticed the readings they had received.

"I knew it, that's definitely a [Category-S], we've finally seen it again..." Shiizaki breathed, amazed to see the phenomena again.

"She did it, she Ethereal Shifted, that's my little girl!" Sakura cried happily.

Without anyone even realizing it, Reine had suddenly disappeared and began walking towards the location of the battle, and the Spirits.

"Go to the light Reine, trust me, you need to be there."
"Isamu..." Reine breathed, trudging forwards towards the light.

Tohka's voice was still heard screaming as the Inverse Spirits felt the force, most of them being pushed away.

"What the hell is going on here!?!" Inverse Rinne demanded.

Finally, after a long period of a transformation, the Light Reiryoku swallowed itself into Tohka as she slowly lowered to the ground, having successfully achieved her Ethereal Form like she had during the fight with Choronzon. However, this time her Ethereal Form was different, almost as if it had become... complete in a sense, all due to her efforts in achieving it without Seigo's aid.

Her original form after her Ethereal Shift had become a mixture of her Inverse and normal forms, almost as if to represent how Tohka wouldn't be able to understand how to use it again after defeating Choronzon with it.

"Whoa..." Tohka breathed, seeing her real Ethereal Form.

- (*insert song end*) -

Her true Ethereal Form had the same general color scheme of white, crystal-platinum that gave an iridescent sheen, and a bright vivid purple, but contained more resemblance to her Inverse Form than it had before, and there were some notable differences.

Her signature butterfly ribbon had become slightly longer, and gained a more graceful shape to it, curving slightly in some areas, giving it a soft appearance that represented the beauty of a rare butterfly. Her shoulder guards were more rounded, with a pair of purple streams made of light parting into two near the end attached to the rim closest to her shoulder, the biggest surprise being her shoulder guards having sleeves of light attached to the bottom rims, reaching halfway down her upper arm.

Alongside her white fingerless gloves were her petal-like cuffs, but they bent slightly towards her hands, making them seem more like blooming petals, with their gradient getting lighter near the top. The middle area of her outfit was mostly the same, still mostly being Inverse Tohka's midriff revealing outfit, but with the sections actually connecting and having some cloth of light form in between, only stopping at the area below her breasts.

The part by her waist was still stretched out to look more like gym shorts than barely covering her unmentionables, but had stretched out a bit into the shape of a small skirt as her ballgown skirt went only slightly above it, and had mainly become focused to the sides and the back, with the back area slightly shorter than the sides, and the same streams as her shoulder guards but large on the sides.

Finally, the petal-like extensions on the sides of Tohka's skirt had shifted sideways, with the petals pointing behind her and now taking a shape like some of the petals of a lily flower, and the larger yet sleeker version of her Inverse Form's boosts.

"No, impossible... how can this be!?!" Inverse Rinne gasped.

"Come to me, Shekhinah!!" Tohka exclaimed.

Soon the more noble and legendary looking version of Nahemah, only in Sandalphon's color scheme with some white added in, manifested in Tohka's hands as she readied herself against Inverse Rinne.

As she looked towards the Inverse Spirit before her, Tohka gave a determined smile.
"Get ready, it's time you learn you can never extinguish are hope!" Tohka exclaimed.

Finally, the answer to how to enter the Ethereal Form has been revealed! It doesn't just take the hope of the Spirit to initiate it, because when the Spirits undergo an Inversion, it's not just their despair, but the despair of the souls that form the consciousness within each of them reacting. So, by giving hope to the Sandalphon region Spirits' collective consciousness, Tohka has finally gained true access to it.

Even better? Because she did it on her own, rather than being a recolored fusion of both her Astral Dresses, it takes cues from her Inverse Form and shifts it into something more hopeful, heroic, and able to reassure those in doubt. By extension, since Tohka is no longer in her Inverse Form, she managed to counter the main worry Rinne had about Shido and Mana assuming full Spirit status because there's some hope to relegate the despair.

Now, you might be wondering what was with the whole thing about some of the Spirits' having their Reiryoku coloration changed? Unfortunately, I can't explain that just yet because it's a spoiler. So, for right now, let's just say that aside from the Sephira Spirits, the others' powers weren't properly aligned, but what Shido did helped as Step 1 in fixing them. Also, hooray, Mana's finally got some elemental powers ^^

Reine's certainly starting to get more involved, and now there's the question of just what's literally going through her head right now, though it seems Isamu seems more involved than Seigo. Chinami's seem to notice something odd as well, hmm... well, things have taken a turn for this arc, and the only thing I can say about it is that we're still only at the start :3

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Inverse Marina, Code Name: [Infection]-

Demon King: Mammon - Sarufiel's Demon King counterpart. It takes the form of its Angel counterpart, but with markings resembling that of data chips, only more jagged. The only difference between it and Sarufiel is that Marina isn't limited to one phase of poison, or using one kind of venom in general.

- Powers: Due to the nature of her Inverse Form's creation, Marina basically has the same powers as before, simply enhanced by the Inversion's use of Dark Reiryoku. However, one notable use of her ability to use multiple poisons is she can now mix them, causing them to become much deadlier as it makes getting the right antidote a problem, but also causes anyone poisoned by such mixtures to gain a strong immunity to poisons.

Risk Factors: S

Spacequake: AA

Spirit's Astral Dress: AA

Angel Rank: A

Strength: 159
Consistency: 118
Spiritual Power: 185
Agility: 197
Intelligence: 135

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)
Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)
Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)
Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)
Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)
Rinne - (Summon a weakened copy of Uriel)
Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)
Kaguya - 99% (Flight)
Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)
Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)
Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)
Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)
Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)
Mana - (Allow Mana to use Spirit Ascension at its weakest level without Angels)
Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)
Chapter 67

Before we begin, time to sound the same warning as in the previous chapter.

WARNING! MINOR TO MAJOR SPOILERS FOR VOLUME 17, READ AT YOUR OWN RISK!

Spoiler warning's up, so time to start our opening notes. We say a big mass of surprises last chapter. Those surprises included the transformation of Shido and Mana becoming full-fledged Spirits, but through a huge gamble since Mukuro was still unsealed and therefore the technique was still unstable, which had nearly caused both to fall into an Inversion.

However, even among all that, Tohka still kept fighting to keep control and protect the others. Despite the odd sneakiness of Chinami during the whole situation, no one seems to have realized her presence... at least, not yet. *gives an evil smirk, shifting eyes a bit* In the end, the biggest surprise came when Tohka managed to quell the rage of her Inverse half and finally managed to Ethereal Shift!

With the power of hope now on her side, Tohka's gonna be fighting everyone else's despair, and Shido's gonna use the chance that Tohka's given him to finally save Mukuro, with the team on Mana's side hopefully doing the same to Mildred, who's still in or out, and anything could happen. The first page of this arc is about to make a major turn here!

Now to reply a guest review.

To Seeker213:
"I was wondering if anyone was gonna bring that up or guess about it, as for your vague idea? While some of the ideas connected to it will probably be different than you expected, I have a good feeling your idea is right on the mark. As for the Persona vibe, you think so? Huh, I didn't even consider that when I made the chapter, I had just been trying to echo Tohka's own arc, so that's a unique coincidence to get such a vibe in there ^^ "

"Ooh... I hate when that kinda thing happens, that's where we have video games that are known as "hidden gems" on occasion, they didn't end up in the right situation to have their sparkle go into the obvious sight that would have gained them a large audience. While I don't know too much about doing a fanfic, I'll at least consider checking the game out. *sees the part about Kaguya's seiyuu doing a few songs for the game* Wait, really!?'"

Alright, I think it's time to get this chapter up and show the highlight we've all been waiting for... the Ethereal Tohka vs Inverse Army showdown! Now, let's do this!

-Inverse Mayuri, Code Name: [Grigori]-

Demon King: Abaddon - Kerubiel's Demon King counterpart. It takes the form of its Angel counterpart, but the wings are more like a demon's in appearance. The only difference between it and Kerubiel is that the lightning it creates has a much higher level of voltage, and it can also manipulate the metal on its own form.
- Alternate Form: Indra - The Inverse counterpart of Zeus. In this form, Abaddon assumes a form of what seems to be a trio of drills twisted into the shape of one, and doubles as a form of transportation for Mayuri. Like its counterpart form, it charges up an explosion electromagnetic plasma blast, but with the additional drills, can also shoot regular lightning and melted metal from the other two drills.

- Powers: Due to the nature of her Inverse Form's creation, Mayuri basically has the same powers as before, simply enhanced by the Inversion's use of Dark Reiryoku. In fact, Mayuri's Inverse Form is the only one that doesn't seem to have any true differences aside from more power.

Risk Factors: S
Spacequake: AA
Spirit's Astral Dress: AA
Demon King Rank: AAA
Strength: 178
Consistency: 156
Spiritual Power: 250
Agility: 182
Intelligence: 125

Chapter 67, S3: Sephira Fury, Part 10

Tohka giggled a bit, causing all of them to look at her oddly.

"Why would I lose control, when..." Tohka asked, beginning her shared response.

"...we're one in the same." Inverse Tohka finished.

Inverse Rinne's eyes widened in surprise and disbelief, recognizing Inverse Tohka's voice.

"What, why are you aiding her!?" Inverse Rinne screamed.

"Because... I want to believe in her, she told me she wouldn't reject me, I can't find it in myself to hate Humanity when its them that's allowed us to live once again!" Inverse Tohka shouted.

"And now, it's time we fight together, Shido... don't worry, your effort wasn't in vain!" Tohka exclaimed.

Tohka raised Nahemah into the air, and within her mind, both halves of Tohka slowly moved into the same spot, soon glowing brightly.

"Our power together, as one!" Both exclaimed.

"Ethereal... SHIFT!"
At that moment, Dark Reiryoku escaped from Tohka's body, before changing from dark purple to a bright purple as it changed into Light Reiryoku, causing everyone who saw it to gasp in shock at the sight.

After a long period of a transformation, the Light Reiryoku swallowed itself into Tohka as she slowly lowered to the ground, once again in her Ethereal Form.

"No, impossible... how can this be!" Inverse Rinne gasped.

"Come to me, Shekhinah!" Tohka exclaimed.

Soon the more noble and legendary looking version of Nahemah, only in Sandalphon's color scheme with some white added in, manifested in Tohka's hands as she readied herself against Inverse Rinne. As she looked towards the Inverse Spirit before her, Tohka gave a determined smile.

"Get ready, its time you learn you can never extinguish are hope!" Tohka exclaimed.

"Why... you... little-" Inverse Rinne growled, readying Choronzon.

Then, without any warning whatsoever, Inverse Rinne suddenly freezes as her eyes dilate, and then start shifting back to Rinne's actual color.

"What!? No, no this is... you can't do this me, stop it!" Inverse Rinne screamed.

Everyone looked in shock, and then Inverse Rinne swiped her Demon King, the sound of shattering was heard as the real Rinne appeared, wearing her Limited Astral Dress as she breathes heavily. The other Inverse Forms showed shock at that.

"W-w-what!?" Inverse Marina exclaimed.

"She broke free, but how!?" Inverse Miku gasped.

Rinne cracked her head back into place, and then stretched a bit as she readjusted herself.

"I knew there was something funky about how I ended up inverting, so I've gotta thank you Tohka, escaping your Inverse Form gave me what I needed to escape my own." Rinne smiled.

"Huh, what did I do?" Tohka asked.

"When my Inversion began, it was strange, it didn't feel like my own power had suffered, it was more like you and the other Sephira Spirits' powers did it." Rinne explained.

Both Tohka and Shido looked at each other, not understanding it, until Shido suddenly gasped.

"Of course, it's like how you can't regain your power until I seal Mukuro, when all ten Sephira Spirits inverted... it caused you to enter your Inverse Form because nothing but Dark Reiryoku was connected with you!" Shido realized.

"Yep, that's the theory I came up with too, so the moment Tohka left her Inverse Form, that gave the small opening I needed to break free." Rinne confirmed.

Rinne sighed, looking at the direction of Inverse Mukuro.

"Tohka, think you can handle these jerks controlling our friends?" She asked.
Tohka nods, giving a determined smile.

"Don't worry, I can do it!" Tohka exclaimed.

"Alright, then I'll help Shido with Mukuro, I'd probably just get my butt kicked while I'm lacking my full power." Rinne replied.

Rinne hefted Shido on her back, surprising the latter slightly.

"Come on Shido, you've got a little star in the sky, now make your wish on it come true." Rinne smiled.

"...Yeah, it's time to save her." Shido agreed, nodding slightly.

Rinne took to the sky with Shido, and Tohka turned to the remaining Inverse Spirits, holding her Archangel out.

"Shekhinah, are you ready for this?" Tohka asked, smiling as she knew the answer.

"[I am, let's do this Tohka!]

Shekhinah replied in a new voice.

Tohka rushed ahead, shouting loudly as she did, an angry Inverse Marina growling before she roared, taking the front and holding out Mammon.

"Destroy her Mammon, kill this bastard right now!" Inverse Marina screamed.

[As you command, I'll destroy her!]

Mammon spread a wave of acid and poison gas at Tohka, causing the ethereal Energy Spirit to move her hand to part of her Archangel's frame.

"AEGIS!"

Tohka pulls part of the frame away, her crystal powers combining with it to make a shield as Tohka zoomed through the venom, surprising Inverse Marina, and giving her little time to dodge Tohka's slash at her.

"Hah, you missed-AUGH!" Inverse Marina mocked.

Inverse Marina saw a purple slash mark form on her, causing her eyes to shake as she turned to face Tohka, seeing about ten feet ahead of where she slashed had also been cut in the process despite Tohka had clearly only hit the air.

"What, y-your sword can... it can..." Inverse Marina gasped.

"As long as I wanna hit it, anything within 10-feet of Shekhinah's blade will still feel the slash." Tohka giggled.

Inverse Marina growled at that.

"Why you!" She roared, aiming at her.

Tohka jumped into the sky, dodging her attack, but soon noticing Inverse Kaguya and Inverse Yuzuru preparing to strike her from both sides, each holding Adramelech in their respective chain and lance form.
"We've gotcha now!" Inverse Kaguya cackled.

"There is no escape." Inverse Yuzuru declared.

Tohka thought for a bit, and soon smiled a bit, holding Shekhinah with both hands.

"You're right, how about I give you both a hand, or rather... a sword?" Tohka asked.

The two looked confused as they neared her, only for Tohka to smirk.

"PROMETHEUS!"

The Inverse Yamai twins suddenly widened their eyes as Tohka smiled, a Shekhinah in each of her hands as she blocked both their strikes. With a mighty push, both of the Inverse Yamai sisters were flung into the ground, crashing into building walls.

When the others saw the dust clear, the two tried to get up, but soon they both fell to the ground, a dark orange sphere enveloping both before they became normal orange, and the two were shown unconscious in their normal forms.

"No, their Inversions have been undone!" Inverse Kotori shouted, panicking a bit.

"Why are you panicking, we still have an advantage." Inverse Kurumi smirked.

Tohka looked at Inverse Kurumi confused, only to see her draw Lucifuge near their heads, her eyes widening.

"We don't necessarily need them, as long as there's someone for the Sephira Crystal to bond with, everyone's replaceable in the long run." Inverse Kurumi stated, aiming a dark smile at Tohka.

'Crap, I didn't consider the others could be used as hostages, what do I do!?' Tohka worried.

Inverse Kurumi laughed, soon motioning her hand to the trigger, ready to fire Lucifuge and kill the Yamai twins before her very eyes, and just when it seemed like nothing could save them from death...

"Hey you, Ms. Wisecrack!"

"Huh?" Inverse Kurumi wondered.

Suddenly both Lucifuge guns were shot, knocking them out of Inverse Kurumi's hands to her surprise, and quickly alerting her someone in the area.

"It must be the AST, don't just stand there, kill those two now!" Inverse Kurumi shouted.

The others all turned and fired an attack at them, only for Saya to drop down and form a barrier, taking the attacks before breaking. The Inverse Spirits were all shocked, soon turning as incoming fire from Ryouko smoked the area.

Saya quickly tossed Kaguya up into the sky, causing Ryouko to catch her as Saya grabbed Yuzuru, soon flying near Tohka.

"Ryouko, Saya, and the AST!" Tohka cheered.

"Sorry for being late, we had to break a roof open to get here!" Saya chuckled.
"Don't worry about the others, we'll keep them distracted so you can face them one on one, and make sure they don't kill each other." Ryouko reassured.

"Thanks you guys, that was scary for a moment." Tohka thanked.

She soon turned to look back at the other Inverse Spirits, who all looked at her as the smoke cleared, and soon rushed ahead.

Reine soon found herself outside, heading towards the spot where the light of Tohka's Ethereal Shift had been not too long before, and as she headed there... the sight of a familiar pair of glowing lights neared her.

"Huh, what are these?" Reine thought aloud.

One of the lights stopped.

"...That voice!"

Reine's eyes widened, and she teared up, that was a voice she recognized better than anyone.

"S... S... S-Seigo?" Reine stuttered.

"It is you!" Seigo gasped.

The light hopped a bit towards Reine, and Reine held her hands out, crying as she looked at it.

"Seigo..." Reine cried.

"Ahem?"

Reine turned to the other light, and slowly gasped again, not even needing to hear his voice.

"Isamu!" Reine cried happily.

Isamu felt himself picked up in Reine's other hand, and soon she sniffles.

"I've missed you both... so much... for all these years." Reine cried.

"OK, not to ruin the moment, but... why does the city look like something ate half of it before puking it out on the rest of it?" Seigo asked.

Reine regained her focus and looked towards the city, giving a flat look as she took a moment to find her words.

"Uh... well, a Spirit went under an Inversion and-" Reine explained.

"Is she a golden-blonde, wears a pink qipao dress, and holds a giant staff shaped like a key?" Seigo asked.

Seigo soon noticed both Reine, and Isamu, stare at him in shock... or whatever a glowing light's equivalent to staring was in the latter's case, making Seigo feel a bit nervous.

"What? Before my soul broke apart, I told my son I had visions of the Spirits he'd meet, and that's the only one I didn't see when I helped Tohka save him a few months back." Seigo asked.

"...OK, let's go with this." Reine replied, sweat dropping a bit.
Isamu groaned, shaking his head.

After he regained his focus, Isamu floated in front of Reine, and despite having no face to see his expression... Reine suddenly got very nervous upon looking at him, especially after her various flashes of memories including him saying to head to the battlefield.

"It's time, you must remember who you really are." Isamu stated.

"Huh, but... what are you talking about, I know who I am." Reine questioned confused.

"I'm... I'm Seigo's sister, Shido and Mana's aunt, Rinne's unofficial sister-in-law, and... your wife, right?" She asked.

Isamu just floated in place, his silence filling the air.

"Come on Isamu, stop pulling our leg, I know some of the weird stuff I've gotta share is weird, but saying that is-" Seigo commented.

"You can't say a thing, if you really knew, then you wouldn't be saying that to me." Isamu interrupted.

Seigo went silent at that, surprised his best friend said that to him.

Isamu sighed, already troubled by what he knew needed to be done.

"...The answers won't reveal themselves here, but at the battlefield." He stated.

As Rinne flew towards Mukuro, Shido still hanging on her back, the inverted Dimensional Spirit screamed and aimed at her.

"Huifu - Restore!"

"Cuihui - Destroy!"

Rinne's eyes widened as Mukuro restored most of the town, only to break it and use the debris like a meteor shower.

"Whoa, no wonder you were struggling under that time limit!" Rinne mentioned, taking a deep breath after.

"Hey mom, just to ask, but do you have a plan here?" Shido asked.

"I do, but I'll need to have Mukuro use her strongest attack against us for it to work, and when I give the signal, I'll need you to pour some of everyone's power into me." Rinne explained.

- (*Gurren Lagann - Sorairo Days*) -

Shido gasped, the two dodging more of Mukuro's debris.

"What!?!" Shido shouted.

"I need the power of every Spirit to make this work." Rinne stated.

"But wait, I don't have any link to Mayuri, there's no way that'll work!" Shido mentioned.
Rinne giggled, and then tapped a finger on Shido's forehead, causing some electricity to spark through him and make him blink.

"Wait, what did you..." Shido inquired.

"Sorry, but Mayuri kinda expected we'd get a situation like this eventually, so she asked me if I could use a bit of her Reiryoku to link her so she didn't have to kiss you." Rinne answered, covering her mouth to hold back a snicker.

Shido sweat dropped at that.

"...OK, but are you really sure what you're about to do is safe?" Shido panicked.

"Nope!" Rinne smiled.

"What do you mean no!" Shido exclaimed in fear.

Mukuro screamed, aiming Belphegor at the two again.

"Waqui - Distort!"

The spatial warp nears the two, and Shido shouted before releasing a magnetic field, disrupting Mukuro's ability, only causing Rinne to shakily fly for a few moments. Mukuro gasped in shock at the sight.

"Alright, it's just like the passive skill you get from Yoshino, but this one works on Reiryoku instead!" Rinne cheered.

"I interfered with her attack?" Shido gasped.

Shido looked at Mukuro, and smirked a bit.

"Alright, I think I can do this, let's go!" Shido declared.

"Yeah, let's do it!" Rinne exclaimed.

"Jiguang - Laser!"

Mukuro blasts a laser at the two, and Shido holds up her hands, forming the disruption field and a Reiryoku barrier to soften the attack into doing no damage whatsoever. Mukuro stepped back, her whole body shaking at the sight.

"STOP THIS!" Mukuro shrieked.

"Fahui - Unleash!"

Shido looks in horror as Mukuro activated this ability, and Rinne quickly understands why when Mukuro’s cries out blood rather than tears like during her first use of it, and soon shakily aims Belphegor at the two.

"Yanmo - Annihilation!"

"Mom, that's it, that's her strongest attack!" Shido warned.

Rinne nodded, and Shido poured all the power he could into her, only to be grabbed by the back of his shirt moments after.
"Mom, what are you doing!?" Shido shouted.

"Sorry, but it's a bit too dangerous for you to stay aboard, just need you to wait up here real quick!" Rinne explained.

Shido screamed as Rinne threw him up into the air, with the First Spirit soon cupping her hands into an "O" shape... all while she stood in place to receive the attack.

Giving a mighty scream, Mukuro unleashes the wave of decomposed Dark Reiryoku at Rinne.

"...I hope this goes right." Rinne whispered to herself, sweating nervously.

The attack soon struck Rinne, and she screams in pain as it hits her, making Shido gasp in horror.

- (*insert song end*) -

"MOOOOOOM!" Shido screamed.

"Go away... go away... everyone go away... I don't deserve anything, any kindness... I'm a curse that will just hurt everyone... just leave me!" Mukuro screamed, still shedding tears of blood.

Tohka and Inverse Kotori shout as they collide in midair, their flames and energy bursting out of their respective weapons as each tried to overpower the other. However, after a few moments, Kotori saw Asmodeus start cracking.

"No, don't break now Asmodeus, don't-Ah!"

The Demon King shattered, and soon Tohka's Shekhinah continued forward, smashing across Kotori before she was flung through a pile of debris.

Tohka soon did a back flip, avoiding an icy cyclone fired off by Astaroth, surprising Inverse Yoshino.

"Stay still!" Inverse Yoshino demanded.

"So, you want me to attack you, OK!" Tohka joked.

The inverted Water Spirit suddenly paled.

"W-Wait a second, I take it back, you don't have to-" Inverse Yoshino panicked.

"GANDIVA!"

Shekhinah changes into a gun/bazooka-like form, and soon aims at Inverse Yoshino, prompting Inverse Rio, Inverse Miku, and Inverse Nia to act.

"I'll take the attack!" Inverse Rio shouted, holding Belial out.

"Back off!" Inverse Miku screamed.

The inverted Sound Spirit suddenly unleashed a sonic scream towards Tohka, while Inverse Nia opens Beelzebub.

"I'll make sure her changes are-" Inverse Nia stated.
Before she could finish, Inverse Nia felt her hand get shot by Tohka, sending Beelzebub flying before she used her free hand to grab Inverse Miku's attack. The latter's eyes widened in shock, while the former tried to grab Beelzebub before it was too late.

"Sorry, too late." Tohka giggled.

Gandiva fires, and the force slams into Belial, shattering the Demon King before tossing Astaroth, alongside with the two standing on it before Inverse Miku, and Inverse Nia, are both hit by the flying black rabbit mech.

Tohka winced a bit as it fell on top of them, and soon opened her eyes as Reiryoku spheres show their unconscious forms as they reverted back to normal.

"No, I won't let you undo it!" Inverse Kurumi shouted.

Kurumi fires Lucifuge's time rewind bullets... however, because of the nature of their forced Inversions, it doesn't have any effect since they weren't in control.

"Lucifuge, you are completely useless!"

**[Shut your trap, you whinny little princess!]**

The nearby AST members all sweat drop at the sight.

"Seriously, is she arguing with her Demon King?" Ashley asked.

"Apparently, that's a yes." Cecile answered, sweat dropping slightly.

Leonora shook her head, and motioned to Tohka about the distraction, and the Energy Spirit nods before walking towards her and tapping her shoulder.

Inverse Kurumi turns to angrily look at Tohka, only to see her holding a charged energy sphere on her finger.

"You little cheat, oh no you don't!" Inverse Kurumi shouted.

Inverse Kurumi stomped the ground, her shadow expanding as a whole fleet of clones appeared, and Tohka blinked before readying Shekhinah.

"*[Ooh, you gonna show her our special energy wave tricks?]*" Shekhinah asked.

'Her... what now!?' Inverse Kurumi thought, sweating a bit.

Tohka gave a toothy grin.

"Yep!" She answered.

Tohka spun around, and after swinging her Archangel, the energy slash spiraled into a saw shape, splitting into three as they cut through some of Inverse Kurumi's clones, making her gasp before she and the surviving clones all take to the air.

"You won't get me from up here, here comes my Omega!" Inverse Kurumi screamed.

Her shadow shifts into the shape of a spiky black sun, and jagged orange arrows for clock hands form inside as the timer began to count, all of Inverse Kurumi's clones heavily guarding her.
Inverse Kurumi laughs at Tohka mockingly, giving her a dark smile after.

"There's no way you'll be able to get me from here now, not fast enough to beat the clock or risk harming your friends that is!" Inverse Kurumi cackled.

"Sorry, but the correct answer was yes." Tohka replied.

"...Huh!?" Inverse Kurumi questioned, sweating a bit.

Tohka rushed forward, soon stopping as she thrust Shekhinah out slightly, and her energy wave comes out as spears, making Inverse Kurumi gasp as her clones were all shot through, leaving her defenseless as Tohka appeared in front of her with another finger blast charge.

She screamed as Tohka blasted her, causing her to fall to the ground, soon collapsing as a black sphere signified Kurumi had returned to normal.

"That annoying little brat, she's treating the whole thing like a damn game!" Inverse Natsumi growled, shaking her fists.

"We need to finish her, take her down girls." Inverse Origami said monotonously.

The remaining Inverse Spirits, which included the two Arusu sisters, Natsumi, Mayuri, and Origami herself, all readied their Demon Kings and prepared to hit Tohka with a sneak attack while she was open.

The AST noticed this, and then...

Mana watches as Artemisia, Mikie, and Katie all tried to take a look at Mildred's possibly fatal injury, the latter three grimacing.

"Oh man, I'm no doctor, but this wound looks really bad!" Miki panicked.

"Worse Mikie, I'm not sure we can help her unless we can try to outright stop her bleeding for a while." Artemisia replied, sweating a bit.

Artemisia noticed the compressed wrapping she had on Mildred was starting to gain a pink tint, showing that Mildred's blood wasn't staying in her.

Mana bit her nails in worry, and then gasped, looking at her hand.

"I think I can help!" Mana offered.

"Really?" Katie questioned.

"Yeah, while my element can work to destroy, I've seen my mom do more than just outright create, so maybe..." Mana answered.

Mana kneels by Mildred, and breathes as she holds her hand out, quickly ripping the wrapping off before making her hand glow, the indigo Reiryoku cackling out before creating a translucent wave.

To Artemisia's surprise, whatever Mana had been doing, it was negating Mildred's blood flow, keeping her remaining blood from seeping out.

"Mana, what did you do!?" Katie asked, surprised.
"I negated her blood flow, as long as I do this, her blood shouldn't leave her body, now do what you have to do." Mana answered.

The three nodded, and begin their efforts to try and save Mildred.

From a distance, Chinami was hiding in a territory barrier she made, apparently typing some things on her CR-Unit's wrist device, using the data for some unknown reason as she waited for things to settle down slightly.

"Just a bit more, and I've got all I need to deal with these weaklings once they're open, not even that whole Ethereal whatever it is will be enough to handle it." Chinami smirked, soon frowning as a thought came to mind.

'Seriously, what was with that oddity from earlier, I know total amount of Spirits... don't I?' She thought.

As she was typing more, she suddenly noticed the sight of someone walking through the battlefield, making her blink as she saw Reine with two lights.

"Wait, what!?" Chinami exclaimed.

Chinami rubbed her eyes and looked again, and saw Reine again as she walked past a building, this time missing Isamu and Seigo's forms as light due their positioning.

The Adeptus 3 wizard laughed at herself worriedly.

"...I think maybe I need a vacation after this, now I'm seeing things." Chinami joked.

Shido landed on the ground, grunting before he looked up, and watching the horror before him.

Rinne continued screaming as Mukuro's attack continued to burn into her body, with her Limited Astral Dress already showing signs of being burnt by the intense waves of Reiryoku, and soon landing on the ground from the force as Shido watched the attack continue to hit her.

"Mom, get out of there, or she'll kill you!" Shido screamed.

"Please, go... don't make me do this... don't make me kill you..." Mukuro subbed, still shedding tears of blood.

At that moment, Rinne's body disappeared from view, and Shido's eyes widened in horror before he closed them, crying as his mother's supposed death... only for a clear flash to go off to his surprise.

- (*Is It Wrong to Try to Pick Up Girls in a Dungeon - Heroic Desire*) -

"Huh?" Shido wondered.

"Don't you dare cry Shido, because I'm not going anywhere!" Rinne declared, smiling.

Shido, and then Mukuro, noticed a sphere of purple Reiryoku between her hands.

"That's Tohka's power!" Shido gasped.

Then it became white.
"And now it's Origami's power!" He stated.

Next up was blue.

"No, that color is Yoshino's..." Shido breathed.

"Hold on, this is... no way, this is what she was planning!?" He realized.

The blue sphere then changed colors again, changing in the following order into red, black, pink, green, orange, indigo, brown, magenta, violet, silvery-gray, cyan, and then ending with the golden-yellow color of Mukuro's Dark Reiryoku, but purified.

"Shido, from that first day, you were the one that took that first step, and as you did... we couldn't help but follow you." Rinne explained.

Mukuro's attack began pushing off Rinne's body, surprising the inverted Dimensional Spirit.

"And now all our powers, all of our feelings, every element of our past, present and future have converged into a true rainbow... of harmonic energy!" Rinne shouted, smirking a bit.

"The full power of your Harmonic Convergence, that's why you took Mukuro's attack on purpose!" Shido stated, smiling a bit.

Rinne nodded, soon aiming the sphere at Mukuro.

"Shido, grab on, because I've given you the chance for victory!" Rinne exclaimed.

"R-right!" Shido agreed.

Shido grabbed on, and after taking a deep breath, Rinne gives a might shout as she unleashes the combined Reiryoku as a beam that spread into every color of Reiryoku. Mukuro gasped as the attack hit her, blinding her as it struck.

Luckily, due to not casting it through Uriel, the power was unfocused and the worst it did was completely immobilize Mukuro from the force, slightly shredding through her Astral Dress. Seeing this moment, Rinne grabbed Shido and spun before throwing Shido at her.

"GO!" Rinne exclaimed loudly.

Shido began flying at Mukuro, the recoil of the attack throwing him around a bit before managing to hug her, sealing his grip as Mukuro felt it, looking at him.

"No, please... just stay away... don't let yourself get hurt because of me!" Mukuro cried, her tears still of blood.

"You're not alone Mukuro, because we're the same!" Shido screamed.

Mukuro looked at Shido in surprise, and soon Shido summoned Raziel before writing: "Show Mukuro just how similar we are," and at that moment... Mukuro saw it all.

The loss of his father, separation from his mother, the loss of his memories, the pain of Reine, the tears shed by Rinne and Rio, but most of all? His and Mana's shared feelings of emptiness, not knowing who they were, and wanting some form of love to not feel alone... Just. Like. Her.

At the same time, Shido saw all of Mukuro's memories.
"Don't you see Mukuro, we're two sides of the same coin, we both knew what it felt like to have no one to love, and wanting to feel loved." Shido stated.

"The difference was I had Mana with me, but you were so afraid... so afraid, that the fear made you do things you didn't understand were wrong, and most of all, you never saw what could have helped you." He reassured.

Mukuro whimpers, closing her eyes as she looked away.

"Please, stop this, I don't-" Mukuro sobbed.

"Mukuro, you don't have to be afraid, because I'm your family too!" Shido exclaimed.

Mukuro's eyes widened, and then gasped in shock as a memory flashed through her mind.

Mildred suddenly felt worried ran into her room, and soon saw an open window, but what ended up being the most painful thing she saw was a lone note that said: 'Goodbye' on it, nothing more... noting less.

"No... NO... NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!" Mildred cried.

Mildred collapsed onto her knees, screaming as tears of sadness flooded out of her eyes.

'She was... crying, for me?" Mukuro thought, her eyes shaking.

"That's what it means to be a family Mukuro, there are times that the people you love will be with others, and you can't enjoy everything with them... but that doesn't mean they'll leave or forget you, or that you mean any less to them, it means there's people that mean the same to them as they do to you." Shido answered.

Mukuro's lip trembled, her tears of blood still dripping a bit.

"That's why, no matter what, me, Mana, my family, my friends, and all the girls I love..." Shido stated.

"No matter what, we'll never forget you. No matter what you do, we'll never hate you, there's no point in one-way love because we're a family!"

Mukuro's voice began to tremble, and at that moment, Shido saw it... her tears of blood were replaced with real genuine tears.

"S-Shido!" Mukuro cried.

In that one moment, Shido moved his face forward.

The remaining Inverse Spirits, which included the two Arusu sisters, Natsumi, Mayuri, and Origami herself, all readied their Demon Kings and prepared to hit Tohka with a sneak attack while she was open.

The AST noticed this, and then Ryouko whistles.

"Bring it out girls!" Ryouko ordered.
"Right!"

Everyone pulled out some kind of bazooka shaped rifles, firing off some kind of energy nets, and the remaining Inverse Spirits all saw it fall on top of them, trapping them in place as Tohka and the AST all moved away from the random directions their attacks discharged from.

Inverse Origami looks at the net, and glares at the AST members.

"...I hate all of you." Inverse Origami stated.

"Yeah, we love you too." Leonora said sarcastically.

"Now Tohka, knock them out of our friends!" Saya exclaimed.

Tohka nods, and soon she rushed forward, zooming for face forward as she raised Shekhinah into the air as she summoned its throne, shattering it and forming Shekhinah's true form in her hand.

"Take a look at this. souls of the Spirit Dimensions, this is the power born from the Sandalphon region's denizens letting go of their hatred, the power born of Humans and Spirits combined!" Tohka shouted.

"Lahathelev!"

With a mighty scream, Tohka swung the sword down.

Both Tohka and Shido's actions happened simultaneously, with the remaining Inverse Spirits all shrieking as the attack this them, undoing the remaining Inversions trapping their friends' bodies, while Shido kissed Mukuro.

"Mmph!" Mukuro gasped.

Mukuro's eyes shake, soon relaxing as she closed her eyes, no longer just shedding tears of sorrow, but of joy as well. Her Astral Dress slowly faded away, leaving only the ribbons in her hear as Shido slowly lowered them to the ground, quickly removing his coat to cover Mukuro's bare form.

- (*insert song end*) -

Rinne smiled with teary eyes, wiping them away as the fight was finally over, and smiling as it finally happened.

"And then there were none." Rinne stated happily.

Right at that moment, a pink light shined from Rinne's body, and she gasped as she realized what was happening. With Mukuro now sealed, all of the Sephira Spirits had their powers within Shido, and that only meant one thing...

...Her full powers were returning.

"Oh man, I can't believe I nearly forgot about that!" Rinne stated.

At that moment, Shido and Mukuro both turned, seeing a pink pillar of light flash into the sky, alerting everyone of its presence.

"What is that?" Saya asked.

"That's Rinne, her full powers are coming back, which means..." Tohka answered, smiling.
Everyone silently gasped before smiling.

"Shido did it, he sealed Mukuro!" Everyone cheered loudly.

Everyone began heading over, intending to celebrate their success as a team.

Back with Rinne, her son stared in awe as she fully manifested her Astral Dress for the first time in nearly forever, and once it was done, she opened her eyes slowly before looking at Shido, giving a bright smile.

"...This time, I'm truly back." Rinne said happily.

Shido smiled back at her, the wind blowing past him.

"Shido!" Tohka shouted.

Soon the three turned as the others all ran into view, all of them waving and smiling at them, and the other Spirits being carried on the backs of the others, unconscious, but back to normal again.

"Everyone!" Shido called out happily.

"Hey guys, what took you all?" Rinne joked.

Everyone laughs at that, and at the same moment, Kotori was the first to wake up from her little nap, the others soon following.

"My head... what happened?" Kotori asked.

"Kotori, what's the last thing you can remember?" Shido asked.

"Well, I remember us fighting Mukuro, and then she was screaming... then I felt something dark, and that was it." Kotori answered.

Tohka looked at Kotori.

"You guys all went into your Inverse Forms, apparently trying to lock our memories caused Mukuro to accidentally make us all Inverse." Tohka explained.

"Wait a second, Tohka... are you in your Ethereal Form, and did you make it looked better!?!" Kaguya shouted in shock.

Tohka giggled a little.

"Yep, and the funny part about it? All I had to do was make my Inverse half drop her hatred towards Humanity." Tohka verified.

"Y-you're kidding me... that's a joke, right?" Marina asked nervously.

Tohka shook her head, holding up Shekhinah in response.

"[She's telling you the truth, against all possibility... she convinced me to believe in her, and I saw it with my own eyes.]" Shekhinah answered.

"Wait... Shekhinah, you mean you're-' Tohka gasped.

The Archangel moved slightly to nod, and manifested as a tiny, translucent version of Tohka's
Ethereal Form.

For everyone watching, this was the true form of Sandalphon.

"[Sandalphon, Nahemah, and this form... they were always part of me, as are you, one I couldn't accept before now, but thanks to you I've found myself.]" Shekhinah revealed, a smile on her face.

The Archangel looked at the other Spirits, aiming its next words towards not them, but those within them.

"[To my fellow kin, I know you might not understand why I could just relinquish the hatred I felt towards Humanity for so long, but Tohka... she showed me something, and before I knew it I saw how foolish I was. Even after all that's happened and what we've done to them, these people are still trying to help us, they have no reason to, but they still choose to, and they want us to live. That's why... I will just that, and it's my wish that one day, you have this same realization.]" Shekhinah explained.

Hearing that explanation, some of the group smiled, some were brought to tears, or some shed tears of happiness.

At that moment, Tohka suddenly gasped as she remembered something.

"What happened to Mildred, did Mana get her help, did she make it through?" Tohka asked.

The others soon had their eyes widen, remembering their injured friend fighting between life and death, while Mukuro's eyes widened.

"She's... b-but I saw her, she-" Mukuro stuttered.

"No Mukuro, she didn't die from the wound, but we don't know if she'll make it or not." Shido explained.

Shido looked around.

"Dang it, where are they?" Shido wondered.

At that moment, Shido felt a twinge and looked a certain direction.

"I don't know why, but I think they're over there, come on!" Shido ordered.

Everyone quickly rushed over.

After running for a bit, the group saw Mana with the others, Mildred on the ground... however, no signs of progress. Upon noticing them, Mana turned and gave them all a sad look, trying not to cry.

"We've... we've tried everything, but the damage is too severe, we can't save her." Mana whimpered.

"I'm sorry everyone, she's gonna go any moment now, all we can do is say our goodbyes before she leaves this world." Artemisia apologized.

Mukuro quickly rushed near her, and cried before kneeling down close to her sister.

"Big sis... I... I'm sorry, I'm so sorry!" Mukuro cried.

Everyone gained a sad look in their eyes, but Reine on the other hand? She held one of confidence.
"No, it isn't too late, not by a long shot." She stated.

Everyone looked at her.

"Listen close, we all make mistakes in our lives, and we can't change the past... though if we remember it right, we can at least change her future." Rinne explained.

"Now with my full power, I can save her from death." Rinne stated.

This surprised the group, and no one could find their voice to ask, but then Shido found it and asked on everyone's behalf.

"What do you mean?" He questioned.

"Simple, back when she was struck, I had prepared to do something to help her, but the Inversion cost me my chance. Though at that moment I managed to copy the information on her cell coding." Rinne answered.

Rinne soon held out her hands, and soon her Reiryoku manifests around her aura before she aimed it at Mildred, firing it at her. In only a few moments, everyone noticed the damage slowly start to be undone as new cells made from her Reiryoku began replacing the old.

Needless to say, the sight left everyone nearly speechless.

"I don't believe it!" Origami stated, shocked at the sight.

"I've been practicing this ever since I regained my body, I didn't get a chance to do it for Karen or Elliot due to how they died, but I had intended to never let what happened to Seigo occur ever again." Rinne explained.

As Mildred's wound was nearly close, Rinne looked worried.

"She doesn't have enough blood, and I don't have enough power to restore that too, everyone with blood type B, lend her some blood!" Rinne shouted.

"I've got a transfusion kit, come on!" Katie stated.

Everyone with her blood type was hooked up, and Mildred soon had their blood transferred into her bloodstream until she had enough.

Shortly after that, Mildred's body had its damage fully healed.

"Yes, the wound's closed, now this last part's all that's left." Rinne sighed in relief.

Rinne turned to Mayuri.

"Mayuri, we need to restart her heart, think can you give her a 1100 voltage bolt?" Rinne asked.

"1100 volts... yeah, I think I can do it." Mayuri answered.

Mayuri put her hands over Mildred's heart, and gives her the slight jolt, but no reaction.

"...OK, little more!" Mayuri said, sweating a bit.

She did it again, and still no reaction, she breathes deeply and focuses.
"OK, one more, should I up it Rinne?" Mayuri asked.

"1700 is the highest I think you can safely go, so try that." Rinne suggested.

Mayuri nodded, and soon motioned her hands, everyone waited as she gave her final jolt to Mildred, hoping this time it worked... or that was it for Mildred.

Everyone waited for a few seconds, and then... it happened, Mildred suddenly gasped as her eyes opened up, looking around her.

"Huh, what... where..." Mildred wondered.

She looked at herself, soon remember her wound before looking to see the damage to her clothes, but no hole in her torso.

"...Am I alive?" Mildred asked.

At that moment, she heard everyone's shaking voices, and soon everyone cheered, Mildred had made it out alive!

Mukuro soon tackle hugged her sister, sobbing hysterically in relief.

"Big sis... you're OK, thank you... thank you!" Mukuro cried.

"Wait, you just called me... Mukuro, you actually remember me." Mildred asked, her eyes watering.

"I... I'm so sorry, please... please don't hate me... I beg of you." Mukuro sniffled.

Mildred's mouth quivers before she cries as well, and the two sisters hug, bringing everyone to tears as the long-awaited reunion, as well as the happy ending they deserved.

Unfortunately...

"Hate to ruin the moment, but... oh wait, I don't hate to ruin it!"

Everyone gasped as they saw Chinami rush at them with inhuman speed, preparing to attack them with her weapon charged to swing an explosive slash, and no one was prepared for it!

Knowing she had to act, Tohka swung Shekhinah, only for Chinami to try dodging way before she should have been able to, but still being hit due to Shekhinah's ability to hit slash targets from a distance.

"Guh!" Tohka exclaimed.

"Ah!" Chinami shrieked.

Both were thrown back, with Chinami crashing into part of the ground and forming a huge dust cloud, while Tohka was thrown onto a building wall, becoming a bit dazed as her Ethereal Shift undid itself.

"[I'm sorry Tohka, we're still not used to the Ethereal Form, and I'm exhausted... I'm sorry.]" Sandalphon apologized.

"It's OK, at least we kept it while we needed it most, and we at least managed to land a blow on her before she got us." Tohka panted.
"Ignore that, when did Chinami get here in the first place!!" Natsumi asked worriedly.

Rinne stared at where Chinami has zoomed, furrowing her eyebrows a bit.

"Mom, is something wrong?" Mana asked.

"The way she moved towards us, and the way she partially dodged Tohka's slash... the way she moved isn't something a human should be able to do, and yet that itself doesn't explain why it feels so odd to me." Rinne stated.

"Huh?" Mana questioned.

Rinne looked at everyone else, some sweat trickling down her face.

"This might be just me, but ever since I've seen Chinami in battle, there's been this feeling that I had about her... like something about her was wrong, but I've never understood why that was the case." Rinne explained.

Chinami soon got up, slowly walking through the dust cloud.

"Damn you all!" Chinami growled.

Everyone turned to see Chinami exit the cloud, but soon the sight of what came out surprised all of them, namely what happened to Chinami's arm...

...or rather the lack of it one!

"Huh?" Chinami wondered.

Chinami looked, and soon paled as she it, up to above her elbow, her arm was missing, but the biggest shocker was the face mechanical parts and sparks of electricity were seen from where it was missing.

The rest of her arm was seen where the dust cleared, with the same sparks and machine parts attached to it.

"Her... her arm!" Miku gasped.

"O-Oh my god, that's why her reflexes aren't human, she's a... a... a..." Rinne stuttered.

Chinami grit her teeth, knowing her secret had been exposed, the secret that made her kill Karen was quickly as she had. The secret that she wasn't human at all...

...because she was a machine!

---

That's right, you read that last line correctly, this entire time we've known Chinami... she's been a machine! When I was thinking on who the new Adeptus 3 should be back before I started Season 2, the big issue I had in considering Chinami being based on Old Timeline Origami was the fact she's a bit difficult for me to keep in character. However, then it hit me, what if I somehow incorporated that difficulty into an idea.

As a result, I made Chinami a machine, because a machine can glitch up and sometimes act a bit odd from it, which is why Chinami's occasional doing weird things or acting odd, yet with the right technology, she could be a machine that acts human. Since this question might come
up, does Westcott know that Chinami is a machine? He actually doesn't, and until I explain it next chapter, I can only say the one clue comes from the fact she debuted in Natsumi’s arc.

Well, there you have it, Mildred survived! My decision ended up coming down to the fact after having killed five people throughout the three connected arcs, I should have at least one subversion, plus I just couldn't bring myself to do it after everyone worked so hard and Tohka entered her Ethereal Form, which kinda spoke to me as "give her hope!" in my head.

First thing most of you are probably noticing that Ethereal Tohka is a bit more playful than she'd normally be, just know that's not a staple of the Ethereal Forms in general, just hers. I figure since she gets a lot more serious when she Inverts, an Ethereal Shift should get her more cheery and relaxed, so she gets a bit more playful when she fights because of it.

Now, for why Rinne was able to escape her Inversion so easily? Aside from Rinne pretty stating the answer, which is that she can't transform into either type of form unless the 10 Sephira Spirits have all assumed it, there's an even bigger reason that I can't reveal just yet due to spoilers. Though, what I can say is that it relates to the events of 30 years ago, and a bit before that.

As for Shekhinah/Sandalphon now housing Inverse Tohka, I should clarify that a bit here. The wills of each Angel were part of their essence in a sense, so when Tohka and Inverse Tohka became one, it made the latter fully integrate with her Angel. Well, we've gotten past the first leg of this arc now, the Inverse Spirit threat is gone and Mukuro's been sealed, so now... all that's left is a fight with Chinami, and the reveal of a few lingering mysteries.

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Shido Takamiya (Full Spirit), Code Name: [Harbinger]-

Angel: All - Due to Shido's ability to use the Angels of a Spirit whose power is sealed within him, Shido has no Angel of his own, but the ones belonging to the Spirits he's sealed or linked to are also considered as his.

- Powers: Shido is the only Spirit who doesn't possess an elemental affinity, but due to his power to seal other Spirits and act as a storage of sorts for their powers, he can copy the power of the Spirits that he's sealed or have a link of sorts to him. He can also use multiple Angels at once, but finds it harder to use more than three simultaneously. Due to Spirits being an all-female race, Shido's powers become stronger when he's Shiori.

Risk Factors: SS

Spacequake: A

Spirit's Astral Dress: AAA

Angel Rank: A to SSS

Strength: 150

Consistency: 210
Spiritual Power: 255

Agility: 141

Intelligence: 190

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 99% (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a second copy of an Angel) *UPDATED*

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Share a mental link that can be turned on and off at will) *UPDATED*

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)

Mayuri - (Disrupt any Reiryoku near him with a special magnetic field)
Before we begin, time to sound usual alert about Vol 17 for this arc.

WARNING! MINOR TO MAJOR SPOILERS FOR VOLUME 17, READ AT YOUR OWN RISK!

And that's done, so time to begin the start notes. Last chapter dropped a pretty big reveal with me showing you all Chinami is a robot, and now this chapter's gonna go into further detail about her origins since I did mention that Westcott is unaware of this fact. As a result, I think it's pretty evident that Origami's gonna take the spotlight for a while... and that's all I can say without spoiling something ^^;

Well, as we've finally made it this far, I can finally reveal that aside from what happens in the Mayuri Judgment movie arc to connect this story to the crossover, Chinami is the final opponent of season 3. The rest of this season will be said movie, and this arc finishing up by revealing the final secrets of the series before S4 becomes the final stand against Westcott.

I'm still surprised how we ended up getting here so fast, when I began this story in April, I never thought I'd end up getting here so fast. Well, we're here now, so it's time this chapter helps start the countdown to the revelation of the final secrets in this story, and let this battle against Chinami begin and end... once and for all!

Oh, before we actually begin the chapter, since Vol 17’s already important to this arc, I'd like to talk about my plans for one of my other DAL fanfics: "The Dark, but Not Evil." Most of you already know what it's about since I've mentioned a while back, so I'll skip the description about it. If you don't know it, then consider checking it out.

I mentioned in the story that I wanted to see if Volume 17 introduced any new info before I continued the story, and it did, more than I had expected... I mean the one thing I didn't expect the volume to answer? It actually did. Due to this, the original version of the story will stay as a one-shot, while I'll make the full-story as a different one.

Also, you may be interested in another planned idea I recently decided is a go, it's called: "Another A Live" and the best way to sum it up right now is that it's a Shido/Mio story with a focus on having a lot of bittersweet moments due to the backstory, but with my own twists to have Mio included much earlier in the story. I'll probably bring it up later on when I have more info on it decided, so it's mostly a concept for now.

With that all cleared up, now let's check out Mana's new data sheet, and then begin the chapter!

-Mana Takamiya (Full Spirit), Code Name: [Murakumo]-

Angel: None

- Powers: Mana's powers as a Spirit are of the Void element, which is opposite to her mother's Ether element. Where Rinne can create and heal, Mana’s powers are more focused towards
destruction, negation and/or disabling. However, according to Mana herself, her powers can't destroy living things the same way she could destroy objects, but she can still do some damage to them.

Risk Factors: SS

Spacequake: C

Spirit's Astral Dress: AA

Angel Rank: None

Strength: 190

Consistency: 140

Spiritual Power: 154

Agility: 217

Intelligence: 135

Chapter 68, S3: Sephira Fury, Part 11

Chinami soon got up, slowly walking through the dust cloud.

"Damn you all!" Chinami growled.

Everyone turned to see Chinami exit the cloud, but soon the sight of what came out surprised all of them, namely what happened to Chinami's arm...

...or rather the lack of it one!

"Huh?" Chinami wondered.

Chinami looked, and soon paled as she it, up to above her elbow, her arm was missing, but the biggest shocker was the face mechanical parts and sparks of electricity were seen from where it was missing.

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"Her... her arm!" Miku gasped.

"O-Oh my god, that's why her reflexes aren't human, she's a... a... a..." Rinne stuttered.

Chinami grit her teeth, knowing her secret had been exposed, the secret that made her kill Karen was quickly as she had. The secret that she wasn't human at all...

...because she was a machine!

"How revolting, to think that I'd be exposed by something as unconventional as my attempt to attack your lowered guards." Chinami said, her eyes showing a dark look.
She slammed her remaining arm on her CR-Unit, causing Lancelot to gain a dark aura as Dark Maryoku began to transform it, and her arm slowly tethered itself back as her own transformation's magical power linked it back.

Origami's eyes shook as she saw this, remembering the events of their first encounter in Okinawa.

"...You said I was your cousin, was that just a lie you told?" Origami asked.

"A lie? Oh, not at all [Angel], I was telling you the full truth about that, the reason I'm a machine is completely different." Chinami answered.

"Basically, you're a cyborg, at least that's what I'm guessing." Marina stated.

"Hmm... you could say that, but I don't think I have much in me that's still human to use the term Cyborg, so saying I'm a machine or at least a Gynoid would be the more accurate term." Chinami admitted.

Marina growled a bit.

"The irony, I get tossed by that stupid Boycott, and yet he keeps you around despite we both had a machine body." Marina remarked angrily.

"Actually, Sir Westcott doesn't even know, the only ones who did were killed by Choronzon manifested in original main branch of the DEM." Chinami stated, grinning darkly.

"Huh!?" Marina exclaimed in surprise.

Chinami sighed, cleaning her ear slightly, and then blowing on the finger she used.

"Simple, you see..."

---

Murdock was seen as the mechanical body of Chinami, but around the age when she saw Origami kill her parents, was being created. Only the top half of her mechanical form was completed, with the lower half of the torso to her legs having not yet been made to attach to her.

"Murdock, are you sure about this, will this really be something to use against Westcott?" A DEM staff member asked.

"I do, the signs of him becoming dangerous to this company are already starting to get evident, when the right time comes and he gets out of line... this will be our ticket to taking him down." Murdock answered.

Time began to fly by as Chinami's machine body was constructed, soon it was completed, and after it was, a certain electricity was shot through it, only moments after this... her eyes opened up.

Chinami walked in a training room, and soon unsheathed a simple steel katana as a Jabberwocky unit was transferred into the room. Taking a deep breath, she took a stance with her katana. The Jabberwocky came to life, and she dashed forward, soon managing to knock it towards the wall.

As Westcott, Ellen, Jessica, and Marina dealt with the fact that Murdock had managed to catch them in a trap to hopefully remove them from power in the DEM, they suddenly heard a crash in one room.

"Oh?" Westcott wondered.
The group of four soon walk back to see the training room Chinami was in, and then they saw the sight of her standing before a Jabberwocky, with Ellen quickly noticing her lack of a CR-Unit, any Wizard gear, or even a Wiring Suit.

"What the... why is she training against Jabberwocky!?" Ellen gasped, shocked at the sight.

"They aren't made to be fought as a training opponent, and why's she bare of any kind of wizard gear!?" She wondered.

She was right to think that, by all means the sight of this girl's choice of combat conditions could be seen as suicide, and it really was... or it would have, if they had known what Chinami really was.

"Hmm... hold on a minute, I'm curious about how this will go." Westcott replied, smirking as he stared at the sight.

At that moment, the Jabberwocky rushed forward as its arms, and legs, pushed against the ground, charging at Chinami.

Once she saw it coming, Chinami slowly shifted into a stance, and then... her eyes widened as she shot forward, suddenly going past the Jabberwocky with her katana gleaming in the air.

As she turned to face it, the machine shook before a single slash mark cut it down the middle, making it explode! The two elite wizards both stared in shock, while Marina showed some awe to her accomplishment.

"Well, well..." Westcott remarked, smirking heavily.

"Let this be a sign of good fortune everyone, we already have something new for us the moment the reins are truly mine again. Now let's cash in on it." He stated.

Westcott walks closer to Chinami, catching her attention as she turned to look.

"Welcome to the DEM... my new Adeptus 3." Westcott greeted, holding out his hand.

Chinami looked at Westcott, her eyes identifying him as the one Murdock wanted out of the picture, so she decided to act natural.

"...You realize that bed head of yours isn't very fashionable, right?" Chinami stated bluntly.

Ellen, Jessica, and Marina all went pale and white eyed at that comment, while Westcott's left eye twitched slightly.

"No, I don't believe they have... thank you for your honesty." Westcott replied sarcastically.

"You are quite welcome, I am Chinami Mikazuchi, it is a rare treat to see you Sir Westcott." Chinami introduced.

The three all looked at Chinami oddly as she started chewing on some of her hair.

"...Maybe this might be a bad idea?" Jessica wondered.

Chinami and Marina were walking across the hall, and this was happening around the time that Murdock's plan to drop the Humpty Dumpty satellites on Tenguu City was going on. As they were walking, Chinami was polishing her katana, until... she accidentally cut some of her skin, exposing some wires underneath.
"I'm glad you decided to take on our position as Adeptus 3, you'll be a great addition to-" Marina stated, moving her hand near the shoulder that Chinami cut.

Marina was suddenly pushed against the wall, shaking as she narrowly avoided Chinami kicking her, the shoulder in question being covered.

"What the hell is wrong with you!?” Marina screamed.

"...Ah, my apologies, I thought you were about to attack me.” Chinami answered.

"Just what would make you think that?” Marina asked.

Chinami's eyes darken, and Marina sighs as she realized a dark past story was about to happen.

"Many years ago, I lost my parents when they died of an illness, I was about 6 to 8 years old at the time, and after a few years, an aunt and uncle of mine decided to adopt me as their second child.” Chinami explained.

'And here comes the sad part any moment-' Marina thought.

"I arrived at Tenguu City, on the same day the Tenguu Fire broke out, the day the current [Efreet] and [Angel] were born.” Chinami stated.

"I rushed to find my parents and my adoptive sister among the fire, and when I did... I saw [Angel] murder them with my own eyes!” She shouted angrily.

Marina suddenly showed surprise at that, not expecting that at all.

"I didn't even see my little sister, I bet she was killed before she even realized it, ever since I've seen the Spirits for what they are and want nothing more... than to kill [Angel] to avenge them.” Chinami said, glaring forward as if to kill a hidden Spirit.

Marina soon wondered about something, and decided to ask about it.

"Uh... this adoptive sister of yours, what was her name out of curiosity?” Marina asked, wanting to see if a guess she made was right.

"...Origami Tobiichi." Chinami answered.

Marina's eyes widened, that was the real identity of [Angel], and because of this, Marina kept silent.

"I see, then you fit right in with us.” Marina stated.

Chinami watched Marina as the let Murdock and the others fall into the DEM's special prison, and as she did, her programming altered itself.

'Murdock didn't have any power, I have no need to follow his plan, so from here on...' Chinami thought.

Her loyalties were assigned towards Westcott.

'I'll fight for the strongest, until I can find and kill [Angel], without any mercy.' She thought.

"And that's taken care of, so... ready to make things official Adeptus 3?” Marina asked.
Chinami soon walked in, and soon nodded to the Spirit based AI.

"...Yes, and I shall kill those Spirits myself if I have to." Chinami replied, with a cold stoic voice.

'Although, I'll keep me being a machine a secret, better to have a secret weapon that way.' She thought.

Chinami cleaned her ear again as she finished.

"And that's pretty much it, I'm not sure how I got into this machine body in the first place, but I don't really give a damn, not as much as taking out all of you Spirits, especially you... [Angel]" Chinami stated.

"You little piece of-" Marina shouted.

Origami held out a hand, surprising Marina, and everyone else as she took a step forward, taking a deep breath.

"...Chinami, your only opponent will be me, it's time we end this once and for all!" Origami declared.

"Oh?" Chinami inquired.

Everyone else showed shock at that, Tohka especially.

"Origami, what are you doing, we should be facing her-" Tohka stated.

"No Tohka, this is something I have to do on my own, a battle that I have to fight, a battle that I have to end... along with the unbreakable hatred in her heart." Origami stated, a sad look in her eyes.

Tohka stared at her, a worried look on her face.

"B-but Origami, you're still weak from me defeating you while you were in your Inverse Form, you don't have the power to win right now, not to mention she's using Dark Maryoku to enhance her CR-Unit!" Tohka warned.

Origami breathed, turning to her best friend.

"Even so, I can't run... because if I do, how will I ever be able to face myself?" Origami asked.

Tohka's eyes widened, remembering how she and Origami met after she was sealed.

"...Origami, you have the promise to not die, you hear me!?'" Tohka shouted, tearing up a bit.

"If I break that promise, feel free to drag me back from the dead and kill me again as punishment." Origami smiled.

Taking another deep breath, Origami walked forward and soon held out her hands.

"[Ehyeh]"

"[Metatron]"

Origami felt her Astral Dress materialize on her body, and then her Angel form on her head, the golden feathery pillars shooting out of the ground soon after.
Chinami cracked her neck, soon unsheathing the Dark Arondight into her hands.

"This is it... Chinami, I'll free you from your curse, right here and now!" Origami screamed loudly.

Reine ran around, looking for where everyone had gone, and finding herself where everyone had been earlier before moving to go help Mildred.

"Rinne!?" Seigo snouted.

Seigo hopped a bit, hoping to see them somewhere.

"Shido!?" Seigo shouted again.

"Mana!?" He shouted once more.

"RIO!?" He shouted for the final time.

...the wind blowing was his answer.

"...None of them, where are they?" Seigo asked, a bit saddened.

"Maybe they aren't here anymore, I guess we should go and-" Reine answered.

"No."

Reine and Seigo looked as Isamu floated out of Reine's hand, hovering in place.

"Isamu?" Reine asked.

"Reine, it is time for you to learn the truth, and you must heed it... for the sake of the world itself, and the world that couldn't be saved long ago."

Reine blinked, no less confused by Isamu than she had been since their reunion.

Isamu breathed deeply, and soon looked at Seigo.

"Seigo, you know of what I mean don't you?" Isamu asked.

"Yeah, well... kinda sorta, I know the Spirit Dimension's real name, but do to this state I'm in, I only seem to recall it if I'm under heavy stress, and with all the Reiryoku keeping my current form manifested without a struggle..." Seigo answered.

"Close enough, knowing is the only part I need for this to work." Isamu replied.

Reine looked at the two confused.

"Sweetie, why are you and my big brother acting so weird? If you just let me try helping you revive with Rinne's help then-" Reine stated.

"SHUT UP!" Isamu screamed.

Reine went silent at that, nearly tearing up.

"...I'm sorry for doing that Reine, but the situation Westcott's brought us too has become too severe, I can't just hope to forever hide you from the truth, and I knew I couldn't because I'd never come back despite that Seigo does have a way to revive." Isamu explained.
Reine's eyes widen as she looks at Seigo.

"Well, that's what he says, but I don't really believe him because he hasn't revived me yet." Seigo answered.

"I keep telling you that it won't work yet, there's a reason why I had to make you inherit the sealing ability to Shido when you got your soul smashed apart! Isamu screamed angrily.

Seigo went silent before "turning" away from Isamu, and "pouting" in response.

"Reine, it's time for you to know, and to start this I should tell you the most vital part..." Isamu said, clearly showing pain at shattering the world Reine had come to know.

"Seigo is not your brother, and... I'm not your husband... we never were." Isamu revealed.

Reine's eyes widened and shook, and she began to panic slightly.

"W-what are you... no... no, no, no, you're lying... you have to be!" Reine exclaimed in horror.

"I'm not... in fact, Isamu Murasame doesn't even exist, he's... just an alias I created when I altered you and Seigo's memories." The being known as Isamu explained.

"...Wait, you did what to me!?" Seigo shouted.

Reine put her hands to her hand as she shook, pulling down on it as she unknowingly pulled her hair band off into her hand, causing her side tail to spill out.

She breathed heavily, trying to avoid having a panic attack as the info before her registered and her mind tried to deny it... Seigo wasn't her brother, and Isamu... wasn't her husband, and was just an alias someone else used?

"...You still deny it, and I don't blame you, this is the world you've known all your life, and that's because you can't remember your time in your true birthplace, after all... I erased those memories myself." Isamu grimaced.

"What... no... you're... this is..." Reine mumbled.

"Uh... maybe you should show her the images, at this rate words will make her head explode!" Seigo muttered.

"Yes, perhaps you're right." Isamu noted.

Isamu breathes, and soon his form as a sphere of light shifted into that of the one from Reine's memories, and he soon tapped her shoulder. She, and Seigo, noticed the landscape around them change and become a replica of the Spirit Dimension, but from a time even Seigo hadn't seen it.

A time many, many, years before Seigo had ever arrived there, and before Reine had ever been born in it.

"This is... the Spirit Dimension?" Reine asked.

"Yes, that's the name you know it as, but..." Isamu explained.

"...That is not the true name of this land, it was one it gained after the people here forgot about it, and the original name was lost." He answered.
Origami, and Chinami, both jumped into the air as they began their battle in the sky.

"[Round Table, equip!]

"[Mal'akh - Heavenly Wings!]

A realizer shaped like a disc attached to Chinami, activating like a propulsion system to aid her flying movement and mobility.

Many of the Metatron pillars fly before motioning themselves into a wing-like formation, and then folding themselves behind her back.

"Here goes!" Origami shouted.

Origami flew at Chinami, and the Adeptus 3 wizard readied her blade.

"[Dark Arondight!]

Chinami slashed down her sword, and created a slash wave that origami narrowly dodged with her enhanced speed.

"[Kadour - Sword of Light!]

The remaining pillars all fling themselves Chinami, making the DEM wizard dodge them, slashing against a few with Arondight.

Taking the chance, she rushed at Origami, smashing her sword against, her, and sending her near the ground.

"Origami!" Shido screamed.

'Come on, don't fall now, imagine you're like a bird...' Origami thought.

Origami imagined herself as a bird flying through the sky.

'.And fly!' Origami mentally shouted.

"GO!" She screamed,

The Metatron pillars on her back fired beams of light, propelling her back up, and smashing into Chinami, which caused the brown-haired wizard to be launched higher into the sky.

Origami motioned her hands forward.

"[Artelif - Crown Cannon!]

The pillars fire a comprised beam towards Origami, and she held her hand out to form a territory barrier against it.

"[Dark Arondight!]

She slashes the air, causing a dark energy wave to fly at the Light Spirit.

"[Zohar - Heavenly Gate!]

The pillars move and become an asterisk shaped shield that blocked the attack before Origami flew at
her, causing the two to have a hit and run tactic as they flew, chasing and trying to attack each other.

"Hold... still!" Chinami roared.

"You... first!" Origami shouted.

They clashed in midair, creating a wave of Dark Maryoku and Origami's white Reiryoku to burst out as small recoils of force, making everyone feel the fierce winds blow towards them.

"Look at that, she's actually handling herself in that weakened state!" Miku gasped.

"Amazing..." Mukuro breathed.

"I should have known, when we fought as Inverse Spirits near the start of Spring, she could always adapt to me, Chinami has nothing on her, and that's because Origami will figure out how to fight back once she gets the right understanding." Tohka smiled.

As the two clashed more, Origami suddenly pushed away and neared the ground.

"So, leaving yourself wide open?" Chinami smirked darkly.

"Actually, you did." Origami countered.

Chinami blinked, and soon realized she didn't see the pillars Origami was using offensively.

"[Shemesh - The Sun!]

Chinami looked up, and soon the pillars, which were floating and spinning in a circle above her, rained down a rain of light blasts, all of which hit her as she tried using her territory barrier against it with little success.

Origami panted as she did this, coughing as she felt fatigue start to catch up to her.

[Oh no, are you alright Origami?]

"I'm alright Metatron, I'm just a bit more tired than I thought, I need to slow down with my attacks or I might be in trouble." Origami replied.

Soon a grunt was heard in Origami's head.

"Say what you want, you humans are all the same, even when you turn into one of us." A voice said in Origami's head.

'Wait, are you... my Inverse self, the Metatron region's collective will?' Origami thought.

"Hmm, let's see... "are you the Metatron region's collective will?", my god... you sound like a broken stereo." Inverse Origami mentally replied.

Origami sweat dropped a bit.

'Wow, she's... cruel.' Origami thought, soon hearing something.

She focused on the ground to see Chinami cracked her neck before flying back up at her.

"Was that it!?" Chinami shouted rhetorically.
"Guess it's time for round 2." Origami said to herself.

Reine looked at Isamu with surprise as she heard him say that, wondering what he met. The curiosity to what the Spirit Dimension could have been really called quickly won her over her mind, and a certain question came to light.

"Not its original name, what do you mean, what was this place called before?" Reine asked, hoping for an answer.

"Its name was..." Isamu replied.

Reine stared at Isamu, waiting for the answer, after a few moments... the answer was spoken.

"HEAVEN"

Reine's eyes widened, her mind briefly shutting down to properly register what she had heard.

"W-what... did you say? This is... Heaven, the actual home of the Angels in the Bible Heaven!?" Reine gasped.

"That's right, you heard me right, why else do you think a concept connected to God was so linked here, or why the Spirits had weapons named after some of the most powerful Angels, with their Astral Dresses as alternative names for God?" Isamu questioned.

Reine took a moment to think on that, and when she did... it made complete sense, it was no different from saying an animal was meant to breathe in water because it had come from, and/or evolved in the ocean, on Earth.

However, now a new question crossed her mind, what were the Spirits... and if Heaven wasn't a land of the dead, just what was it really? Most of all, who was Isamu really, and how did he know all of this.

"Isamu, what-"

"I think I know what you're going to ask." Isamu interjected.

"The Spirits are essentially, no... exactly, what you've known them as, evolved Humans who lived in another world. Heaven is, or rather was that world, and both were created by God, who observed them and hoped to find a unique path for both, but also having them learn and grow together. Now, as for who I am, that's actually quite simple... but I'll answer that later." Isamu explained.

Isamu sighed.

"For now, this is what you need to see." He continued.

Seigo moved to Reine's shoulder as she saw a horrific sight, they zoomed out of the world of Heaven, and appeared in one that was... the exact opposite, it was dark, nightmarish, and terrifying to the both of them.

Neither of them even had to ask what this place was, where they had been before clearly spelt it out to them, if they had just witnessed Heaven... then this place could only be the land that opposed it, Hell.

"So, there's another world, and that one's Hell!?" Reine asked.
"Watch before you ask anything.

The sight of various monsters, none of which resembled humans at all, were seen doing things that could only be described as awful and evil, and watching over all of them was a black horned figure with a reddish tint at the tips of his horns, and glowing red eyes, with the inside of his mouth being the same.

This creature was the Devil, and the ones before him were all Demons.

"I... I think I'm gonna be sick!" Seigo shook, hiding in Reine's hair to avoid looking.

"Yes, the ultimate nightmare, there was once another world God had made, but he realized quickly it was becoming too twisted and stopped before he created anything that would become the horrors he knew could come... but he had been too late, and they thrived in the shadows without his notice." Isamu stated.

Soon, the image continued as the sight of the Devil and the Demons attacking Heaven was seen, before it quickly fell onto Earth and caused things like various landmarks such as the Grand Canyon, the destruction of continents believed to be myth in the present, and worst of all?

The Devil stabbed into the Earth, introducing the essence of himself into some Humans, the essence... of evil, negativity, sin and etc.

"Long before the Spirits existed, the Spirit Dimension only had God and the Angels, and the Earth still had Humans, but the land that would become Hell would grow to not just create the Demons... but one so dangerous it became the antithesis to God himself, the Devil." Isamu explained.

"The Devil infected this world, and God couldn't stop it or undo the damage, so the only thing he could do... was to stop it from spreading any further than it already head. This is that moment before us..." He continued.

Reine noticed the slight regret in his voice, confusing her slightly.

Soon a figure emitting light, wearing a light blue and white robe clashed with the Devil, and the king of Hell soon dealt what looked to be a fatal blow as he smashed his claw into God's body, but God did not falter... and motioned himself to let the Devil stab himself.

The king of Hell roared in pain, and as the Devil removed his claw, God smashed his palms over the wound and unleashed a power resembling the modern day Reiryoku, but much more potent and divine looking, and it destroyed the Devil forever.

Reine gasped as the entirety of Hell soon compressed and exploded, the nightmarish realm, and all of the Monsters inhabiting it, were erased from this world.

"In the end, the Devil was destroyed and Hell was annihilated, that was it... or so God thought." Isamu stated.

"...Or rather, so I thought." He revealed.

Reine's eyes widened, and soon enough, Isamu's form shifted to show the same robe as before, but now the light hiding God's form was dispelled. He resembled a handsome young man with pale, almost light-gold, colored hair (A/N: Think the illustration of younger Elliot & Ellen from Vol 17) and eyes that changed color every few seconds.

"Uh... surprise, Isamu is God!" Seigo stated, chuckling oddly.
"...Seigo, don't help me." Isamu groaned.

"Yes sir." Seigo obeyed.

Isamu sighed, soon continuing his explanation.

"The battle had been... the damage had been unreal, the Earth was mostly unscathed, but Human was in shambles, and for everyone's safety, I disconnected Heaven from Earth except for a one-way spot that people like Seigo would find and fall into, the one tether I could not break." Isamu mentioned, showing a brief image of the area.

"I realized then, I was dying, and the damage was too great, the Devil had done more than doom me to death, but I was outright cursed, and in a way that would always keep me dead, not even if my soul was broken and then repaired would I revive." He explained, crying a bit.

Reine gave a saddened look, putting a hand on Isamu's cheek, with Seigo floating up and touching his other one.

"The only thing I could do after, was unsure that something would keep both worlds safe, so before the curse destroyed my ability to live forever... I gathered the Angels who had survived." Isamu continued.

Reine and Seigo watched, and soon the 10 angels were seen, the ones that the Spirits' Angels would be named after... however, Reine soon noticed something shocking, they all looked exactly like their current possessors!

"They... they look like Tohka, and Origami, and... and..." Reine gasped.

"Yes, it was no coincidence that the ones possessing the crystals now became their final wielders. Before my demise, I asked those 10 to become the new world's foundation, under a tale as their legendary heroes and guardians, becoming the Sephira Crystals shaped on their weapons in the great battle, and I sent pieces of their soul to Earth where one day, they'd reincarnate as Humans." Isamu revealed.

"However, I had three last acts to do, ones I had to accomplish before I truly vanished from the realm of the living." He continued.

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_God, in the form of Isamu, went to a certain part of the world and helped establish a secret village of wizards, ones that would end up forming the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn under the ancestors of Westcott, Elliot, and Ellen._

_"There, now for the next part." Isamu whispered, soon coughing a bit._

_Isamu would soon find himself in the area of land that would one day be the city that would be replaced by Tenguu City, the home of a certain family line._

_Standing before said family's ancestors, Isamu placed a strange light within man of the two._

_"I know it may not make sense now, but promise me you will keep that safe, in the future, your descendants will need to carry that "key", and when the time comes, then the world will be guided away from the plagues I unknowingly brought to it." Isamu explained._

_"That is the mission that the Takamiya family must carry." He continued._
Reine's eyes widened, and soon looked at Seigo.

"Wait a minute, Seigo... your family is-" Reine gasped.

"Yeah, shocking huh? That's the real reason Shido has sealing powers, that memory where he thinks I got it from DEM chemicals was put in me by Isamu because he wouldn't be ready for the truth." Seigo verified.

Reine blinked, and then shook her head.

"Wait, hold on a second, then have you only shared certain details when we have seen you appear before now!?" Reine demanded, now feeling confused.

"Uh... my soul was fragmented, remember? I could only remember certain bits and pieces related to the fragment that the others met with, it was luck that Tohka met the one that knew the Ethereal Form's source."

Reine hung her head in defeat, unsure what to understand anymore.

"The third and final thing however? That I must directly show you, or you won't believe it." Isamu stated.

Isamu motioned Reine to take her hand, and she did, causing the visual illusion to take them to a specific area.

The two combatants flew across the air once more, and soon enough... Origami found an opening!

"[Kadour - Sword of Light!]

Chinami suddenly saw the pillars near her again, and she slashed Dark Arondight at them... unfortunately, she realized to late that Origami had pulled a feint on her, charging at her directly while detaching the pillars she used for the Mal'akh formation.

"GO!" Origami shouted.

"Shit!" Chinami screamed.

[Fire!]

Metatron blasted all of its beams at Chinami point blank, with the pillars tossed by Origami's last use of the Kadour formation also turning to fire at her, causing her to be slammed with a massive amount of light.

"She got her!" Kotori cheered.

"Alright!" Mana shouted happily.

"You go girl!" Natsumi screamed excitedly.

Origami smiles.

'This is it!' Origami thought.

"...[Inverse Workings!]"
Suddenly an area on the Dark Lancelot opens up, and Dark Maryoku floods out, pushing Origami away as all of Chinami's damaged is healed, and the Adeptus 3 wizard cackled menacingly.

"No... this can't be." Origami gasped in horror.

Chinami grabbed Origami by the throat, preparing to choke her.

"That's what you call saving your best trick for last, I can only do that once every few hours, but never got a chance to use it against that Karen girl I killed, but this is what real power is, and now you'll die [Angel], so say goodbye!" Chinami cackled.

"Everyone, I'm... sorry." Origami apologized.

Everyone stared in horror as Chinami prepared Dark Arondight, but... suddenly Chinami's eyes glitch up, and she shakes before they suddenly turn from amber to green, surprising Origami.

"Ori...ga...mi..." Chinami spoke, her voice sounding younger.

"Huh?" Origami wondered.

Suddenly, Chinami began to tear up, her whole body shaking.

"Ori...gami... it's me, the... real Chinami!" Chinami cried.

Origami's eyes widened.

"What!?" Origami gasped.

"The... the story you just heard form... this robot me... isn't the full story. The truth is, my... mom, and dad... didn't die of an illness, they were murdered by... the DEM, and... I was killed too!" Chinami sniffl

Everyone down below heard this, and showed surprise to it.

"She... she was what?" Shido gasped.

"Oh my god, the DEM... just what sick boundaries have they failed to cross, if any at all!?" Nia growled, her fist shaking.

Chinami cried.

"They... took my soul, and... some man named Murdock... put me in this body, he rewrote the machine to overtake my personality... run on most of my memories, but it's... own set desires! Worst of all, one of those orders... was to... kill your parents!” Chinami revealed.

Origami's eyes widened.

"The misfire that Metatron caused, you mean..." Origami realized.

"It wasn't Metatron's mistake... or you, it never... was!" Chinami confirmed.

"They were... killed because, they worked as part of a business that DEM wanted... to purchase, but they refused the offer, so... they were killed just because they could be a threat of ally with Ratatoskr, your parents died because... because I was used like this!" She sobbed.

Origami's eyes shook, watering slightly.
"And... and now, my soul is... being broken apart, I can't rest in peace, and... soon, I might be too broken to rest at all... Origami, please... destroy this machine, end my suffering, I beg you!" Chinami cried out.

At that moment, Chinami's eyes reverted back to amber, showing the machine persona regained control.

"Oh, how annoying, for the real Chinami to reveal all that, well... then I guess I just have to confirm it's all true, how's it feel to know how your parents really died!?" False Chinami cackled.

"Now, die... die with your despair [Angel], killing you while you Inverse will be fun!" She laughed.

At that moment, False Chinami thrust her Dark Arondight forward as planned, and everyone watched in horror as it was about to hit... only for it to break into pieces!

- (*Silvery Wings - Accel World*) -

"W-what!?" False Chinami gasped.

"...I knew it, all along, the way her hatred was strong was too unnatural, and now I know it was because that hate wasn't' even hers." Origami cried, shedding happy tears.

"What... why are you crying? How can you smile like that, you saw a Human treat another of their kind like a tool, I don't see how the will of the Sandalphon could ever believe in your kind!" Inverse Origami questioned, incredulous to her reaction.

Origami sniffled, and giggled a bit.

"Because, you're looking at it all wrong, I thought my own family was my enemy... but she's not, she's trapped and now I know I can save her. Yeah, we Humans aren't the same as Spirits, and we make mistakes, but we do our best to admit to them and move forward." Origami replied.

"Just like... just like someone showed me how to live, when I wanted to die long ago." She smiled.

Inverse Origami's eyes widened, surprised at that.

"You wanted to die, but... found reason to live? How could someone push you like that, how could you keep going, I don't get it, I... is this because of our hatred?" Inverse Origami asked.

"No, it's because that person gave me hope, the hope named... Shido Takamiya." Origami answered.

At that moment, Inverse Origami took another look at the words that Sandalphon spoke to the Inversions, and then... she understood it.

That hope wasn't just some kind of promise, it was a revelation that their future was one beyond a single-minded hate, that she could live by the path she chose to walk, not one decided by forces beyond her.

"I... I get it, I think I get it now, what you were trying to say... if that's the case then... to you who's inherited the power of the Metatron region, allow me to see your strength and let me know if its right to believe!"

"I will... thank you." Origami thanked.

At that moment, False Chinami was pushed away as suddenly, Origami's white Reiryoku
manifested, but brighter than ever before.

Shido's eyes widen.

"That light, she's..." Shido breathed.

Soon the bright white Reiryoku exploded, forming a pillar of it that everyone saw.

"Whoa!" Mana exclaimed.

"Origami..." Mukuro breathed.

"You did it Origami, you've... Ethereal Shifted!" Tohka sniffled happily.

- (*insert song end*) -

Slowly but surely, the light of Origami's transformation ended, and the silhouette of her Ethereal Form appeared under the bright light she had created, soon looking towards the False Chinami.

"Chinami, don't you worry... I'm here to save you!" Origami exclaimed with determination.

That's right, you just saw it, Origami's just undergone an Ethereal Shift, and as such she's become the second Spirit to gain her Ethereal Form! Unfortunately, I'll be teasing you a bit longer with how she looks like and putting up her data sheet, so you won't know what Ethereal Origami's like just yet, considering the rest of the reveals on Reine's side, its better I give you it then so you experience all of it at once.

Also, you did hear that right, this story's version of the Spirit Dimension was none other than Heaven! That's a twist I've had in mind since day 1, because it just felt like one I had to use when the Angels are named after actual important angels, the Astral Dresses are all various names for God, and then Da'at is essentially God himself, how could I have said no to this idea?

Now, on the part of Isamu being God? Had it planned as long as the Heaven thing too, notice how throughout the series that I always brought up Seigo when I had the chance to, and showcased his story, but Isamu was heavily neglected in comparison? Exactly, his character had too many secrets, but I also didn't want to imply that, so I barely brought him up to disguise the mystery through him appearing as a flat character.

Well, the one thing I don't think I can hide is the part of Isamu's explanation about the Devil... I think you'll probably have a good idea where that's leading to no matter what I say otherwise ^_^; *chuckles* Well, considering the remaining secrets of the series are starting to unravel here, I guess that's not too big of an issue, when you make these reveals, it's easier for some info to be linked to something else in the process.

Last thing I've gotta mention before we close things up is this. The one side-story for the series, Date A Re:Live - Encore? I mentioned a while back that it might not continue due to trouble with it, but after some thought, I realized the problem was I just attempted to do it way too early, and since there's only two Chapter I'd like to redo with the Spirits that have been introduced since, I'm just gonna redo the story when I complete this one.
Basically, the first story with the hot springs will now include everyone instead of the first 5 Spirits, and I'm also gonna drop the whole story voting aspect, that might have made it a bit harder for me than I had realized too, so I'll amend that issue as well. Alright then, I guess that's all I really have to say for today's chapter, so...

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 100%, MAX (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - ( Summon a second copy of an Angel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Share a mental link that can be turned on and off at will)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)

Mayuri - (Disrupt any Reiryoku near him with a special magnetic field)

Mukuro - 99% (Safely use all 100% of his body's physical power)
Before we begin, time to sound usual alert about Vol 17 for this arc.

WARNING! MINOR TO MAJOR SPOILERS FOR VOLUME 17, READ AT YOUR OWN RISK!

While the arc still has at least one chapter left (an epilogue of sorts without officially being one due to the story still having S4 left), I can at least say that this is chapter where the major Vol 17 spoilers will have already been revealed, so starting from the next chapter, the spoilers have passed. Now, time for the start notes. Well everyone, the fight between False Chinami, and Ethereal Origami, is about to begin.

I'll admit that I actually wanted to introduce a few more Ethereal Forms here, but ultimately, I consented to only Origami's because it felt like it would be too scrambled otherwise, and... because I haven't been able to figure out any fitting names for the other Sephira Spirits' Archangels yet ^^; *chuckles embarrassingly* So, the rest will be debuting throughout the crossover and/or Season 4.

Now to reply a guest review.

To Seeker213:

"Fair enough, there's always something that someone might not like, I had a good feeling not every would be as comfortable with the twists as I am, but it's how I wanted to write the story, and partially why I began writing in the first place, but I guess everyone's got their preferred twists. I'd say more about Westcott, but I won't cause this chapter's gonna be doing that part for me."

"Also, if you're thinking that the crossover is the result of the Heaven and Hell thing, that actually isn't why I'm doing the crossover. That's the result of the plot point in DxD's fourth arc where Rizevim gets an interest in other worlds/dimensions, and since Date A Live itself has another world through the Spirit Dimension, it just felt like the perfect opportunity. Unfortunately, I can't say more on that due to spoilers for those who read both stories."

"I can see why you might see that, but I can assure you it isn't as bad as you think, there's a bit more of Origami's reaction to the whole thing with Chinami in this chapter that will aid in her development. As such, I apologize over not mentioning there was going to be more on that for this chapter, it's the one thing about multi-part chapters I hate myself, how info spread across them can make something look like what it isn't."

"To answer your question about Encore, that's what I'll be doing, but in a unique sense. The current version has this unique thing I began in Chapter 2 where each chapter ended with a photo being added to an album. So, for the first chapter, it'll be an event near S3's end, and showcases that idea before restarting to between Tohka and Origami's arc and then I'll be going chronologically from there."

"However, this is only for the slice of life events, any romantic events between arcs is planned
to be in the DAR:L side story called the Dating Game."

Well, there's not much else for me to say, so I guess it's time to bring up the data sheet for Ethereal Origami, and then we can get this chapter started!

A/N: Slightly unrelated, but I figured I should mention it because there's one use of it in this chapter, and it's been a question I couldn't answer before now. To anyone who's been wondering if you can use the f-bomb in a T-Rated story, you can as long as it's not too often.

-Ethereal Origami, Code Name: [Seraph]-

Archangel: Lucifer - Metatron's Archangel counterpart. Unlike other Archangels, Lucifer has no resemblance to its Angel counterpart's form, taking a uniquely different form, namely a set of seven white streamers of various length on her back, with six of them shift into the shape of wings and the seventh acting as their supporting base, all with rainbow tips at their ends. Unlike Metatron, Lucifer doesn't need to move off Origami's body/vicinity, allowing her to use her light-based attacks from anywhere, in any way, and at any direction.

- Alternate Form: Amaterasu, Dawn of Radiance - The Ethereal counterpart of the Shemesh, Artelif, and Kadour formations. Using the power of the Amaterasu formation, Origami can create a multiple of attacks using her light, including stronger versions of the three formations this one is a counterpart to, and new ones such as light refraction, light scattering, and reflecting the attack off a surface.

- Alternate Form: Ehki, Heavenly Godspeed - The Ethereal counterpart of the Mal'akh formation. By absorbing all the nearby photons in the area and imbuing them within her body, Origami can make herself move so fast, only the Ethereal form of the Yamai twins' natural speed can exceed hers. While she's not actually going this fast, many claim that she moves as fast as light when using this ability.

- Alternate Form: Sulis, Eternal Lightwave - The Ethereal counterpart of the Zohar formation. By refracting all the nearby light she's compressed onto each other, Origami can create a translucent shell of light that can defend from many attacks, and the shell is movable as well, meaning Origami doesn't need to dispel and reform it for her to use it somewhere else.

- Alternate Form: Ra, Shining Prisma - A new formation exclusive to Origami's form, and nicknamed by Origami herself as her "Strategic formation." When using Ra, Origami creates a prism of light around her, and while within this prism, Origami's mind processes data at a right at least a thousand-fold faster than a normal person usually can, letting her think up strategies and prepare for the unexpected on the fly if she has the chance to use the formation.

- Powers: As the pinnacle of Origami's abilities, anything she could do in either her normal or Inverse Form is usable here even stronger, and her Ethereal Form has even more tricks of her own. The most notable difference between Origami's normal and Ethereal Form is that it uses less formations than before, which allows it to do more as Origami's formations now have multiple purposes rather than a singular one.

Also, unlike her normal form that relies on photon particles that weakens it when there's less light, Origami's Ethereal Form relies on sunlight and moonlight, meaning that as long as
there's any kind of natural light, Origami will be able to use her powers without anything holding herself back. Origami's teleport dodge gains reaction time so fast, she'll always be teleported a good distance away by Lucifer, and can do it seven times in a row before Lucifer needs a 20 second recharge.

Risk Factors: SS

Spacequake: S

Spirit's Astral Dress: AAA

Archangel Rank: S

Strength: 215

Consistency: 227

Spiritual Power: 252

Agility: 160

Intelligence: 256

Chapter 69, S3: Sephira Fury, Part 12

At that moment, False Chinami thrust her Dark Arondight forward as planned, and everyone watched in horror as it was about to hit... only for it to break into pieces!

"W-what!?” False Chinami gasped.

"...I knew it, all along, the way her hatred was strong was too unnatural, and now I know it was because that hate wasn't even hers.” Origami cried, shedding happy tears.

"What... why are you crying? How can you smile like that, you saw a Human treat another of their kind like a tool, I don't see how the will of the Sandalphon could ever believe in your kind!” Inverse Origami questioned, incredulous to her reaction.

Origami sniffled, and giggled a bit.

- (*Silver Wings - Accel World*) -

"Because, you're looking at it all wrong, I thought my own family was my enemy... but she's not, she's trapped, and now I know I can save her. Yeah, we Humans aren't the same as Spirits, and we make mistakes, but we do our best to admit to them and move forward.” Origami replied.

"Just like... just like someone showed me how to live, when I wanted to die long ago.” She smiled.

Inverse Origami's eyes widened, surprised at that.

"You wanted to die, but... found reason to live? How could someone push you like that, how could you keep going, I don't get it, I... is this because of our hatred?” Inverse Origami asked.

"No, it's because that person gave me hope, the hope named... Shido Takamiya." Origami answered.
At that moment, Inverse Origami took another look at the words that Sandalphon spoke to the Inversions, and then... she understood it.

That hope wasn't just some kind of promise, it was a revelation that their future was one beyond a single-minded hate, that she could live by the path she chose to walk, not one decided by forces beyond her.

"I... I get it, I think I get it now, what you were trying to say... if that's the case then... to you who's inherited the power of the Metatron region, allow me to see your strength and let me know if its right to believe!"

"I will... thank you." Origami thanked.

At that moment, False Chinami was pushed away as suddenly, Origami's white Reiryoku manifested, but brighter than ever before.

Shido's eyes widen.

"That light, she's..." Shido breathed.

Soon the bright white Reiryoku exploded, forming a pillar of it that everyone saw.

"Whoa!" Mana exclaimed.

"Origami..." Mukuro breathed.

"You did it Origami, you've... Ethereal Shifted!" Tohka sniffled happily.

Slowly but surely, the light of Origami's transformation ended, and the sight of the Light Spirit's new form appeared before everyone. The sight of a crown or the wedding veil connected to it was completely absent, with two light blue ribbons tied around only a few strands of the sides of her head, but they didn't seem to be her Archangel which had yet to reveal itself.

Similar to before, Origami's Astral Dress kept its similar appearance to Tohka's if the princess gown theme was more like a wedding dress theme, though it also had changes that made it look more like an individual than it had previously. For one, while still mainly white, it seemed like the purest of white, with some light-pink gradients near the various ends of its non-light cloth.

Any trace of armor on her shoulder had faded, looking more like the normal sleeves of an outfit that lengthened the out to end at a zig-zag pattern, with another layer of cloth made from light extending out below it, with a more translucent look to it, with light-pink fingerless loves that had iridescent-platinum rings around their ends, which was the same color that everything formerly gold on her normal Astral Dress was.

Her boots which had always been similar to Tohka's had also shifted into a more aerodynamic shape, with some part of the sides near the heel having cured to gain a more wing-like shape, and her stockings being light-pink in color. Topping it all off was the blow near where her outfit showcased some of her cleavage, which had kept its butterfly like shape, but now looked like one with six wings, and taking a translucent rainbow color.

"Beautiful!" Rio commented.

"Origami, she looks so regal now, doesn't she?" Mikie commented.

"I know, she doesn't look like an Angel anymore, she looks more like... like..." Natsumi replied,
trying to describe it.

"Like a Seraph."

Everyone turned to Mildred, who had made the comment.

"That's what we call one of the highest levels of Angels if not the highest depending on the origin related to them, and considering that was her prior code name, it only seems fitting her Ethereal Form is more than that." Mildred explained.

"Damn it... damn it all!" False Chinami screamed.

The robot wizard shook, clearly showing rage at the sight before her.

"How dare you feel hope from this, how could you not feel despair from this, you bitch!" False Chinami roared.

"...You wanna know how I honestly feel then?" Origami asked.

False Chinami growled at that.

"I'm truly happy to know that Chinami never hated me, and even more... now I know I have nothing to feel guilty over, I always thought accepting the Metatron Crystal had been a mistake regardless of the true result of that day, but now..." Origami explained.

"...Now I know had I not accepted it, I'd have been an orphan and never learned the truth, because you would have killed them through something else, at least like this Rio left their souls within me so I had part of them still living!" She exclaimed.

"Just what kind of bull crap are you talking about?" False Chinami glared.

Origami's hand trembled before she clenched it, and soon she breathed, showing an angry face towards the False Chinami, one that everyone noticed clearly showed hate.

"Simple... because despite that, that doesn't change the fact that because of you, they aren't alive right now, because of that... the only thing I can feel towards you is hatred!" Origami screamed.

Origami readied herself.

"That's why... I'll destroy you, free the real Chinami's soul, give her peace, and finally avenge my parent's murder!" Origami exclaimed.

"Just try it [Angel], because you'll be the one that dies today!" False Chinami countered.

-(*insert song end*)-

The False Chinami held out her Dark Arondight, the sword and its fragments pulling together before flying at her, followed by False Chinami stabbing the broken blade into her CR-Unit, causing her to scream as her form began to change. Her machine body shifted as its skin grayed out, and most of her hair went pitch black, her sclera becoming black and many of her body's wires breached free of her.

"Oh my god, what just happened?" Kaguya asked, hugging onto her sister.

"I don't know, but... she feels dangerous, like a living force of destruction." Yuzuru replied, doing the same.
"...It seems like she forced her robotic form to integrate with the Dark Maryoku in her CR-Unit, she's mutated into a living personification of the power... at least, that's my theory based on what we're seeing." Rinne theorized.

Kurumi nodded at that.

"It makes sense, as a machine, she can likely handle such an act compared to a living creature." Kurumi answered.

False Chinami's body began moving erratically before the power fully settled, and she gave a seething, furious look towards Origami.

"I will swallow you beyond the depths of dying, and erase you from this world!" False Chinami stated.

Origami took a deep breath, looking at the robotic fake of her cousin.

"[Lucifer!]

A flash went off as Origami's Archangel finally appeared, manifesting on her back as seven white streamers of various lengths, taking the shape of wings and their supporting in the middle, all with rainbow tips at their ends.

Upon fully awakening, the wings glow a bright white, making the rainbow tips shine and sparkle.

"Ready to end this, Lucifer?" Origami asked.

"[Yeah, you and I together!]

Origami and Chinami rush at each other, truly beginning their final battle with one another.

Reine looked around her as she, Seigo and Isamu finally arrived at the area the latter wanted the visual illusion to bring them to. One she saw it, she was amazed at the sight she saw before her, it was the Spirit Dimension back when Seigo had arrived in it.

"Seigo, is this..." Reine asked.

"Yep, this is what the Spirit Dimension looked like when I landed in here." Seigo answered.

"Not as beautiful as when it was Heaven, but it's still a huge "Wow" factor, isn't it?" He asked.

"I... well... yeah, it really is." Reine agreed.

"Yes, it would be accurate to say the reason the name of Heaven was lost to this world was when I had the Spirits born to live here, they were my wish to help restore Humanity of the taint left in them by the Devil." Isamu explained.

Reine soon sees the sight of the renewed Heaven's first days, where the Sephira Crystals, which had only recently been created by the surviving Angels being transformed into them, had been placed in ten spots of the currently colorless and concept-like land before them.

As each one was placed, a tenth of the world suddenly began to develop based on the former powers of the Angel residing inside the crystals, and soon in the center of the world, Isamu began to shake, starting to succumb to his curse.
"After I set everything up, all that was left was to give the Spirits a proper progenitor, one that I made inherit my strength, but only the strength that would allow the world to heal, and the strength to create, rather than destroy." Isamu explained.

Isamu soon motioned himself to a spot, and shakily extended his hands as he focused all the power he could, causing parts of the world to flicker as the power he compressed was put into place, soon exploding out as something like a Spacequake, but instead of harming the world, it gifted it.

He soon looked down to see a small bundle, and picked it up as the baby within it began to cry, upon feeling its touch, the baby quickly stopped crying and calmed down as it saw her father for the first time.

"I created a child, and due to my weakened strength, I didn't have enough to form another, limiting the Spirits to only woman, unlike Humans who also had man... and that was when my physical form finally ceased." Isamu revealed, a sad look in his eyes.

Isamu shed a tear before his body collapsed, and his physical form dissolved into particles, leaving only the astral projection that he was today.

"The Sephira Crystals would soon create their guardians, and they'd be unaware of me through the little power I had left, they would only know this child was the [Spirit of Origin] that all others came from, and she must be protected." Isamu stated, motioning to the Sandalphon guardian picking the baby up.

"Due to the family that I entrusted the task to on Earth, I left her with a name to show she had the same importance as them, and in a sense, was the Spirit Dimension's counterpart to that family, that name... was Mio Takamiya." He revealed.

After having not seen her face, the Sandalphon Guardian shifted the baby in her arms, allowing Reine to see her... see a baby girl with the same hair and eye color as herself, with the only difference being the eyes of a Spirit she possessed.

"Wait, that baby, it looks just like... just like..." Reine gasped, starting to piece something together.

"Just like you?" Seigo stated.

Isamu closed his eyes, looking away as he revealed what had come next.

"Of course it would, because... that baby is you." Isamu verified.

Reine's eyes widened, and she felt her legs give out slightly, looking at the sight before her, and then at her hands before looking back again.

"I'm... a Spirit?" Reine, or rather Mio, asked.

"...Yeah, and you always have been." Seigo confirmed, staying close to comfort her.

As it all sunk in, she turned to Isamu.

"Then... why did you send me to Earth, live as if I was Seigo's sister?" Mio asked.

"I can't answer that, because... I never did." Isamu answered.

Mio's eyes widened.

"That was when I realized my greatest mistake, that there was no way I could outsmart the Devil,
because his power was so opposite I couldn't predict... causing this chain of events to happen."

Isamu put his finger on Mio's head, causing it to glow slightly, and making her eyes widen as she felt a jolt through her head.

False Chinami roared as she thrust her arms out, charging blasts from her wires.

"DIE!" False Chinami screamed.

Dark beams streamed out, homing in on Origami's location.

"[Sulis - Eternal Lightwave!]

Origami put her hands forward, and light gathered as a protective shell that blocked the attack, but a few beams went around and aimed at her from other directions.

"A shield is useless if it can't protect you from every side!" False Chinami cackled.

"Oh, so this one doesn't?" Origami asked, smiling a bit.

False Chinami raised her eyebrows at that, only to gasp as the light shell moved itself in response to Lucifer's slight shifting, causing each beam to only meet the shell as it re-positioned itself in front of where each one hit.

Origami dispelled the shell, and the robotic wizard growled angrily.

"Damn you!" False Chinami shouted.

She rushed with her sword out, and Origami glared a bit.

"[Amaterasu - Dawn of Radiance!]

Spheres of light formed before they twinkled like stars, and flashed forward, aiming at False Chinami.

The mechanical DEM member quickly started flying away, dodging the attacks as they all missed her, and giving a mocking grin towards Origami.

"[If you think that's all these stars can do, then you haven't seen them shine!]

Lucifer joked.

The light spheres soon crashed into parts of the debris, compressing and bouncing even faster as they continued their path towards the False Chinami, and making the robotic fake gasp as they refracted, scattered and reflected around her, making a storm of light around her.

"No way, how is this-Guh!" False Chinami screamed.

Soon many of the light spheres smashed into her, dealing heavy damage onto her, but only enough that her body smoked from where she took damage.

"You miserable... annoying... pest!" False Chinami glared.

"[Hey, we're only trying to give you a little sun, I mean you do look a little pale.]

Lucifer replied.

False Chinami's eyes twitched before her body shook heavily, soon causing a flare of Dark Maryoku to explode from her body.
"Don't you dare fuck with me!" False Chinami screamed furiously.

Origami felt the Dark Maryoku push against her.

'I won't... let this beat me, I have to destroy this monster, and save Chinami's soul!' Origami thought.

Origami screamed, causing her Light Reiryoku to flare out and push against False Chinami's power, surprising the latter as a bright light covers the entire area, making everyone shield their eyes.

"Look at all of that power!" Mayuri shouted.

"This power... is really superior to the Inverse Form?" Mukuro breathed, amazed at the sight.

Tohka nodded at that.

"Yeah, it is, nobody knows that better than me after I've used it twice." Tohka confirmed.

"Come on Origami, you can do it." Yoshino cheered quietly.

Origami zoomed at the robotic wizard again, causing her to growl before she rushed towards the Ethereal Light Spirit.

Mio soon found herself alone, looking at the sight of the village of the wizards that Isamu had created long ago, and soon enough... she saw horror as it was suddenly attacked weapons of war, quickly setting it ablaze!

Adults and children alike ran, with a few trying to combat the forces around them with magic, but it was quickly evident despite the potential of magic, there were too many forces and weapons attacking them for their efforts to turn the tide. Before the villagers knew it, their fellow wizards were slaughtered faster than they could defend themselves, or simply fight back.

"What... what is this?" Mio gasped.

"The one thing I didn't predict, as I said before, the Devil is my antithesis, and as such I can never predict him due to his opposite nature... if I had then I would have known this in time to prevent it." Isamu answered.

Mio tried to look for him, but couldn't find him.

"Don't try to look for me, I'm talking to you via your mind, just focus on what's happening here." Isamu explained.

Mio continued watching, and that's when she saw four familiar looking individuals... Westcott, Elliot, Ellen, and Karen, making her eyes shake at the fact she was able to recognize their younger selves so easily.

"Isamu, those are..." Mio gasped.

"Yes, when this village was made, there was an order known as the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. The three who formed it were known as William Robert Woodman, William Wynn Westcott, and Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers... in other words, the ancestors of the DEM and Ratatoskr's founders." Isamu verified.

"Of course, how could I have been so blind, the only way Westcott, and Elliot, could have developed Realizer technology from the Maryoku at the speed they did was if..." Mio realized.
"...If they had studied magic all their lives." Isamu stated.

*The sigh of the continued chaos soon made itself evident as the reactions of the four children.*

*Elliot had a hopeful look, intending to make sure he and the others would get out alive, and keeping a brave face as he did so. Karen wasn't as hopeful looking, being visibly scared at the destruction she saw, but stayed close wanting to belief in Elliot's courage.*

*Ellen had a very hateful looking face, filled with anger, to see all the destruction before her... the feeling of never losing to anyone was born in her heart, with her intention to make every non-wizard pay for today. However, it was Westcott who had the most extreme reaction.*

*He was clearly hit hard by the sight of the destruction, it had stained him, his eyes distant and he didn't move as it registered through him, but... it wasn't because he was terrified or being mentally broken. The answer was written all over his face by one thing, and that... was the smile he was giving, making Mio's eyes shake in horror.*

'He's... smiling, just like the stories about his origins!' Mio thought.

*As a large plume of smoke covered everyone's view, Mio saw something black within the smoke, and the glow of two red dots and a red line shaped themselves within it, soon rising to reveal a shadowed figure with two horns.*

*It tapped Westcott's shoulder, and soon the boy looked at him, the line representing the shadow's mouth said something as Westcott replied back, easily looking convinced before the shadow being forced itself into Westcott through his eyes.*

"Wait a second, is that..." Mio asked.

"Yes, that was where my error allowed the Devil's second act against the world, the attack was influenced by his actions... and then he took the young Westcott's mind, who for reasons unknown enjoyed the destruction, and offered him something." Isamu answered.

"...Why do I feel I'm gonna regret hearing this answer." Mio mentioned, gulping a bit.

"What he offered him, was to have his power if he allowed him to merge with him to regain his power, making Westcott... into his reincarnated self, a new Devil."

*Mio's eyes froze in place, and suddenly the comments Westcott made about becoming the Devil?* The once figuratively words had become all the more terrifying, because now she knew his use of them was actually literal, and it didn't take long for her to realize a bigger connection to Westcott housing the Devil's soul.

"The Inversion taint, it's the Devil's influence that's within him! That's the reason why the Spirits have the Demon Kings when in their Inverse Forms, isn't it?" She stated.

"I'm afraid so, and they share the name of the Demons that my 10 surviving Angels only narrowly defeated in battle." Isamu sighed in confirmation.

*Elliot soon managed to get himself, both Mathers sisters, and Westcott away from their village, with the attackers never realizing their escape as they kept running... nor of the being that fused with Westcott through his eyes.*

*Eyes that marked damage that would echo throughout the world for the next half of the century.*
Mio breathes as Isamu moved his hand off her head, and she breathed heavily.

"I'm guessing you just saw the whole thing about Devil Westcott, I know what you're thinking, and I ended up working under that psychopath due to my job no less." Seigo stated, sighing a bit.

"Wait, I'm confused... how does that relate to me ended up on Earth?" Mio asked.

"Simple, because its related to how Rinne was born." Isamu explained.

Mio's jaw dropped right open at that, and when she looked at Seigo, his light form moved up and down to act like nodding his head.

"You see, Rinne was an attempt of Westcott's to create a copy of you to replace you, and get the power of the Spirits for the sake of awakening the dormant powers the Devil left within him." Seigo explained.

"Oh, and the worst part? His efforts in doing so are what caused the terrifying devastation we know as the Indian Ocean Earthquake & Tsunami of 2004." He added.

Isamu claps his hands, revealing the events of that day in the visual illusion around them.

After briefly showing that the four had split off from each other over the years, the sight of Westcott, along with Ellen, as teenagers was seen as the two stood in an area of Indonesia without any people, with the two of them preparing a spell together.

A dimensional ripple appeared as a humanoid body began forming from the magic that would one day become Maryoku, and within the ripple, a brief sight of a child-aged Mio was seen... followed by a huge explosion as the two were knocked to the ground.

Soon, the image of Rinne's still forming body got shot into the ripple, while Mio began being tossed within it.

"Despite my current form and lack of power, I still could do a little, so I jumped after you before redirecting where you'd end up... because they had a duty related to protecting you, I sent you to the only people I could trust you with, and guided you to Japan." Isamu explained.

"...The Takamiya family!" Mio realized.

Seigo does his movement nod again.

"Yep, that's when you ended up becoming my sister, of course Isamu altered are memories to avoid confusion, and he ended up giving you the false identity of Reine because..." Seigo answered.

Seigo thought for a bit, trying to remember that.

"Because before I handled that, I ended up naming Rinne, and figured a similar sounding name would through Westcott off if he ever tried looking for you." Isamu explained.

"That was it!" Seigo replied.

Isamu and Mio sweat dropped at that, before the former cleared his throat.

"Case in point, the reason why Rinne was so different from the other Spirits was because she was based off you, but was also her own person, I'm pretty sure the was claimed a Sandalphon region Spirit due to her outfit's coloration." Isamu mentioned.
"Ok, wait... does that mean Seigo and Rinne meeting was indirectly part of Westcott's plans?" Mio asked.

Seigo moved left and right to represent shaking his head.

"Well, not exactly, more of a kinda sorta." Seigo answered.

Mio looks at him confused.

"Well in the part of me falling in love with her and having kids? That was me, Westcott only needed Half-Spirits to open the gate for his plans, and then have Rinne go through it, I could have fallen in love with any other Spirit and the same thing would have likely happened." He explained.

"Oh, now I get it." Mio replied.

Mio soon wondered something, and looked at Isamu.

"Hey Isamu, what exactly is this "key" that the Takamiya family carries, and how does it relate to Shido since I'm guessing that it's in his sealing powers?" Mio asked.

"That "key" is the last hope for Humanity's survival, and... for it to regain everything it lost since the Devil first damaged the world." Isamu answered.

Mio looked at him surprised.

"You've seen how Rinne can revive the dead right? Well, consider that a hint of sorts, but to even the world, and all the innocents with good hearts that were unfairly silenced before their time." Isamu explained.

"Back when I first made it without knowing the Devil's survival, it was meant to slowly erase the damage, I wanted to help Earth regain its beauty, and that was something reaching contact with the Spirit Dimension was meant to be, the day the Takamiya family would meet you in the other world." Isamu sighed, looking saddened.

"Unfortunately, when I realized he survived, it became more... the Devil's already been corrupting people into a stage so horrible, they can't be saved, and he'll use them to destroy this world for good. The only way to stop it, is to bring everything that was lost back, and change the tide to annihilate his evil in one go at the source, hopefully before Westcott fully resurrects the power he gave to him, and becomes his successor." He revealed.

Mio gasped, putting a hand near Isamu before he looked at Mio.

"For the longest time, ever since I saw the Devil's Survival, I tried having visions of where the future would go... but each one had the same result, Tohka was captured, then her Sephira Crystal stolen after she was killed, the same future leading to full annihilation, but that's when Seigo made me realize something."

"He did? What was it?" Mio asked.

"Simple, when I caused Shido's birth, I somehow created a possibility that altered his vision, and finally showed him the future could change, and the world saved, and that proof continued with the Arusu sisters becoming Spirits, the birth of Rio, even Mayuri's creation!" Seigo stated.

Isamu nodded, hugging Mio close.
"Mio... I don't know how this will end, but there is hope, but you are the final piece, the lock for the "key" to open... I know that I'm asking much, but I beg you, help Shido save this world, it's my one wish that you get to live in happiness somehow." Isamu stated, shedding some tears.

Mio's eyes slowly widened, and tears begin to shed from her eyes as well.

"I get it, I think I finally get it, why I've been able to fight through all the sadness I've had to experience... because part of me didn't want to give up for everyone I love, and care for!" Mio realized, crying a bit.

Mio hugged her father, making Isamu snifflie before Seigo cried loudly.

"I wish I could hug right now!" Seigo cried out.

"Mio, this is... the last thing I can do for you, I'm going to... free your lost memories and restore everything, after this... you must go to Shido and unlock the key, this is the last of my time... left in this world... know that I'll always be proud to have been... your father, even with the short time we had together." Isamu smiled, sniffing a bit.

"Daddy..." Mio cried, closing her eyes as she looked down.

Isamu looked at Seigo, soon patting his light form's head.

"Thank you as well Seigo, continue on as you always have from here... and goodbye."

Mio reached out as the visual illusion shattered, and Isamu broke into light before her eyes, signifying his true erasure from the world. One of the light particles flew towards her head, and soon enough... she felt all her erased memories return, with Seigo also feeling the same as it echoed towards his life force.

As the reality set before her, and her forgotten memories integrated alongside her current ones, she cried loudly towards the sky as the pain of losing Isamu fully sink in, regardless if she had known him as a husband... or her real father.

"Mio... I'm so sorry, if only I could have done more." Seigo apologized.

"No, don't apologize Seigo..." Mio replied.

Taking a deep breath, Mio gained a determined look, and turned as if knowing where Shido and the others were before looking to the sky determinedly.

"I know what I have to do, and I won't hesitate, because I'm the [Spirit of Origin], and I will help save this world!" Mio screamed.

Seigo looked, a happy expression on his lack of a face, and soon he felt Mio hold him in her hands.

"Come on, let's go."

False Chinami, and Origami, both gave loud screams as they clashed in the sky, with everyone on the ground struggling to keep themselves on their feet as the recoil from the clashing glows of the Dark Maryoku, and the white Light Reiryoku, filled the sky.

- (*Silvery Wings - Accel World®) -

The two broke off, with both giving intense glares at one another, and the False Chinami soon
charging more power into her wires as she aimed them.

"Take this, my [Dark... Barrage!]" False Chinami shouted.

A fast flurry of shots fire out towards Origami, faster than she was ready for, though luckily, she had a solution.

"[Ra - Shining Prisma!]

A prism of light forms around Origami, but rather than being a full barrier to shield her, it was a field that suddenly flooded her synapses with so much data at once, she felt time slow down as she processed information at an accelerated rate.

"Lucifer, how do you think we should go with this?" Origami wondered.

"[Try flying forward with a twirl, swapping into a spin, and then I think we have an opening to use Ehki against her.]" Lucifer replied.

"Got it!" Origami agreed.

The prism soon broke, and Origami dived forward, twirling a bit before she spun, allowing her to fly and evade all of the robotic wizard's shot, surprising False Chinami greatly as she wasn't hit even once.

"Impossible!" False Chinami exclaimed.

"Alright faker, now it's time for game, set, and match!" Origami shouted.

Origami quickly began absorbing all the nearby photons in the area, and then imbued them into her body, before anyone even realized it...

"[Ehki - Heavenly Godspeed!]

Origami began moving so fast that even the Yamai twins were shocked to see her speed exceeded their own, causing a Sonic Boom to go off behind her, and blowing away the nearby clouds. False Chinami's eyes widened as she completely lost the ability to predict the Light Spirit's movements.

"What's happening!?" False Chinami asked loudly.

Origami screamed loudly, soon pulling her hand back before throwing it forward, coated with light shaped as a sword, and then smashing right through the mechanical fake's body, severing it in two as Origami flew out with a spirit in hand.

The Light Spirit soon aimed towards the ground and landed, skidding to a stop before turning to see the Adeptus 3 wizard's mechanical body crash to the ground, where everyone noticed only her upper half, aside from past her elbows, had stayed intact.

- (*insert song end*) -

"N-No, this... this can't be, how!?!" False Chinami stuttered.

"This battle's over Chinami, that's all that you need to know." Origami stated.

Looking at the spirit in her arms, Origami smiled at Chinami.

"Hey, are you alright?" Origami asked.
The young spirit of Chinami looked at her cousin, smiling as a tear appeared in her eye.

"Thank you, Origami... thank you so much." Chinami thanked.

"You're welcome, now come on, my body's got room for a third soul, as long as I'm alive you can spend the rest of my days gaining the happiness you deserve with my parents." Origami smiled, tearing up a bit.

Chinami closes her eyes, giving a teary smile as she nods, and soon she let herself be absorbed into Origami's body. Once that was done, Origami turned to Chinami, and showed her look of hatred at her again, coating light as a sword around her hand again.

"Wait, what the... no you wouldn't!" False Chinami gasped.

Everyone else panicked the same way, knowing exactly what Origami intended to do, and that was... murder the robot copy.

"No, don't do it Origami, don't-" Mana exclaimed.

Mana attempted to run at her, but was stopped as Shido, and Tohka, both held out their hands in front of her.

"Huh, what are you-" Mana asked.

"I want to believe in Origami, that she won't do this, we need... to have faith in her." Shido answered.

While the two were both sweating, showing even they were worried she might do the deed, but Mana ultimately consented.

As Origami neared the False Chinami, the robotic wizard panicked, trying to think of a way out...

"Stop it, I'll switch sides, and join Ratatoskr, I'll even give you some of DEM's tech to prove it!" False Chinami begged, sweating a bit.

"Don't even bother, would you have spared my parents if they had been begging before you!?" Origami screamed.

False Chinami's eyes widened, knowing that nothing she said would work, so she used what was left of her arm to try and drag herself away in vain, with Origami walking to her faster than she could move.

At that moment, everyone saw Origami stomp her foot on the False Chinami's torso, locking her in place as she rose her sword up and prepared to strike.

"Origami!" Tohka exclaimed.

"Don't do it!" Shido shouted.

Origami began to breath heavily, sweating as images of her life flashed by, relating to all the good times with her parents, up until the very day they died due to the actions of the machine before her, and with it, she swung her sword down!

Everyone's eyes widened as the blade neared the machine... only for Origami to stop only moments before she pierced through the mechanical faker's face.
"...No, despite how much I want to, even though I hate you more than anything, I will not become you." Origami stated.

"You're chickening out, hah!" False Chinami mocked.

Origami shook her head, giving a hateful, but pitiful look towards the False Chinami.

"Wrong. I'm being the better person, because it's a crueler fate for you to live in this state, knowing you are responsible for everything that led to you being in your current state." Origami answered.

False Chinami's eyes widened, her eyes shaking as she heard those words.

Origami soon reverted back to normal, walking towards the others before stopping in front of Shido, and then... began crying heavily. Shido hugged her close, rubbing her back to comfort her.

"Shido, tell me... was it the right choice to spare her, when I... I..." Origami sobbed.

"I'm proud of you Origami, I remember how fragile and timid you were when we first met, and how it felt like you'd break if something happened to me, but you've grown so much since then... to not take her life despite how you feel, I know your parents are proud." Shido reassured.

"We all are Origami, and now she can't chain you down, you're free from her." Tohka smiled.

Origami sniffled a bit more, smiling a bit as she hugged the two of them.

The others all joined in in a somewhat group hug, but while that happened, False Chinami suddenly gave a quiet, but maniacal laughter towards them.

"Oh, you think you made the right choice, can you still say that after I do this?" False Chinami said with a dark smirk.

"Activate command: Link Up, connected to Inverse Void gate, change activation requirements... set to self-destruct, timer at 5 seconds!" She exclaimed loudly.

That got everyone's attention, and a beeping sound was heard from her, an insane laughter coming out the wrecked machine.

"Sir Westcott has a special toy he's been waiting to raze the world with, and I'll destroy myself to bring it here, I'll let him end you now with the power he's obtained from all your Inverse Forms!" False Chinami stated, giving a smug smile.

Mukuro quickly tried to summon Michael and lock the robot's systems before it was too late, but the timer expired before she could even say her Angel's name, and the mechanical wizard powered off, falling to the ground before exploding!

"We're too late!" Rinne gasped.

- (*Metal Madness' Arrival - Sonic Heroes*) -

Soon the sound of laughter is heard as a dark portal opens up, and the sight of a machine's single glowing red eye looked through the portal.

"Chinami, how lovely of you to open such a gate for me, and the timing was fitting too!" Westcott laughed.

"...Westcott." Shido breathed, glaring a bit.
Soon from within the portal, the sight of the dark machine opening in one spot was seen, revealing Westcott sitting inside of it... but now his original colors from 30 years ago had been restored, with the only difference being his eyes now looked demonic, with glowing red snake-like pupils.

"It was already a treat to have [Zodiac] enter her Inverse Form, but to have all of the new Inversion samples, it was just... delightful, and now I have everything I need!" Westcott declared, cackling slightly.

The machine's giant black hands grab the sides of the portal, soon pushing on it make it larger, and revealing the black machine as a bigger, stronger, darker and more dangerous looking version of the Deus.

"Prepare yourselves Humanity, because finally... the time has come, the Demon King has returned through my greatest creation, the Diabolus!" Westcott announced.

"He... he made an even stronger version of the Deus..." Kurumi breathed in fear.

Westcott laughed as the portal began getting large enough that the Deus began forcing itself through, making everyone get ready as it prepared to breach into the world.

"The end is now!" Westcott declared victoriously.

- (*insert song end*) -

"No, it's not over, it hasn't even begun, and nor will it begin today!"

Everyone turned in shock at that voice, seeing Reine/Mio run towards them with the light representing Seigo following her.

"Reine, why are you here?" Shido asked.

"No time for that, just listen to what we're about to say!" Seigo shouted.

Rinne, Shido, Mana, and Rio all gasped as they recognized Seigo's voice.

"...Seigo?" Rinne whispered in shock.

"Uh... alright, what do you need us to do?" Tohka asked.

Mio breathed, soon turning to Shido.

"Shido, listen to what your father tells you very carefully, because you need to give me the key."

Mio stated.

"Huh?" Shido blinked.

"Just trust us Shido, you and the Spirits of the Sephira, unite your energies together and then focus them, then unleash that power at Reine!" Seigo stated.

Despite being confused, Shido looked at his harem, and soon one by one, they all nodded in agreement.

'Key, what are they... wait, it can't be!' Westcott realized.

- (*Gohan powers up - Dragonball Z*) -
Shido held his hands out like he was channeling something, and soon the ten Sephira Spirits each held out a hand around him, closing their eyes as they focused their powers toward him. Shido began to channel their power and his own, soon creating a rainbow mass of Reiryoku.

Once it was formed, it took the shape of a keyhole, and once he saw Mio nod at him... he thrust it forward into Mio's body, making her scream.

"For the world I came from, for the world I live in now, and for the sacrifice my father made... I will help his dream be realized, and not just save this world, but help bring back everything that was taken from it by you and the Devil!" Mio exclaimed loudly.

"Because, I am Mio Takamiya... the Spirit of Origin!" She screamed loudly.

This surprised some of the others before the light enveloped his entire body, causing an explosion of Rainbow colored Reiryoku to burst out, and before Westcott could even realize it... the portal that the Diabolus was trying to open was forced to close, with the machine's strength losing!

"No... no!" Westcott exclaimed.

"Diabolus, don't you dare lost to this, don't let her overpower you, force the portal back open!" He ordered.

The machine made a noise as if to respond, and keep pushing with all of its strength, but it was all for naught as the portal was forcefully closed and the Diabolus pushed back inside of it.

"She's closing it, she's really closing it!" Tohka exclaimed happily.

"Amazing..." Mana breathed.

"How strong is she right now to do this?" Mukuro asked.

Rinne looked at the sight before her, and could feel it... while she could tell the power had no offensive or defensive strength, possibly having no possible way to harm anything due to its nature, one thing was perfectly clear to her.

"She's... she's even more powerful than I am!" Rinne shouted.

This caught everyone's attention, surprised that Rinne of all people would make a claim like that.

After a long struggle, the portal was soon almost fully closed, and Westcott could only glare thorough it.

"This isn't over, when I can finally cross back to this world, you will suffer my wrath!" Westcott shouted angrily.

The portal closed completely after that, leaving no traces of itself as Mio's Reiryoku clad body just stood there panting, completely exhausted from having used Reiryoku for the first time in three decades.

- (*insert song end*) -

Everyone stared in shock at Mio, surprised at what had just happened.

"...Father, please tell us, what just happened?" Shido asked.

"This is the real Reine you just saw, the spirit that came before any other, and the Spirit that Westcott..."
used as a basis to give life to your mother..." Seigo explained.

Rinne looked at Seigo when he said that, surprised and confused.

"...her name, is Mio Takamiya." He answered.

Mio soon fell over, losing consciousness before Shido caught her in his arms, and the Reiryoku covering her body vanished.

To his surprise, the form that everyone had come to know as Reine Murasame faded away, leaving a girl with the same hair color, and even the string that acted as Reine's hair tie which had moved to near the bottom of her waist length hair. She wore a pink sleeveless strap dress, and a light blue short-sleeved hoodie jacket, with the pockets having tied strings just like the one in her hair, green plaid shorts, and a pair of sneakers with white socks.

"No way..." Shido breathed.

Everyone looked at the Spirit in Shido's arms before her eyes slowly flickered open, revealing Reine's usual eyes, but with Spirit pupils, which looked at the boy holding her... soon making her blush as she felt the hormones of her body's biological age rush to her head.

"Uh... Shido, maybe you could put me down?" Mio asked.

The others were in for a long story, because it was the time for the final secrets Mio had learned to be shared with them.

There you have it, the fight with Origami and Chinami is over, the last of Isamu's secrets has been told to Reine, while she's been revealed as the Mio Takamiya (Though I have a feeling that some of you expected this part ^.^;), the Spirit of Origin! A preview of what everyone will face against when Westcott prepares his final move has been revealed, and Mio's regained her true form.

So, as of this moment... nearly every secret this story has been revealed, with only a few small ones left to be cleared in the next and final chapter of the Sephira Fury arc. Now, since I'm expecting this question due to its relation to a previous one, is Mio going to be joining Shido's harem at some point? Well, due to how Vol 17 shows she's in love with Shido, and because she's a canon Spirit... yes, she will join it, but she's the only addition I'll be making, and she still has to develop those feelings first.

Well, all that's really left now for this arc is kinda an overview of the aftermath, Mio explaining everything with Seigo's add, a bit of moments with Seigo since his light form's hanging around with everyone, Ratatoskr's consideration to what was learned, but most of all... we'll be seeing the scene between Shido and Mukuro that Vol 15 has near the end, because I haven't had the proper after bonding moment between them just yet.

Before we close things off, I'd like to thank everyone whose stuck with the story up to now, mainly because I know the last chapter revealed one big shocker that was a pretty major reveal. I hope the Mayuri Judgment movie arc is as enjoyable once I begin, it as the crossover with Legend of the Heavenly Dragons. Also, before I forget, just a small reminder that after I finish Season 3, I'm adding the Date AST Re:Strike chapters into the story like I said was decided early in Mukuro's story line, so the next two-so updates will be those.
Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 100%, MAX (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a second copy of an Angel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Share a mental link that can be turned on and off at will)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)

Mayuri - (Disrupt any Reiryoku near him with a special magnetic field)

Mukuro - 99% (Safely use all 100% of his body's physical power)

Mio - Maxed (Ability Currently Unknown)
Chapter 70

Woo... after last chapter, which to quote my friend kingpariah was "the biggest chapter we've had yet" (and most likely will be the biggest overall, I don't think I'm topping it due to the massive reveals it gave), it kinda feels like a big weight's been lifted off my chest since I got every secret in the series out into the open and now it's just a straight line to the end of the story!

Just as a friendly reminder, this chapter is an epilogue to the events of Mukuro's sealing, and all the reveals. So, this is a breather chapter, with a bit of slice in life since its Christmas Day in-story (I don't blame anyone for forgetting that detail, last time the date was mentioned was earlier in the Mukuro Quasar arc), which also helps fit the transition for the Mayuri Judgment adaption since that's mostly a slice of life too, though with a little romance.

Now to reply a guest review.

To Seeker213:
"That's right, there's more to Westcott's meeting with the Devil, half is due to S4 spoilers, and half is related to why I muted their talk. Although it's not anything like one of them betraying the other, because like Isamu said last chapter, they merged when the Devil's soul entered his eyes. Think of it like the two Origami personalities merging in canon, but if they truly became one."

"You pretty much nailed it there Seeker, that's exactly how I plan to have her romantic development with Shido go. She's only known Shido as a nephew for years, so that's the only reasonable way she could act, not to mention her feelings have also been a little thrown off by Isamu having been her husband in her false memories, but really be her father in reality under a disguise."

"Also, I like that song suggestion, I'll save it for later."

Since we're finally nearing the end of this season, well... it's finally started to really sink in that soon enough, this story's going to be over. I'm happy that I'm about to finish such a big story, but I'm also sad this is where it'll be ending... and now I'm crying, I need a moment. *grabs a tissue as I wipe my tears* I can only hope any more DAL stories I make, even if not as big, will be enjoyed in the same way this one has.

OK, now that I've aired that out of my system, it's time to get this chapter started! Here's a data sheet on Mio, and then a little something extra I’ve left at the end notes.

-Mio Takamiya, Code Name: [Deus]-

Angel: Ain, Ain Soph, and Ain Soph Air - Compared to other Spirits, Mio doesn't have one Angel, but three, and in her case, these Angels are considered part of her own Sephira Crystal/Heart. Despite being officially registered as an Angel, the power it has makes Ratatoskr state it's more like an Archangel, and that Mio's normal form is more like an Ethereal Form.
Mio's Angels give her all of the powers she received from her father, as well as abilities exclusive to herself, though she doesn't know how they work, or what her Angel's physical form manifests, due to having never manifested it, or her Astral Dress. However, she instinctively knows they are, and simply needs to discover how to manifest them to fully recall what they are.

- Powers: Mio's powers as a Spirit give her the power of all the others, but unlike them, she can only use them to create due to a lack of training and refining them, and the fact her powers were born from her father's non-violent or destruction powers. A good example of this is using Kotori's fire, but not being able to burn anything, and using Tohka's barrier would break something that would normally would upon hitting it.

Despite this current limitation, she is still the most powerful of the Spirits, with even Rinne, who was indirectly made by Westcott based on her and actually can use offensive skills currently, admitting that Mio is much more powerful than her. Also, she's still got powerful support abilities, and a notable feat of her strength was being able to close a portal to the Inverse Void being forced open by a powerful creation of Westcott's.

Risk Factors: Unreadable

Spacequake: Unreadable

Spirit's Astral Dress: Unreadable

Angel Rank: Unreadable

Strength: Unreadable

Consistency: Unreadable

Spiritual Power: Unreadable

Agility: Unreadable

Intelligence: Unreadable

Chapter 70, S3: Sephira Fury, Part 13

Mio's eyes slowly flickered open, revealing Reine's usual eyes, but with Spirit pupils, which looked at Shido as he held her... soon making her blush as she felt the hormones of her body's biological age rush to her head.

"Uh... Shido, maybe you could put me down?" Mio asked.

"...Oh! Sorry about that, putting you down now!" Shido exclaimed.

Shido soon put her back on the ground, letting Mio get back on her feet as everyone gets a good look at current form, Mana in particular staring at a certain area, catching her father's attention while Rinne sighs, putting a hand on her daughter's shoulder.

"Mana, we all know you're suddenly focusing on her chest size as a leftover from your time being flat, just say her size and let us get on with our lives." Rinne stated, shaking her head slightly.
"Hey, I'm not... she's 100 cm, so Tohka's still in first place." Mana stated, sweat dropping afterwards.

Tohka blinks at that, not sure how she should reply to that.

"...Uh, lucky me I guess?" Tohka chuckled awkwardly.

Mio chuckled oddly, sweat dropping a bit.

"How did I see that coming?" Mio said with a forced smile.

Seigo soon floated over to Rinne, and the First Spirit smiled, sniffling slightly as she saw his light form land in her palms.

"Seigo..." Rinne sniffled a bit.

"Hi honey, it's been so long, well kinda sorta, I did indirectly see you guys near the start of the month in that story world." Seigo joked.

"Who cares you big doofus, you're with me again... even if in this form, I'm just happy you can be with me again." Rinne cried.

Rinne holds his light form near her face, making the two nuzzle their cheeks together... until Seigo's light form suddenly began glowing, surprising Rinne a little before everyone else noticed it.

"Seigo!??" Rinne gasped.

"W-what's going on here!?" Seigo wondered.

= Thank you as well Seigo, continue on as you always have from here... and goodbye. =

Seigo's light form suddenly floated away from the group before screaming loudly, causing everyone to shield their eyes as a bright flash went off, the flash encompassed the entire city as well, and listed for a good two minutes.

Once the flash's light finally faded, everyone opened their eyes again, and they were surprised to see all of Tenguu City had been restored to before Mukuro had initiated her fight with Tohka.

"The city... it's back to normal!" Mildred gasped.

"Oh... my head, what just happened?"

- (* Tabidachi No Uta - Assassination Classroom *) -

Everyone turned to the voice of Seigo, and when they did, the reactions were varied. Some showed shock, some showed surprise, others disbelief... however, the biggest reaction was most definitely Rinne covering her mouth, with tears flowing down her eyes.

While he looked a bit different, possibly due to his time being dead, maybe how he died, or even just his old form having become lost beyond recovery... before their eyes, everyone saw a man best described as an older looking Shido, but with a beauty mark under his right eye.

Seigo eventually noticed everyone looking at him, still unaware his corporeal form was back, and blinked oddly.

"...Why's everyone staring at me?" Seigo asked.
"Is... is this for real?" Rinne asked.

Rinne soon let out a wail, a waterfall of tears as she hugged Seigo's restored body, and the moment he felt it... Seigo realized it himself and started crying as well. Right after that, everyone else began doing the same, with his children joining in the group hug.

The sound of the clock striking Midnight soon sounded, initiation the next day had come.

~December 25th, 2051 - Christmas Day

[At that moment, the words Mio and Seigo heard from Isamu before he faded had sunk in, because there was no way to truly bring himself back to life from the curse bestowed on him... he created the miracle of all. Undoing the impossible, and reviving a shattered soul.]

[He revived my father, the greatest Christmas Present of all.]

As that happened, everyone began leaving the shelters, only to see the surprise as spheres of light, comprising every known color known to mankind, began floating and falling across the night sky.

It wasn't just in Tenguu City either, the entire world was seeing this wonder, but to those who knew him in Tenguu City, the meaning of these lights could be defined in one simple way.

...It was Isamu's thanks to them, and his wish for good luck and happiness, to save the world and the future that their efforts had made possible, and that they themselves would make sure to become a reality.

[Isamu would be the one that in our hearts we knew wouldn't come back, it was as if he was telling us that Humanity would be the ones to shape tomorrow and beyond... and that's a promise that we all swore we would to keep, no matter what.]

- (*insert song end*) -

A single star shined brightly at the sky, aiming towards Ratatoskr as a metaphorical manifestation of Isamu's face, in the form everyone knew him as, smiled down on them one last time.

~December 25th, 2051 - Christmas Morning

Inside the Takamiya Household, the sight of all the Spirits, Kurumi's cat Macaron, and the recently revived Seigo were all seen sleeping across various spots in the living room, even Mio was present in the household.

Noticing the rays of the sun start to leak into the room, Shido's eyes slowly began to open, yawning a bit as he looked and saw the Christmas Tree and all the presents underneath it, then looking at everyone else.

"Merry Christmas everyone, glad you're all here." Shido stated, smiling a bit.

Shido got up, and soon walked over to the kitchen, getting started on making a special Christmas breakfast. As he did this, Tohka finally woke herself, and noticing Shido, she gave a silent stretch and yawn, slowly sneaking towards him before giving him a surprise hug.

Shido felt the hug and saw her, the Energy Spirit giggling.

"Surprise." Tohka whispered.
"Yeah, you got me there Tohka, any reason for being extra cuddly by chance?" Shido asked.

"Cause it's our first Christmas together!" Tohka smiled.

"...No, it isn't?" Shido replied.

Tohka stared at Shido a bit, raising one of her eyebrows with a smile as if saying "you sure?", and then... Shido ended up remembering when they both got trapped in a time stasis as 7-year old's.

"Oh, you're right, this is the first time we've had a Christmas together, couple or otherwise." Shido chuckled embarrassingly.

Tohka giggled at that.

"Well, since we're the only two that are awake right now, wanna help make Breakfast?" Shido asked.

"Sure, but first I want my own special Christmas gift." Tohka offered.

"Like what-"

Shido never got to ask that question as Tohka kissed him, and held it for a good long while before breaking off, Shido giving her a smile as if he realized what she did.

"You were planning to be the first of my harem to kiss me on Christmas for months now, haven't you?" Shido chuckled.

"Maybe?" Tohka playfully shrugged.

The two laughed a bit before they started making Breakfast together.

Everyone soon woke up, followed by enjoying, and then finishing, the large breakfast that Shido and Tohka had prepared for everyone. Seigo patted his belly and sighed, having eaten a ton due to all the years he had been dead for.

"Man, that was delicious!" Seigo sighed happily.

"I still can't believe you learned how to cook just by having to focus on all the house work, and Tohka learning just from helping you out is just as surprising." He chuckled.

Tohka blushed a bit, while Shido chuckled.

"Well, I had to watch Kotori too, and having two little sisters isn't something you can do without any effort." Shido answered.

"Oh yeah, you're Haruko's daughter, aren't you?" Seigo asked.

Kotori panicked a bit, and bowed slightly.

"Y-yes Mr. Takamiya, it's nice to officially meet you." Kotori greeted.

Seigo snickered and offered a hand.

"No need to be so formal, you're gonna be one of my... uh, dozen daughters-in-law one day, just think of me like your own dad." Seigo smiled.
Kotori's whole face went red and she screamed, making Shido, all the girls in his harem, go white eyed with blushes on their faces.

"D-d-d-dad! U-uh... sir, I mean Seigo, isn't that looking a bit too far ahead, I mean everyone knows he's gonna marry Tohka first!" Kotori exclaimed.

"It can't be a dozen, there's only 11 in his harem." Mio mentioned.

"No, there's definitely 12, when he was holding you, I clearly-"

Seigo was suddenly shut up as Mio stuffed food in his mouth, rendering him unable to talk as Mio hid her blush from Shido's view.

'I don't have a crush on Shido, before yesterday, everything told me I was his aunt! To like him now makes no logical sense!' Mio mentally panicked.

Rinne clears her throat, trying to distract everyone.

"Hey Mukuro, while I know you have technically moved in, I'm surprised you slept here rather than stay with Mildred to meet your parents." Rinne asked.

"Big sis wanted me to wait until later today to see mom and dad, it's her Christmas present to them." Mukuro answered.

Rinne smiles.

"I see, that's a nice way to share Christmas together." Rinne replied.

"Hey Aunt Mio, are you living here now too?" Rio asked.

Mio sweat dropped a bit, chuckling at her "former" niece's question.

"Rio, I'm not your aunt anymore, remember?" Mio reminded.

"Oops, my bad." Rio giggled playfully.

"And to answer your question, I am, because now that I look like a teenager, my landlord would have kicked me out anyways." Mio answered.

Rio cheered and hugged Mio, surprising the Spirit of Origin.

"Uh... I'm gonna take that as you being excited?" Mio asked.

"Yep!" Rio smiled.

Mio blinked before laughing cheerfully, and everyone else joined in, minus the still mouth stuffed Seigo.

"Hey Mio, you still haven't explained to us how you're a Spirit just yet, are you gonna tell us?" Tohka asked.

Everyone looked at her, with Seigo giving a look of worry.

"...I will, but let's wait until we meet with everyone at Ratatoskr, I think it would be best that everyone learns this together." Mio answered.
After some time passed, everyone was gathered in the Ratatoskr base, and listening to Mio explaining her story as Seigo helped her out, filling in some blanks, or talking about details that Mio was less knowledgeable about if at all.

"-and that's when Isamu, the one known as God, and the man who had been my father... finally succumbed to his curse, and disappeared from the world forever. The only thing that was left in my mind was what he told me, the bad future that Shido's birth changed, the creation of the world we see now due to his rescue of Tohka, and that I had to stop it alongside everyone, leading to me becoming who I really am, Mio Takamiya... the Spirit of Origin." She explained.

Silenced filled the air briefly, everyone needing a moment to let things like the knowledge of Heaven and Hell, the Devil and God being Isamu, the final Sephira Spirits being reincarnations of actual Angels, and the revelation that winning could bring back what the lost... yet defeat meant more than the end of everything.

"I can't believe this, to think the fight we've had to fight the DEM for the past 30 years, and yet it's only a fraction of an even longer battle?" Ryouko stated.

"That's not the part that shocks me, to hear Westcott merged with the Devil's soul... how nasty can people get!!?" Mildred questioned.

Mikie and Katie looked at each other, but wondering about the wizard village.

"How did a village of wizards not get revealed sooner if that was the case?" Mikie wondered.

"I'm not sure, maybe another nation would have favored their existence, so the attackers didn't mention it to avoid giving them allies?" Katie mentioned.

Rinne blinked as she looked at herself, then looked at Mio.

"So, basically... I'm a clone of you, but also not a clone?" Rinne blinked.

"Uh... kinda, sweetie?" Seigo answered.

"This doesn't mean our love only resulted from that, does it?" Rinne asked worriedly.

Seigo shook his head, and waved his heads out.

"NO! The only thing that happened there was you trusting me so fast, our love happened because of us, because you can't clone that kind of feeling." Seigo explained, smiling a bit.

"Aw, thank you honey." Rinne smiled.

The kissed each other, making Rio make a "eww" face.

"Yuck!" She exclaimed.

Mio chuckled a bit, scratching her head before she turned to Kannazuki.

"With all that's happened recently, I think this is an obvious question, who's gonna replace me as Commander?" Mio inquired.

"Uh..." Kannazuki mumbled.

With said bomb dropped, everyone's attention focused onto that.
"Huh? I don't get it, why can't you just stay the Commander?" Mukuro questioned.

"I can, but now that we know I'm a Spirit, that means I have to join you all on the field... and unfortunately, I really need the training because of this issue." Mio explained.

Mio held up a finger, and then expelled fire like Kotori’s at Seigo, while everyone initially panicked, they saw that neither Seigo or the nearby wall was being burned.

"My power came from my father's abilities of creation, and non-destruction abilities, because of this, my powers in their unrefined state are unable to harm anything, so I'll only be able to do support until then." Mio remarked.

"And that might be a problem depending on what comes next." Rinne realized.

Mio nodded.

"So, for that reason, I need someone to take over my role as Commander of the Fraxinus." Mio replied.

Maria looked at Kannazuki.

"Why not Kannazuki? I remember when he and I helped combat against the Arbatel on Arubi Island, he's a bit unexpected, but he can do the job." Maria suggested.

"Sorry, but I don't think I'd do good in that role when a situation's not dire." Kannazuki stated.

"Because of your pervy side." Mio bluntly remarked.

Kannazuki flinched at that, making Seigo fall to the floor with laughter.

"Ooh, I know, how about we decide the next Commander via this?" Marina said with a dark smile.

The Spirit of Poison took out a bag of jalapenos, hot mustard, wasabi, and many other incredibly spicy things... along with some of Sarufiel's safer poisons.

"I'll mix this together and spray it into everyone's noses, whoever can handle the most gets to be the Commander!" Marina chuckled darkly.

'My older sister really is a sadist!' Maria mentally screamed.

Rinne karate chops Marina on the head, knocking her to the ground as she took the spicy ingredients.

"Marina, I am very concerned about your future." Rinne sighed.

"Why's everyone straining their brains, the obvious choice is who leads best under pressure, even when they're pissed off? The new Commander should be Ryouko." Saya stated.

Ryouko showed surprise at that, as did the rest of the AST, leading to their Captain pointing at herself.

"Me!?” Ryouko asked.

"Of course, I remember Mana telling me how you encouraged her, hearing what your first experience with a Spirit was like, and Kannazuki made the choice to have you become the new AST captain, the signs all point you as the best candidate." Saya confirmed, smiling a bit.
Kurumi thought on that, and soon smiled.

"You know what, I agree with Saya, what about everyone else?" Kurumi asked.

"Sure thing, Ryouko would make a great Commander." Mana stated.

"Yeah, I think so too." Seigo agreed.

"Why not?" Natsumi shrugged, smiling a bit.

Ryouko looked around as everyone son gave their own approval, and soon smiled before looking at Mio.

"If everyone really thinks that, then... who am I to say otherwise?" Ryouko answered.

"Alright, then its official, I hereby pass my status of Commander to Ryouko!" Mio smiled.

Ryouko smirked a bit, and soon looked at Artemisia.

"Though that also means the AST needs a new Captain, so I'll be passing that position to you Artemisia." Ryouko stated.

The top Ratatoskr Wizard gasped slightly at that.

"Really?" Artemisia asked.

"You were a great inspiration to the members of the SSS when you first joined us, that was the same reason I became Captain when Kannazuki took over as Vice Commander, I think that same quality should be upheld by the next leader." Ryouko explained.

Artemisia smiled at that.

"Alright then, I accept the position Commander Ryouko." Artemisia smiled.

Ashley playfully punches Artemisia's shoulder, making the new AST Captain chuckle at her response as Cecile immediately hugged her right after.

"I can't believe it, you're the new Captain, this is great Artemisia!" Cecile smiled.

Rinne soon gasped, catching everyone's attention.

"I think I just figured out who could be the new Ratatoskr chairman too, remember why you all made the organization?" Rinne asked.

"Well, it was due to the efforts... of..." Mio answered.

She soon realized it, and looked at Seigo, making the patriarch of the Takamiya family blink a bot before he screamed.

"ME!?!" Seigo shouted.

Rinne nods at that, smiling as she did.

"Wow, I mean... well, I guess it makes sense, and Elliot was the one who led me to meeting my lovely Rinne in the first place." Seigo replied.

"Alright, if that's the case, then I'll take over as chairman." He smiled.
Everyone cheered at that, but soon he cleared his throat.

"However, I have one condition." Seigo stated.

"OK, what would that be?" Rinne asked.

Seigo smiled before taking one of the crystal ring his will gave to Rinne during the Choronzon incident, and then held it out to her as he kneeled, causing everyone to gasp as Rinne covered her mouth, tearing up.

"Rinne, we have three wonderful kids, and we've had so many years, even with the 30 that set us apart... however, there's one thing we never got to do that I'd like to fix here and now." Seigo said lovingly.

"Will you please marry me?" He asked.

Rinne cried happy tears, hugging Seigo close.

"Seigo, you dummy, why ask a question you already knew the answer to?" Rinne cried happily.

Everyone cheered as after 3 decades of wedding, Seigo finally proposed to the woman that was his wife in all but name, their children all getting misty eyed.

"We're finally gonna be a true family, I'm so happy!" Mana cried.

"Mom and Dad are finally getting their happy ending, I'm gonna cry!" Rio sobbed.

Shido held out his shirt, letting his little sisters use it as a tissue.

Mio wiped the tears forming from her eyes, happy for Seigo and Rinne, even if he wasn't her brother... they still shared a strong bond.

'Congratulations you two, this is what a Christmas miracle should be.' Mio sniffled.

~December 31st, 2051 - 11:50 pm

Shido yawned as late night came, and everyone else was in the living room as they prepared for New Year, as he prepared to go to bed... he heard someone's footsteps as they headed upstairs.

"Huh?"

Shido decided to follow the footsteps, soon finding himself on the rooftop of the Takamiya Household, and laying on the ground was none other than Mukuro, who was staring at the starry sky above her.

Smiling a bit, Shido soon got on the rooftop, getting her attention as she turned to notice him.

"Shido?"

"Sorry, I heard footsteps and followed you, mind if I lay here too?" Shido asked.

Mukuro smiled a bit.

"No, go ahead." Mukuro answered.
Shido soon laid down beside her, looking at the stars alongside her, even if not the best view to watch them, the sky was so clear that the marvel of stars was in perfect view for the two.

"Wow, I've never seen such a beautiful starry night before, did you know it would be a clear night sky?" Shido asked.

"Yeah, I've always known, must be due to my last name." Mukuro answered.

Shido looked at her confused, making her giggle slightly.

"My last name, the first part of it means "star", I think that's why I went into space for all 5 years I was alone." Mukuro explained.

"I get it, they were familiar, almost like they called to you." Shido replied.

"It wasn't just that, you see... when I was adopted, big sis would always take me out here as she braided my hair, so the stars were what bonded our sisterhood together." Mukuro smiled.

Shido smiled as well, soon taking her hand in his.

"Then it can also be a symbol for our own bond, you have me and everyone else now, and we'll make sure you never feel the pain you once did ever again." Shido promised.

"Thank you Shido." Mukuro replied, tearing up happily.

Mukuro snuggled closer to Shido, and Shido blushed a bit before smiling, petting her head with his other hand. The Dimensional Spirit blushed from the touch, and soon looked at Shido.

"...Hey, Shido?" Mukuro wondered.

"What is it?" Shido inquired.

"Could you... help me make my hair healthier tomorrow?" Mukuro asked.

The blonde Spirit blushed a bit, making Shido look at her confused, and soon looked at him face to face.

"I don't ever let anyone cut my hair, unless... they're family." Mukuro explained.

"Oh! Sure thing, I'll help you out tomorrow morning to celebrate New Years'." Shido smiled.

Mukuro smiled, and soon laid her head on Shido's shoulder.

"Thank you Shido, for letting me love you." She smiled.

"You're welcome." He responded.

After a bit, Shido heard the others come up, joining them on the roof as Mana held a tablet to show the countdown.

"You guys nearly missed it, here comes the new year!" Tohka exclaimed.

"Yeah, and with it, this world has a new future we'll try to help it achieve." Shido replied, smiling brightly.

Everyone looked at the last few seconds came.
"10!" Tohka shouted.
"9!" Miku shouted.
"8!" Kaguya and Yuzuru shouted.
"7!" Natsumi shouted.
"6!" Mukuro shouted.
"5!" Kotori shouted.
"4!" Yoshino shouted.
"3!" Kurumi shouted.
"2!" Nia shouted.
"1!" Origami shouted.

At that moment, the sight of fireworks filled the air, spelling "2052" as they announced the new year's arrival.

"New Year!" Mio exclaimed.

The year of change, 2051, had come and gone... and now before everyone was a road they couldn't see the end to, other than it include a fight that they... would... win!

---

Shido stood at the viewpoint, watching the afternoon sky standing before him as the wind blew by, and smiling as it filled Tenguu City with its glow. Before he knew it, Tohka came up behind him, followed by the rest of his harem, and Mio as well, leading to him to turn to them.

"Hey everyone, looks like I wasn't the only one who felt I needed to be here." Shido remarked.

"Yep, this is pretty much our special spot." Tohka stated.

Tohka looked out at the sky like he was, and then looked back at him.

"Not only is it where we share treasured memories, but in a sense, it's also the place where everything began... where you and I reunited, and you told me that you'd always accept me." Tohka smiled.

"Not to mention, here you told me to keep living." Origami giggled.

Before they knew it, everyone was standing by the viewpoint's guard rails, looking at the same sight, with Mio standing behind Shido.

After a few moments, Shido breathed before looking at everyone.

"We'll probably make more memories here too, and as such..." Shido stated, soon turning to face the others.

"Tohka."

Tohka smiled, nodding a bit.
"Origami."

Origami closed her eyes, giggling a bit.

"Yoshino."

Yoshino blushes shyly.

"Kotori."

Kotori gives a thumb's up.

"Kurumi."

Kurumi nods briefly.

"Natsumi."

Natsumi gives a playful smirk.

"Kaguya."

Kaguya flashes a peace sign.

"Yuzuru."

Yuzuru gives a gentle smile.

"Miku."

Miku gives a warm smile, blushing a little.

"Nia."

Nia closed her eyes, giving a teasing smirk.

"Mukuro."

Mukuro twirls a lock of her hair with her finger.

"No matter what happens, promise me that we'll all face it together." Shido requested.

"That's a promise." Everyone answered.

Shido smiled at them, and soon turned to face Mio, surprising her a bit.

"That includes you Mio, as a Sephira Spirit, you're considered a part of this team as well." Shido reasoned.

Mio blushed a bit, and soon collected herself.

"Y-yeah, if you say so." Mio replied.

"Ooh, I knew it, Mio likes Shido too!" Nia teased.

"W-what? N-No I don't!" Mio denied, stuttering heavily.
Natsumi chuckled at that.

"That isn't what your blush says." Natsumi remarked.

"Oh, come on, please stop teasing me you guys!" Mio blushed embarrassingly.

'DATE A RE:LIVE, SEASON 3 - END'

That's it, with the exception of the adaption of Mayuri Judgment for the next few chapters, Season 3 is officially over. We've had Seigo return to life, Ryouko becoming the new Commander of the Fraxinus, Artemisia taking over as the AST's Captain, and now... the new year that represents the last leg before the final battle between the Spirits and Westcott.

Oh yeah, I should probably mention this before I forget. As you might notice in Mio's data sheet, it mentions her powers are more like a Spirit in their Ethereal Form, and her Angel is more like an Archangel. So, if there's anyone that's thinking this relates to how Seigo created the imbuing that created the Ethereal Form, then you're right.

While it was mostly the result of Seigo's love for Rinne, his bond with Mio as her big brother while she was Reine also had a hand. Said bond caused her to indirectly unlock a hidden part of Isamu's powers within the Sephira Crystals, which lead to creating the Ethereal Form, just like how Westcott's merging with the Devil is why he created the Inverse Forms.

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

Since we've finally revealed every Spirit, I think it's time that I show what the non-Sephira Spirits of this story would represent on the Sephirot.

-Extra Spirits' Representations-

Mio: Ain Soph Aur - Being the original Spirit, Mio represents the highest level of the three Ains, which is the actual form of God, with Da'at just being a form of it that's filtered for Human understanding (which is likely why it represents knowledge)

Shido: Da'at Tachton - Also known as the lower perception level of Da'at, which represents how Shido has the power of the Sephira Crystals in him like his mother, but through a more human level and understanding.

Rinne: Da'at Elyon - Also known as the higher perception level of Da'at, which represents how last chapter revealed Rinne was the result of Westcott trying to create a Spirit based off of Mio, making Rinne the "filtered" version of her in sense.

Mana: Abyss - The Abyss is part of the Sephirot in a form lacking the tree of life, which is likely why it's called the abyss, and is best described as void between the phenomenal world of manifestation and its noumenal source, hence Mana's elemental power.

Maria: Pillar of Mercy - One of the two supports for the tree of life, hers representing how Maria is the nicer and softer of the Arusu sisters.

Marina: Pillar of Severity - One of the two supports for the tree of life, hers representing how
Marina is the more blunt and feisty (not to mention a slight sadist ^_^;) of the Arusu sisters.

Rio: Ain Soph - Despite not being born of Mio, the Ain Soph is the most often linked stage of the three Ains to Da'at, which her mother Rinne represents.

Mayuri: Ain - The first stage of the three Ains means "nothing", which fits how Mayuri was literally nothing until Mildred helped create her, while also reflecting how Rio is the one who made her powers.

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 100%, MAX (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a second copy of an Angel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Share a mental link that can be turned on and off at will)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)

Mayuri - (Disrupt any Reiryoku near him with a special magnetic field)

Mukuro - 99% (Safely use all 100% of his body's physical power)

Mio - Maxed (Ability Currently Unknown)
Well, here we are everyone, the Mayuri Judgement adaption, and the 5th DAR:L movie arc! After a lot of action, time for an arc that's a breather for our heroes, and as such, this arc's emotion is: "Relaxation" to represent that there's no actual conflict in this arc... because this is the last roadblock before the story's finale! *creates thunder noise for added effect*

Other than the additions of Origami as a Spirit, Kurumi being sealed, along with the additions of Mukuro, Natsumi, Nia, and Mio, this arc will won't be much different from the movie due to its nature as a breather arc. I just hope the dates I've chosen fit the characters, like the dates in the actual movie did. *chuckles* So, let's get this movie started by, for the only time in this story, using Kotori's signature line...

Let's get this date started!

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**Chapter 71, Movie Chapter: Mayuri Judgment, Part 1**

*In some unknown area, the sight of a rigid gem could be seen, causing a boy to notice its glow.*

"Hmm?" He wondered, kneeling by it.

*The dark gem quickly gave off a small burst, scaring him a bit.*

*[Destroy... I will destroy!]*

*The bow gave a panicked scream before running away, only for the gem's energy burst to rush out and grab him. He began a screamed cry as he was slowly drawn in.*

"NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

*The energy enveloped him, and his screams started to grow feral as they did.*

*[Mio... I'm coming for you, Mio!]*

*A familiar cackling could be heard alongside a voice that was laced with what sounded like pure evil.*

As that was happening, Mayuri was having lunch when she suddenly sneezed, making her blink as Seigo looked towards her.

"You alright, Mayuri? Seigo asked.

"I'm fine, though that sneeze came out from nowhere. Maybe someone's talking about me?" Mayuri wondered.

The Electrical Spirit shrugged, and resumed eating her sandwich, unaware of the slight sparks that her body was emitting.

*Castle Town Dandelion - Ring Ring Rainbow plays*
The scene begins with Shido grabbing his school uniform.

[The truth about 30 years ago has finally been unraveled, and the return of the true Spirit of Origin has marked the war's tide is changing. For right now, Earth has had a few brief months of peace that everyone intends to enjoy before Westcott's grand return. However, there's a new event our heroes will have to face, one that will be impossible for them to prepare for. This story is the story known as...]

He quickly unfolded it, holding it out in front of him.

[Date A Live!]

(Rock on! It's time to start this brand-new day.) Shido stretches his arm through a sleeve.
(For you! I'll walk this road with you.) He slips his shoes on.
(Cheer me! Come on, this is our adventure.) Then he puts his tie on.
(Let's go! The path I'll walk with you.) His hands fix his uniform's collar.
(Ring Ring! I'm shining like a rainbow too.) Finally, he adjusts his belt.

(*repeated loud brass instrument blows and orchestra*) Soon, he smiles at the mirror, with an afterimage of Shiori floating nearby, followed by [Shido/Shiori Takamiya - Spirit No. 16] appearing beside him in clear words that had a crystalline outline. Quickly following it came the words “デー・ア・ライブ - DATE A RE:LIVE - Mayuri Judgment” flash over, turning the screen white as the words become a rainbow of colors across it.

(As I stand... through this horizon before me, I give a smile at happiness in my heart!) Mana was seen one of the Takamiya Household's many balconies, hanging out some washed clothing to dry off, with [Mana Takamiya - Spirit No. 17] appearing besides her in violet text before she smiled at the screen.
(Because, despite the magic that's surrounding us, I know this isn't a fantasy!) Maria was with Marina, waiting to taste test some breakfast stew she was making as [Maria Arusu - Spirit No. 14], and [Marina Arusu - Spirit No. 13] appeared by them in brown, and magenta text, respectively. Maria gets a taste dish to try, only to expel a fire from how spicy it was, with her older sister laughing at her misfortune during the entire process.
(Wherever we go from here, or wherever we end up, I know me my friends and this world will keep moving forward!) Mayuri was seen trying to decide on a book to read, with the text [Mayuri Seraphina - Spirit No. 15] appearing besides her in cyan text. After a bit of pondering, she decides to grab a romance story, and smiles as she starts reading it.
(Even if I falter, I know that I have a future...) Rio holds out her hands, taking a bunch of plates in hand as [Rio Sonogami - Spirit No. 12] appears beside her in pink text, and then walking over to the sink as she started to put them away, closing her eyes and humming happily as she did.
(Because together we're writing this story!) Watching their youngest with a cheery look on her face, both Rinne and Seigo smile at the sight, with [Rinne Sonogami - Spirit No. 11] appearing besides the former in pink text, while [Seigo Takamiya - Guardian of the Spirits] appeared by the latter with a lack of color, which Seigo noticed in surprise as his son waved a good morning sign to the both of them.

(*music slows slightly, a quiet sparkling sound follows*)

(Shining through the light above the stars, and extending my reach to the heavens above!) Shido was seen walking outside, taking the sight of everyone looking happy in their everyday lives, and putting a smile on his face.
(*music shifts a bit faster*)

(Take a leap. TAKE A LEAP!) The sight of Ryouko with the Fraxinus crew, and Artemisia with all the girls in the AST were seen through group photos.

(Don't give up. DON'T GIVE UP!) Everyone in Raizen High, and then followed by a black screen showing a dark mass of energy, marked with a symbol showing six eyes, blinked into view shortly after.

(Show the world your... [Rainbow! Rainbow!]) A burst of light goes off, leading Shido to run forward before jumping into the air, and taking off through the skies of Tenguu City.

(*loud sparkling, and faster music playing*)

(As I fly through this great blue sky, I know where to go, but I don't know why!) Shido soars through the skies, passing by various buildings as both people he knew, and those waving high as they saw him fly through the sky greeted him, implying that this was a usual sight for them.

(This path before me, with no end in sight, but I'm not afraid because of my light!) He soon does a loop in the air, flying upwards before extending his hands out, and two different hands took them in response to this, making Shido look to his right.

(As all of these colors stand by me, now I understand... that I am free!) Holding his right hand, he saw the chain of Tohka, Origami, Yoshino, Kotori, Kurumi, and Natsumi who had text saying [Tohka Yatogami - Spirit No. 10], [Origami Tobiichi - Spirit No. 1], [Yoshino Mizui - Spirit No. 4], [Kotori Itsuka - Spirit No. 5], [Kurumi Tokisaki - Spirit No. 3], and [Natsumi Itsuwari - Spirit No. 7] following them in their respective colors.

(Come one everyone, this is the story of-) While on his left side, he saw a chain of Mio, Mukuro, Nia, Miku, Kaguya, and Yuzuru, followed by [Mio Takamiya - Spirit No. 0], [Mukuro Hoshimiya - Spirit No. 6], [Nia Honjou - Spirit No. 2], [Miku Izayoi - Spirit No. 9], and [Kaguya & Yuzuru Yamai - Spirit No. 8] with the same conditions.

DATE A LIVE!

(This is our adventure now, so time to take off... and fly away!) Shido smiles, and soon accelerates faster, the Sephira Spirits all following as they held on tight.

(*slight drum playing*)

(Stand UP!) The non-Sephira Spirits all do a slight dance shake, and then shout the followed words as they extend their hands into the air.

(LET'S GO!) Their allies in Ratatoskr do the same, but do a slightly different dance, then stretch out their hands as they shouted the following words.

(*smooth guitar melody*) Shido, and the Sephira Spirits, all begin flying towards the viewpoint, with the others on the ground all running towards it.

(*guitar melody slowing down, with the music stopping almost immediately after*) Those on the ground all gather, and pose together right as Shido's group, landed, getting into position themselves.

The sight of the screen freezing in place, gleaming a bit as if a picture was taken, followed as it showed everyone's shared smiles.

~March 18th, 2052 - Western Osaka~
Way out in Osaka Prefecture, gathered around a large stadium stationed near the ocean, which was in turn part of a large amusement/water park area, the sight of a large crowd gathering was seen as various posters, one of which showed Miku, were posted to show the many people gathered for a single charity concert.

As the fans began to gather, Miku's friends were all either in the best seats she could get them, or up high in the VIP stands where they could watch everything with plenty of room at the same time. Shido, the other Spirits, and Seigo were all holding their glow batons as they waited for Miku's turn to begin. Not to long after, she appeared on stage, exciting her fans.

"Thank you all for coming everyone, I hope you'll all enjoy the concert debut of my newest song!" Miku stated.

The crowd began to cheer, and soon the music began to start.

- (*Date A Live: Mayuri Judgment - Summer Girl*) -

Miku raises her hands as drums start play.

"[Are you ready? Sweet, Sweet Heart!]" Miku sang, waving her hand to the crowd.

"(Be Ready! Be Ready, Sweet Sweet Heart!)" The crowd sang back.

"[I'm ready! Sweet Sweet Heart!]" Miku sang, shaking her left leg before shimmying a bit.

"(She is ready to fall in love-)" The crowd sang back.

"[WITH YOU!]" Miku sang, giving a finger pistol to the crowd.

Soon only the instrumental kept playing, and everyone kept waving their batons as Miku walked across the stage, cheering as the song went on.

"[I strode across the sand in my bare feet to chase the waves, enjoying my Summer day at the beach! With my smile dazzling as bright as the sun above! But wait, what's this, what do I see? Is that boy over there, looking at me?]" Miku sang, making slow motions and poses as she danced.

"As the sunshine began to caress my tanned skin, something else warm began to heat up inside my heart! Is this Summer life making me suddenly... feel... bold? Or is it, that boy has caught my sunny heart?]" Miku hugged herself, and then extended her arms, followed by her twirling her right pointer finger in circles.

A bit of instrumental briefly plays, sounding like trumpets playing.

"[I can't deflect... the gaze of his warm eyes, or cool off, the sweat dripping down my back! My throat has gone dry, giving me a burning thirst, to become his Summer Girl!]" She turned her back to the camera, soon turning around, giving a wink, and then twirling as she moved away from the camera slightly.

"[Time to mix a juice of love, pouring from my heart, to show him my Summer's special flavor! My heart wonders if it will be, a delicious, Summer! GO SUMMER GIRL! Show the boy you love your special magic, shine it from your soul, and then leave a sweet little... kiss!]" Miku sang, poising and dancing towards each direction of the crowd, ending with her looking towards Shido like she blew him a kiss.
The crowd cheers even louder, ready for the last verse of the song, while Shido blushed a bit from her last action.

"[Are you ready? Sweet, Sweet Heart!!]" Miku sang, shimmying again, but at a slower pace.

"(Be Ready! Be Ready, Sweet Sweet Heart!)" The crowd sang back.

"[I'm ready! Sweet Sweet Heart!]" Miku sang, tapping her foot as she waved her finger out.

"(She is ready, Summer Girl!"") The crowd sang back.

Soon the stage releases some indigo fireworks, marking the song's end.

- (*insert song end*) -

The crowd cheered loudly, filling the entire stadium as Miku waved to her fans, giving a wink to her man as she did.

Shido once again blushed a bit, though a lot redder this time, with the others all still cheering too much to notice themselves.

"MIKU!" The crowd cheered, repeating themselves multiple times.

As that happened, Seigo noticed Mayuri sparked slightly, manifesting some cyan static around her.

"Hey Mayuri, you're sparking a bit, you alright?" Seigo asked.

"Hmm?" Mayuri blinked.

She looked at herself, seeing said sparks across her body.

"I'm alright, it might just be all the electricity being used for the special effects." Mayuri replied honestly.

Seigo shrugged a bit.

"Alright, if you don't feel anything wrong, then I guess there's not much reason to worry." Seigo stated.

Time flew by, and soon afternoon came as everyone left the stadium, the last concert having ended only a short while ago. As this was happening, the sight changed to the water park area, where the Takamiya Household's residents were all gathered.

On a particularly large water slide, wearing the same purple one-piece swimsuit with star designs she bought back during the time Kotori was the focal Spirit for Shido to seal, Tohka was screaming with excitement as she slid down it. Behind her was Yoshino, wearing a light blue one-piece with some pale blue frills at the top and bottom, holding on tightly as the slide's end make them jump through the air slightly.

"Whoa!" Origami said in awe.

Origami was wearing a white bikini, with the bikini top being held together by a silver ring, and waded over as she made sure the two were OK. She smiled as the two popped up a few seconds after submerging.
"That was really fun!" Tohka said cheerfully.

"Yeah." Yoshino agreed.

"Alright, come on Nia, it's our turn next... wait, where is she?" Origami wondered.

Origami saw some water bubbling, and sighed a bit before moving towards it.

"Nia, if you were trying to scare me, then you already gave yourself away-" She stated.

Nia roars as she pops out, wearing a silver two-piece tube top with a sea monster mask, and making Origami freak out as she screamed loudly. After turning white from shock, Nia chuckled as she dispelled the mask.

"Gotcha!" Nia remarked.

"Are you trying to give me a heart attack!?" Origami questioned.

Nia giggled before grabbing Origami's wrist.

"Hey, at least now you know the slide can't freak you out the way I just did." Nia mentioned.

Before the Light Spirit could register it, Nia dragged her out of the pool, and heading up to the slide's top. The Yamai twins watched this from their table area, the two wearing orange versions of their Okinawa swimsuits with Kaguya's having pink polka dots, and Yuzuru's having blue, each with their own views on what they were seeing.

"Doing stuff like that, they're all so childish." Kaguya stated.

"Sis, when you get jealous, I can see it on your face." Yuzuru replied.

Kaguya blushed before turning toward her twin sister, with a metaphorical arrow saying:
"Completely jealous" pointing at her.

"I am not jealous, why would I be!?" She stated.

Yuzuru smiled before extending her hand, surprising her twin sister by the gesture.

"Would you like to go down it with me?" Yuzuru offered.

"...Yes!" Kaguya answered.

Kurumi sighed as she rested on a lounge chair with a small towel around her neck, wearing a black one-piece with a revealing backside, and unique cuts that gave it a modest yet sexy look, topped off with a cut out above her navel shaped like a cat.

"This is so nice." Kurumi smiled.

Miku was sitting at one of the tables, with the Takamiya siblings sitting alongside her. Miku was wearing a frilly indigo bikini, while Mana wore a half-violet, half-lavender two-piece that was divided by spiky looking zig-zag lines.

"Hey Miku, you sure this is fine? Reserving this area of the park?" Shido asked.

"Of course, I had the staff ready it for me the day before the concert." Miku answered.
Mana chuckled at that.

"As expected from a superstar." Mana joked, sipping her fruit punch at the same time.

Shido chuckled a bit at his sister's comment.

"Here we come!"

The three looked to see Kotori run into view wearing a two-piece, quickly jumping into the water, and splashing everyone in the water as she did. Everyone else soon followed wearing either a one-piece or two-piece fitting their Spirit colors (in Rinne and Rio's case, the former was a in a pink two-piece, and the latter a pink one-piece), with only Natsumi, Mukuro, and Mio yet to appear.

For Seigo, his absence was excused by him getting food for everyone, and trying to make sure he said everyone on a reminder list correctly. Natsumi soon came into view, looking like she was trying to drag someone into view, but was having little success in doing so.

"Come on Mukuro, get out here!" Natsumi groaned, wearing a mint colored jacket with a revealing green bikini underneath it.

"No, don't make me Natsumi! I look stupid!" Mukuro panicked.

Natsumi sighed, motioning to Shido to say something.

"Oh, uh... Mukuro, I'm sure you look fine in your swimsuit, don't be afraid." Shido stated.

"...Alright, if you say so." Mukuro replied.

Mukuro soon walked into view, and Shido had a nosebleed as he saw her yellow bikini (which was given to her by Miku), which seemed to have the right mix of showing, and concealing, her skin and figure.

Mukuro blushed as she saw Shido's nosebleed, and looked at Natsumi.

"Is that good or bad?" She asked.

"A boy getting a nosebleed from seeing a girl is always good, cause Shido thinks you're sexy hot!" Natsumi grinned.

Mukuro went redder, and looked away with a slight smile.

Clearing his throat a bit, Shido stood up as Mio walked into view, wearing a rainbow two-piece under an already wet T-shirt she had brought with her. The Spirit of Origin looked confused as he stretched a bit.

"Uh..." Mio wondered aloud.

"Alright, I think I'm gonna start swimming now." Shido stated.

Changing into his form as Shiori, she quickly dove into the pool, making a splash as Seigo rejoined the group.

Soon the night sky came, and everyone was seen waiting near the subway station to start heading back to Tengu City, though none of them noticed someone looking at them as they passed by.
"..." The unknown person watched.

"So, things went OK? Nothing strange happened?" Ryouko asked, talking through Seigo's phone.

"Nope, just the concert as planned, followed by the water park trip." Seigo answered.

Ryouko sighed in relief.

"OK, we'll see you all when you get back to Tenguu City. Good luck out there." Ryouko replied.

The call ended, and Seigo put his phone away as Rinne walked back with the tickets, and a few boxes of everyone's dinner.

"Come on honey, time to go." Rinne stated.

"On my way." Seigo smiled.

They all got on the subway, and after a few hours in, some of the group was sleeping while the others were having the take out that was their dinner, Seigo soon noticed Mayuri sparking a bit like earlier.

"Hey Mayuri, are you sure nothing's wrong, because that sparking's been occasionally happening all day." Seigo asked.

"Relax dad, I'm sure. Though I'll let you know if I think a problem's starting to happen." Mayuri answered.

"Right, just making sure." Seigo replied.

As the subway made a brief stop, Mayuri looked at the moon, and suddenly saw some kind of water ripple emit from it, followed by the sound of a bell ringing. The Electrical Spirit blinked as she rubbed her eyes, but didn't see the ripple again, or hear a bell sound.

Once she turned back, a different sight entered her eyes, the sight of something black. It had a humanoid shape to it, and when it turned to look at her, she saw a sharp turn of its head, with looked like glowing red pools of horror.

'What the... am I seeing things?' Mayuri thought.

The Electrical Spirit rubbed her eyes again, and soon noticed the black shape was gone, as if it was never there.

"Something wrong Mayuri?" Mio asked.

"No, I think I might just be a bit tired... think I'm gonna sleep now." Mayuri answered.

Mayuri yawned and closed her eyes, unaware the sight she saw had been real. It made some strange noise before looking up to the sky, making the ripple go off once more in response, and then... caused it to briefly gain a red tint.

[Soon...]

~March 19th, 2052 - Tenguu City

As the sun's light filled the skies above Tenguu City with a pinkish-purple color, everyone in the
Takamiya Household was currently asleep. As they slumbered, some of the household member's usual sleeping quirks were noticed, such as Tohka biting into her bread pillow, and the Yamai twins mirroring the others' movements.

Mayuri tossed around a bit, soon rolling out of bed, and waking her up as she got to her feet.

"Hmm... I'm awake now." Mayuri groaned, still groggy.

She soon opened her curtain, but the moment she did, she gasped loudly, making herself spark as she took notice of what could best be described as a giant floating marble in the sky!

Mayuri soon screamed loudly, and yet the only one it managed to wake up was Mio, who quickly knocked the rammed the door open.

"I hear you scream, what's wrong!?!" Mio asked worriedly.

"L-Look outside my window, at the sky!" Mayuri stuttered.

Mio did, but when she looked outside...

"...Mayuri, I don't see anything, did you just have a bad dream?" Mio asked.

"Wait, you don't see that thing?" Mayuri asked in shock.

Mio tilted her head.

"Eh?"

Only an hour later, the Fraxinus, while using its Invisible, floated in the sky as it scanned the skies of Tenguu City.

"Scanning complete, we're sending the analysis over now." Ryouko stated.

"Got it." Mildred replied.

Mildred soon typed on the keyboard a bit as data shows up, and soon the radar's readings show the sphere that only Mayuri could notice in the sky.

"We've got it Ryouko. While only the radars confirm its existence to everyone but Mayuri... she's right, there is a giant sphere hovering over the center of the city." Mildred stated.

"Whoa, to see something no one else can see, that's amazing." Mana replied.

Mio scratched her head slightly.

"I'm a little confused though? Why is it only she can see it, because I should be able to do the same if its a matter of sensing electricity. I do have all the Spirits elemental affinities after all." Mio asked.

"That's a good question... hey wait, could it be possible?" Mildred wondered.

Mildred looked at Mayuri.

"This is just my guess, but it might be related how I created Mayuri. The DEM's [Material B] project." Mildred suggested.
"Basically, you're saying that I'm the only one who can see it is because I might be made to?" Mayuri wondered.

"Pretty much, but that's the best I can say since Rio deleted all the related information due to the mind control research behind it." Mildred replied.

Rio chuckled embarrassingly, while Seigo put a hand to his chin in thought.

"Hey Nia, can you see if Raziel will be able to get any more info on it?" Seigo requested.

"Let me see, can you do it, Raziel?" Nia asked.

[Let's see...]

The Book-shaped Angel tried to process any information it could, but only a large "?" appeared on its paged.

[Eh? Well, this is strange, I can't get any information on it, that sphere almost acts like it exists, but also doesn't exist at the same time.]

"Crud, so that's a no go." Nia sighed.

Matthew types a bit, finishing up an analysis on the sphere.

"I just analyzed the sphere more, and I think I've found us a clue. While I don't know if the project intended it at the time... as of presently, this sphere seems to be the result of the following." Matthew explained.

It starts to load up, soon revealing ten different colors within the sphere's composition, and followed by all 12 Sephira Spirits' profiles being linked to certain spots on the sphere's combined energy mass.

"It's a combination of the Sephira Spirits' wavelengths. Does this mean that the Reiryoku they've used in battles collected in the air, then merged into this sphere due to something related to the base where the Material B project was being done?" Rinne questioned.

"Well, there's emotional readings in the collected energy, be it Reiryoku or not, so perhaps maybe it's something more?" Matthew inquired.

Marina sighed, turning to Seigo.

"The answer's in such plan sight, its damn embarrassing you don't see it. For it to be emotions, it's gotta be related to the one feeling I bet all of you share since you're in Shido's little harem." Marina answered.

"I'm not in his harem!" Mio exclaimed.

Ignoring Mo's outburst, Marina continued her explanation.

"This stuff's all the jealousy you give off unconsciously." Marina answered.

"Eh!?" The Sephira Spirits exclaimed.

"I think I get what my sister's saying, remember how Tohka initially felt about sharing Shido, not to mention Mukuro's initial refusal to share him?" Maria replied.

Mana gasped, snapping her fingers.
"I get it, even if everyone's willing to share him, there's that subconscious desire to have Shido to themselves, even if only briefly." Mana realized.

"Thank you, Mana! At least we got someone on the nose among you guys, hit it right on the nail there." Marina smirked.

Seigo sighed, leaning on his seat slightly.

"So, the fact that they're unconsciously doing it might be how this sphere formed, yet it took a while before it finally gathered enough mass to take a solid form." Seigo remarked.

"I wonder how we're gonna get rid of it though?" Rinne thought aloud.

Rio raised a hand, making Seigo chuckle.

"You have an idea Rio?" Seigo asked.

"We hit it away like a baseball!" Rio stated.

Rinne sweat dropped at that.

"Sorry sweetie, but I don't think it'll be that easy if it was indirectly made by something the DEM did." Rinne replied.

Tohka hummed as she looked at the sphere, trying to figure out something about it. After a few minutes of being deep in thought... she suddenly widened her eyes, hitting her fist into her hand.

"I've got it! The situation is all of us!" Tohka shouted.

"Hmm?" Everyone looked at her in response.

"Well, think about it like this. If this thing was really made by jealousy, then maybe giving each of us a day to have Shido to ourselves might cause the emotions supporting the sphere to disappear." Tohka explained her idea.

Marina showed surprise at that idea, taking a moment to reboot her brain, and then looked at Seigo.

"I... I think Tohka's idea might actually work. Plus, I don't see anything else we can try at the moment." Marina agreed.

"So, in other words, the best thing to do is give all the Sephira Spirits their ideal date, and let each of them all have Shido to themselves for the day." Seigo realized.

Mio teared up a bit, realizing she was included.

'I keep telling everyone I don't have any romantic feelings for Shido, why is this happening to me!?" Mio mentally sobbed.

Back at the Takamiya Household, everyone looked particularly excited since they were all going to have a date with Shido, having him all to themselves for that day. Though based on Mana's observations, Tohka was most excited, while Mio was... not.

"Can we go on our date right now, please?" Kotori begged happily.

"Whoa, don't rush everything there, Kotori." Rinne chuckled.
Seigo walks in, carrying a large container with eleven sticks, each with a circle sign marked by a number.

"Alright everyone, here's how this will work. Starting with tomorrow, you'll spend the next few days going on dates with Shido. These are the rules that you need to both remember, and follow, to a T. For the dates themselves, you can do anything you want as long as it's not too extreme. Most importantly, you can not interfere with another date, but you are allowed to watch from a distance to aid in the planning of your own." He explained.

"So, does anyone have any questions?" Rinne asked.

Yuzuru raised her hand.

"Yes, Yuzuru?" Rinne inquired.

"Will Kaguya and I be separate, or together?" Yuzuru asked.

"Well, I did make a twelfth straw just in case, but considering the two of you tend to go into a panic if you're not within a certain range of each other, we'd prefer it if you two could share your dates with Shido." Seigo answered.

The two sisters look at each other.

"Yeah, I think we'll stick together, trying to do it alone seems like someone asking us to make a pig fly." Kaguya remarked, sweating dropping a bit.

"Alright then, draw your numbers everyone." Seigo said.

He held out the container, and everyone looked at it before grabbing a stick.

"One, two, and three!" Everyone exclaimed.

They pull them out, and everyone sees their numbers before showing them to everyone else, Kaguya smirking as she showed she held "1", giving the Yamai twins the first date.

"I'm 2!" Miku cheered.

"It looks like... I got 3." Yoshino said softly.

"Ooh, I'm 4th." Mukuro smiled.

Natsumi held out an open hand, showing she got "5", with Kurumi giggling as she showed the "6" she was holding.

"Seems like I'm Lucky 7." Origami mentioned.

"I'm 8th then." Kotori remarked.

Nia chuckled as she showed she had "9", though her face clearly showed she didn't like getting such a high number.

"10th..." Mio replied, still wishing she didn't have to go on a date period.

"...Hmm, so I'm last?" Tohka noted, rubbing her chin as she looked at the "11" she was holding.

"That's alright, it just means I've got plenty of chances to make my date special!" She smiled.
Marina chuckled at that.

'That's one way to view getting last place as the jackpot' She thought.

"Wait, so what are the others gonna be doing during all this?" Origami asked, looking at the Non-Sephira Spirits.

"Aside from Mayuri, we'll all be going around the city, hopefully finding something that will give alternate answers to how we can settle the situation with the sphere." Maria answered.

"Since my occasional sparking might be related, I'll be watching like the others can. Though I'll be doing it to check for any possible changes in the sphere's status." Mayuri answered, sparking right after.

Seigo nodded, soon clapping his hands together.

"And that's the game plan everyone, so for now, most of you just wait your turn as you start planning your dates." Seigo stated.

"Of course, but we have don't have to wait because our date is first." Kaguya smirked.

She quickly imagines her, Yuzuru, and Shido in a fancy fantasy of sorts.

"The perfect date with Shido, it will be like something out of a love story-" Kaguya exclaimed.

"Don't say it. The last time you said that over something we did, the day ended with you embarrassing yourself by falling to the ground, and dropping your ice cream on yourself." Yuzuru interjected, sighing a bit.

Kaguya blushed at that.

"Yuzuru, why'd you say that out loud!?!" Kaguya shouted.

Everyone wondered what situation they were talking about, with Mayuri walking by the window to look at the sphere, and soon noticing someone outside the window. Something black slithered across the area, though as it was currently night out, she simply scratched her head at the sight that blended with the environment.

Mayuri blinked a bit, but the moment she did, the girl disappeared.

'On second thought, maybe dad's concern about my sparking is right.' Mayuri thought worriedly.

Unknown to any of them, the slithering black object made its way into an alley, where the sight of a strange symbol appeared. Just as quickly as it was formed, it also disappeared from view.

~March 20th, 2052 - Tenguu Mall District

Shido was seen dressed in a gray shirt, a white short-sleeved jacket with some black cloth in places, long blue-gray jeans, and black and white shoes as he looked at his phone. He was still waiting for the Yamai twins to show up for the first of the eleven dates.

"This is the first time that I can remember where I haven't needed to have the headset on during a date. I'm a bit nervous, but at least the pressure's gone." Shido said to himself.

"I guess it's a good thing I can't see the sphere then." He remarked, looking at the sky.
"Shido!"

Shido's attention soon dropped back to ground level, seeing the Yamai twins run into view.

The two were wearing matching outfits as they usually did, which were T-Shirts with an orange colored chain & lock design on the front, with Kaguya's shirt being pink-red, and Yuzuru's being blue-purple, gray jean shirts with ripped bottoms, and brown boots. Something that caught Shido's notice is that Kaguya's usually messier hair had been combed down for the occasion.

"Hey girls, glad you made it!" Shido called out, smiling.

"We didn't keep you waiting, did we?" Yuzuru asked.

"No, you're right on time, I just got here too earlier." Shido replied.

Kaguya chuckled a bit.

"We intended to come earlier too, but since we're going on a date, I wanted to make sure I was dressed right for the occasion, and then I ended up holding Yuzuru back trying to match me." She admitted.

Right as she did that, her hair shook before it puffed back to its usual messy state, making her tear up slightly.

"My hair betrayed me... I don't look strange now because of it, do I?" Kaguya asked.

"Not at all, both you and Yuzuru look great, regardless of your hair's stubbornness." Shido replied.

The twins blushed at that.

"Really!? Thank goodness!" Kaguya cheered.

"Thank you, that's... very kind of you." Yuzuru bashfully replied.

"This date... will it not be too awkward with both of us here?" Yuzuru asked.

"Its fine, since we're all on this date, any awkwardness that happens is just part of our chemistry." Shido answered.

He held out his hands to the twins.

"Come on, time to have your "perfect date" like Kaguya stated, right?" Shido mentioned.

The two blushed, each taking one of his hands.

"Y-Yes." Yuzuru answered.

"L-Leave it to me!" Kaguya remarked.

The trio began walking off, while sitting behind a nearby advertisement sign, the other Sephira Spirits were watching. Tohka in particular had a notebook she wrote something down, taking notes for her own date plan.

"So, they chose to meet Shido here, their date outfits were pretty casual, and Kaguya tried fixing up her hair..." Tohka whispered to herself.
"Is it fine they're dressed kinda plainly?" Mukuro asked.

"I don't see a problem, they did say to make it our *ideal* dates after all, so we should be able to dress how we want." Origami answered.

Mio sighed.

"Seriously, why am I here?" Mio wondered.

"We all know you actually like Shido no matter how many times you say you don't, stop hiding it." Nia teased.

Mio blushed at that.

"Why do you all keep saying that!?" Mio whispered loudly.

"Because you blush every time, you wouldn't be blushing if you didn't like him." Natsumi replied.

Mio flinched at that.

"Not to mention, I could always look in Raziel-" Nia added.

Mio slapped a hand over Nia's mouth, shaking as she overheated, and her eyes became swirls.

At the same time, as the trio kept walking...

"Hey Shido, did you come on an empty stomach like we asked?" Yuzuru inquired.

"Yeah, all I've had since this morning is a glass of milk." Shido answered.

"So, I'm guessing that's the first part of this date?" He questioned.

"That's right, and get this..." Kaguya replied, smirking a bit.

The three stopped by a supposedly random alley way.

"Tucked in this alley way, there's an amazing hidden restaurant!" Kaguya revealed.

"Really? I've never heard of it, what's it called?" Shido asked.

"Uh, it was a French place called..." Kaguya answered.

Kaguya sweated, trying to remember the name from the guide book she and Yuzuru used to plan their date, and then looked at Yuzuru with a face saying: "Help me, I forgot the name!" to her. Unfortunately, Yuzuru sighed and gave her a face saying: "You told me you memorized it, and that I didn't need to know" in return.

Realizing that Kaguya couldn't recall the restaurant's name, Shido decided to break the ice.

"...How about we just head to it now, we'll figure out the name when we get here." Shido replied.

"Good idea, let's go." Yuzuru replied.

They soon found the restaurant in question, but to the Yamai twins' surprise, said restaurant wasn't for French cuisine, it was a Ramen shop.

"This is it, right?" Shido asked.
"...The address we checked said so, this doesn't make any sense." Yuzuru mentioned.

"Maybe this isn't the right alley-" Kaguya wondered.

At that moment, Kaguya's stomach growled loudly, making her go blue in the face.

"How about we eat here. Truth is I think I'm about to starve to death, if we made a wrong turn then we can come to the French Restaurant together some other time." Shido offered.

"Sure, if you don't mind..." Kaguya replied.

"Alright then, let's go." He stated.

They soon enter the, restaurant.

"Welcome!" The restaurant owner stated.

They all had a bowl of Ramen, and it was an incredibly tasty bowl of it no less, soon they paid for the meal and left.

"Come again!" The restaurant owner thanked.

"Wow, that was great!" Shido smiled.

"Delicious." Yuzuru agreed.

"That was the best ramen I've ever had!" Kaguya exclaimed.

The twins looked at Shido.

"Shido, did you know about this place?" Kaguya asked.

"No, and I wouldn't have if you hadn't brought me here." Shido answered.

The two blushed at that.

"Oh, you're welcome, and... sorry about not having French cuisine like we promised." Yuzuru replied.

"Don't worry about it, it's fine." Shido assured.

Kaguya soon smirked, soon taking his hand, dragging him and Yuzuru (who held his other hand) to their next spot.

"We're 100% sure about the next place, it's a gnarly pool bar that all the dudes and dudettes go to!" Kaguya stated.

"Wait, I don't think we're of legal age for that!" Shido panicked.

However, similar to the restaurant, the twins saw what was actually at their set address was something else, with said pool bar actually being a game center, containing games that weren't at the local arcade.

"Again!?" Kaguya shouted.

"We probably wouldn't have been allowed in a bar anyways." Shido remarked.
"So, let's just have fun in here." He smiled.

The two felt themselves dragged inside the game center, and the three soon began playing games before they even knew it.

Some of the games they played included a car racing game, air hockey, and even a prize grab game where Shido managed to pull out a pair of twin based plushies.

"I really don't get it, how did our plans get all zig-zagged like this?" Kaguya wondered.

"Well, nothing exactly went wrong at least, but ramen and a game center were a little unexpected." Yuzuru mentioned.

"If it helps you two relax a bit, I'm having fun on this date." Shido remarked.

The twins both smile at that.

"Really? Well, if you're having fun, then I guess things turned out well for us." Kaguya replied, blushing a bit.

As the three sat down to have some drinks, none of them (or anyone else for that matter) noticed the sight of another living shadow, radiating an orange aura of its body. It turned to look a them, revealing two heads, and what looked to be horns on each of them.

It looked at them for a bit longer, then it suddenly disappeared.

"Nothing odd here." Mayuri remarked, standing outside the game center.

At that moment, she felt her Reiryoku spark again, right as she heard the familiar noise of a bell. Looking up at the sphere, she tried to see if anything seemed different... but nothing.

'I hope I'm not missing something important...' Mayuri thought worriedly.

Mayuri continued walking, completely unaware she just had.

Shido and the Yamai twins were soon seen heading back home, the Takamiya Household in sight.

"Thanks for the great date you two, it was really fun." Shido thanked.

"No, thank you." Kaguya replied.

Once the two stopped by the house, Yuzuru scratched her head and turned to Shido.

"Shido, we have a slight confession to make..." Yuzuru admitted.

"We just followed a guide book we found the whole time, the places we went to weren't really our plan at all, when we tried it ourselves... we just couldn't agree on anything." Kaguya confessed.

Shido blinked before chuckling a bit.

"Now I get it, your guide book might have been outdated, that's why the places we visited weren't what you read about." Shido realized.

"Aw man, I knew I forgot something." Kaguya laughed.

"Still, the date was... nice." Yuzuru replied.
The three giggled as they went inside the house, meanwhile from the Fraxinus, they were watching the date's end from the ship's video screen.

"The Yamai twins' date has been completed." Minowa confirmed.

"Alright, let's analyze the sphere to see if anything changed. Shiizaki, contact the other Spirits." Ryouko ordered.

"Roger." Shiizaki replied.

Soon the same image showing everyone's spirit colors comprising the sphere appeared, and the orange areas suddenly vanished as they stabilized.

"They vanished, so that would mean the dating plan is working. Glad to know we're getting somewhere." Ryouko remarked.

"Let's see if the others had any results." Kannazuki wondered.

Ryouko presses a button, and soon 6 screens appear showing the non-Sephira Spirits aside from Shido.

"Any luck you guys?"

"Afraid not, there wasn't any strange or different about the places we looked." Mana answered.

"Yeah, or at least they aren't noticeable yet. What about you Mayuri?" Maria questioned.

"Well... I heard this bell sound around the time I was near the game center the date was taking place in, but that was all I noticed." Mayuri answered.

Ryouko hummed a bit, wondering what said bell noise could mean.

"Guess we'll just have to keep trying until we find answers, it's all we can do right now." Ryouko remarked.

Meanwhile, inside the Takamiya Household, the Yamai twins were each playing with their new plushies, the others watching them both from the doorway.

"Looks like the date went well. I got worried when I realized the date on their guidebook, but it looks like lady luck had good intentions for them." Nia mentioned, smiling a bit.

"I'm gonna go add to my date plan, I'm feeling confident now!" Tohka exclaimed.

Tohka ran off towards her room, leaving Natsumi to look at Miku.

"Well, tomorrow's your turn, what's your date plan gonna be?" Natsumi inquired.

"Sorry, but that's a secret." Miku said, giggling a bit.

'I think I like it already.' Natsumi thought, giving a snicker in her mind.

~March 21st, 2052 - Private Dining Room

Shido walked through a building before finding a certain room, and knocking on it.
"Come in!" Miku's voice sang.

Shido opened the door, where aside from some of the fancy decor, he saw nothing except for a table in the entire room with Miku seated at one of the two chairs, and large windows as one of the room's walls. Miku was seen wearing an indigo short-sleeved sweater, some crystal earrings, a pearl necklace, violet shorts with pink floral designs and blue sneakers.

"Welcome, Darling!" Miku smiled.

'She's definitely not holding back.' Shido mentally chuckled.

Shido soon had himself seated, and the two made their orders, after that was finished...

"I'm sorry about this Darling, I wanted to meet with you somewhere else for a regular date, but Rinne mentioned that "people might go still crazy if they see you with a man right now," so I felt it would be better to figure out what we should do here." Miku apologized.

"I see, guess half a year might still be too soon." Shido replied.

"Though, isn't this place really expensive?" He added.

Miku giggled.

"Don't worry about it, this is my treat." Miku smiled.

"Alright, if you insist." Shido replied.

Shortly after, their food finally arrived, leading to a discussion on what they should do.

"Well, if it helps remove most of the problems, I could just transform in Shiori... although that might catch some eyes if I'm wearing the same outfit, and using Natumi's powers to alter them would force me to stay in my Spirit Ascension." Shido mentioned.

"That's it!" Miku gasped, smiling.

Shido blinked at that, confused by why she shouted, and soon noticed her roll out a suitcase.

"I was so troubled by what I should wear, I brought another outfit in case I decided to change my mind." Miku revealed, holding out a cream dress with salmon accents.

Shido's eye twitched a bit, some sweat forming on his face.

'Why do I suddenly feel like she actually planned for this to happen?' Shido thought worriedly.

Around 15 minutes later, and after transforming into Shiori, they were walking outside, hand-in-hand as everyone stared at the two.

"M-Miku, do you think we can go somewhere with less people?" Shiori asked.

"What's the matter, we're both girls after all." Miku smiled.

The Sound Spirit hugged Shiori's arm, making the latter blush.

"And dates can be like this too, can't they, Shiori?" Miku questioned.

"True, and this is supposed to be your ideal date." Shiori admitted.
As they walked by, the talkative trio noticed them, and all watched in shocked at sight of Shiori's dress.

"Did Miku actually get Shiori to wear that?" Ai asked.

"Sometimes I wonder if she even needed her powers to influence people, because she sure knows how to talk people into things." Mai wondered.

"Shiori, as of right now, you are the bravest person I know." Mii stated.

At the same time, Hiroto saw it as well, going a bit red at the sight.

"How can she wear that in public so calmly?" He thought out loud.

Miku soon lead Shiori into a store, where the former had the latter change into various different outfits, Shiori sweat dropping slightly.

"As expected, you look wonderful in everything!" Miku smiled.

"Um... thank you." Shiori replied.

Miku grabs another outfit.

"Oh, I love this one, but..."

Miku makes a cat smile, making Shiori panic as she backed into the dressing room's wall.

"...You might have trouble putting it on yourself. I'll help you get dressed, Shiori!" Miku cheered.

Shiori screams as she comes in and closes the curtain, the nearby aid even looked slightly surprised as it flaps, one of Shiori's hands stretching out in vain.

"HELP ME!" She cried out.

After a lengthy process of trying on the outfits, Miku decided to buy them all to Shiori's shock, and then they stopped by a section with hats.

"I'll take everything from here to there." Miku stated, pointing at them with a smile.

"M-Miku..." Shiori stuttered.

Then, they moved over a jewelry store, where Miku noticed all of the jewelry in one of casing.

"All of them please!" Miku stated, smiling again.

"Miku!" Shiori whimpered, holding everything with a struggle.

Finally, they entered a shop full of women's underwear and lingerie, though particularly sexy ones, that's where Shiori suddenly sweated heavily, worried what Miku was about to say.

"Everything!" Miku smiled.

Shiori went white, nearly falling over from the load of clothing she was giving.

Mayuri, who had been watching the scene from a distance, sweat dropped at the trial that Shiori was going through, and then heard the same bell sound again.
'Oh no, is anything nearby!?’ Mayuri gasped.

She looked around, but like before, failed to notice what was unseen to even her. Another shadowy mass with an indigo aura was walking by, also having eyes matching said aura like the one before it, and a pair of horns, though this one had only a single head.

On the other hand, the sight of some kind of opera mask was plastered over were its upper face could be seen.

"Weird, why do I feel I'm missing something?" She wondered, walking through the shadow.

At that moment, the shadowy beast gave a distorted laugh towards her.

Miku and Shido were soon seen by the Takamiya Household's entrance, their date having ended not too long ago.

"I had so much fun today! It's been a while since the two of us have gotten to do anything alone." Miku smiled.

"Yeah, when you aren't busy with work, usually all of us are together. Sorry about that." Shido apologized.

The two laughed a bit at that, with the others all watching from the household's window.

"I knew she had something fun planned, and I was right, props to Shido for surviving her extreme shopping." Natsumi snickered.

"Using Shiori like that was pretty amazing too." Mukuro mentioned.

"My date's next, I... hope I do well like everyone else has so far." Yoshino replied nervously.

Tohka soon rubbed Yoshino's head.

"Don't worry, you can do it." Tohka encouraged.

Yoshino blushed and smiled.

After Shido and Miku walked into the house, the former sat himself down on the couch, exhausted from carrying so much. Mana walked by in her PJs, her hair down and wet from having just taken a shower.

"So, how'd it go?" Mana asked.

"I now know the dangers of shopping." Shido joked.

Mana chuckled at that.

"Well, me and the others haven't had much luck finding anything, minus a few oddities Mayuri's felt. Though she needs to find something real before she can say anything for certain." Mana replied, sitting down by the kitchen table.

"Though we have good news too, after your dates with the Yamai twins and Miku, their spots on the sphere stabilized, and then vanished entirely." She added.

"So, the dates are actually dispelling it?" Shido inquired.
" Seems to be the case, so keep things going big brother! " Mana cheered.

Shido smiled at that, neither of them noticing two girls meeting outside.

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March 22nd, 2052 - Tenguu Shrine

Yoshino, who was currently wearing a larger version the same outfit she was given after being sealed to fit her true figure, was watching a beetle climb a nearby tree, and then heard footsteps as she heard someone coming. She turned to see Shido, who was wearing an open short-sleeved black jacket with a dark gray shirt, blue jeans, and red shoes, walk into view.

"Glad you made it Shido, welcome." Yoshino smiled.

"Sorry to keep you waiting, and I'll admit, it's interesting you decided to make this shrine our meeting place." Shido replied.

Yoshino blushed slightly, fidgeting her fingers.

"Actually, this isn't the meeting place." Yoshino admitted.

"This shrine... it was where I first met Tohka, and how you ended up meeting me." She explained.

She slightly reminisced about the day Tohka passed by while she was splashing in the puddles made by her own rain, with neither realizing the other was a Spirit at the time.

"Oh, that's right, I forgot Tohka mentioned she met you when she passed by here." Shido recalled.

"I spent a lot of time thinking about what we should do for this date, but no matter what I thought, all I really wanted was to make memories here with you... is that OK?" Yoshino asked.

Shido nods, and pet her head.

"Of course, let's have fun then, Yoshino." Shido answered.

Yoshino smiled brightly at that, and shortly after, the two had simple fun through playing games, starting with word climb.

"Rock, Paper, Scissors!" The both exclaimed.

Yoshino ended up reaching the top first after a few rounds, and soon enough, they were playing hide and seek, with Yoshino being the seeker.

"-27... 28... 29... 30! Ready or not, here I come!" Yoshino exclaimed.

Yoshino looked around for Shido, who was hiding by the charms, with Yoshino being unable to find him until he accidentally shifted his arm into view.

"Found you Shido." Yoshino stated.

"Aw man, you got me." Shido chuckled.

"So, what should we do next?" Shido asked.

"How about fortunes?" Yoshino replied.
They soon got their fortunes, and after looking at them.

"Hmm... looks like I got great fortune, what about you?" Shido asked.

"I also got great fortune." Yoshino smiled.

The hours soon flew by, and while sitting on a bench, Shido rubbed Yoshino's head as she slept on his lap.

"We can stay like this for a little longer, enjoy your nap for now." Shido smiled.

As Shido sat there, Mayuri walked into the shrine, hiding behind one of the trees, and shortly after doing so... once again heard the bell like before.

'There it is again! Come on, you have to find something this time!' Mayuri thought, looking around.

As she did, she failed to notice the shadowy figure with a blue aura coming off it, this one in particular having the appearance of a were-rabbit. Its horns waggled a bit, before its blue eyes gave look resembling a silent snicker.

It dashed away from view, with Mayuri groaning as she failed to find anything... again!

'Why can't I find anything!!?' Mayuri screamed in her mind.

Mayuri looked at the sphere, now all the more concerned what its true nature was.

After a while, Shido gave Yoshino a piggyback, and headed back to the Takamiya Household. Yoshino was currently in Tohka's room, telling her about how the date went.

"I see, so there's that kind of date too." Tohka realized, taking notes.

Tohka stood up, smiling as she did, before petting Yoshino on the head.

"Thanks to you, I've taken another step to making the perfect date plan!" Tohka said cheerfully.

Yoshino blushed, smiling as Tohka pet and praised her.

A knock was soon heard on the door, and Origami soon opened it up.

"Uh... think you two can help us keep Mukuro calm-Whoa!"

Origami ducked as a trash can went flying, having accidentally flown from Mukuro's powers getting a little unstable from her worries.

Speaking of said spirit, her entire face was sweating and her arms shaking as the realization her date would be tomorrow filled her head, immediately flustering her, and causing her emotions to run wild through her mind.

"It's just a date Mukuro, nothing big, or should I make it big? It is my ideal date, but what do I wanna do on a date..." Mukuro muttered.

"Uh oh, she's about to have a breakdown!" Tohka realized.

Mayuri was seen walking to the Ratatoskr base, taking a deep breath as she did.
"A giant sphere in the sky of unknown origin, a sudden bell sound that rings on occasion, the occasional ripple from the sphere, and worst of all? Constant feelings... all of which happen with the bell sound." Mayuri said to herself, speaking again.

"Then there's how my powers are emitting these random sparks from my body..." She remarked.

She looked at the sphere once more, and breathed deeply.

"...I hope we figure out what this thing is, because I'm starting to get a bad feeling about this."

And with that, the first part of the movie is done, and that same eye symbol from before is starting to get a bit more active. With only Mayuri able to see most of the strange oddities, this threat is quite troubling for everyone, and yet even she has yet to notice these creatures showing up... if only Mayuri had looked up at the moon during that one night. *sweats*

However, from what those shadowy creatures seem to be, it looks like they all have horns. That doesn't seem to imply anything good. Just what are they even doing? What's that symbol the first one made, and why are they invisible to even Mayuri, when she can see everything else that's going on throughout this arc? Whatever the answer is, our heroes might not like it...

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 100%, MAX (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a second copy of an Angel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)
Mana - (Share a mental link that can be turned on and off at will)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)

Mayuri - (Disrupt any Reiryoku near him with a special magnetic field)

Mukuro - 99% (Safely use all 100% of his body's physical power)

Mio - Maxed (Ability Currently Unknown)
Chapter 72

Well, this is it, the Mayuri Judgment adaption, and the last bit of Season 3 overall, is about to come to an end! We've got the last eight dates to show, all of the remaining shadowy monsters to pop up during the dates, and then... the next chapter after this will start the next movie, known as Mio Salvation! I hope all the remaining dates do well, especially the ones that I've made myself, even more so because the first one you'll see is Mukuro's.

With all of that settled... everyone, let's continue these dates!

Chapter 72, Movie Chapter: Mayuri Judgment, Part 2

~March 23rd, 2052 - Ocean Park, Amusement Park section

Shido walked through the gates of Ocean Park, soon walking into the amusement park side. He was currently wearing a light blue T-Shirt, gray knee length shorts, and brown sneakers. Once he got far enough in, he looked around for Mukuro.

"The others said Mukuro was nervous all night, I hope she's OK..." Shido wondered aloud.

"S-Shido, over here."

Shido turned, finally finding Mukuro was she waved towards him, looking away slightly aside from a few brief glances.

Once Shido saw her, he noticed her wearing a very light-yellow, almost white, blouse with a skirt of the same color, with the sleeves and skirt being double layered. Said layers were also the only part of her outfit that lacked yellow, if ignoring her hair ribbons and the blouse's buttons, which were the same shade of pink her Astral Dress was.

"Whoa..." Shido breathed, shocked by how cute she looked.

"Oh no, I look bad... don't I?" Mukuro said worriedly.

"N-No, just the opposite, you're... I don't know the right word to use, but it's definitely a good one." Shido answered.

Mukuro blushed brightly for a moment, soon smiling as she took Shido's hand.

"...Thank you." Mukuro whispered.

The two started walking around.

"So, any particular reason you wanted to have our date here?" Shido asked.

"Truth is, I've never been to an amusement park before, so... I figured why not visit here on a date with you?" Mukuro answered.

"I see, guess it's pretty fitting I have a date here. This is where I learned Kotori had been a Spirit." Shido replied.

Mukuro tilted her head at that.
"Oh right, you weren't with us yet." Shido chuckled.

"Kotori had become a Spirit around the same time you and Origami had, but we didn't notice at the time because Rio locked her powers out of safety, remember how Saya mentioned she was Kotori's predecessor?" He explained.

Mukuro nodded.

"Well, Saya's consciousness survived in her, and tried to take over, not realizing she had died." Shido revealed.

"Holy..." Mukuro breathed.

"Luckily, everything worked out. In fact, we wouldn't have saved Kurumi if Saya hadn't survived in Kotori." Shido replied.

Mukuro smiled.

"I see, so this place... there's already precious memories here." Mukuro stated.

"Yeah, so... you ready to go on some rides?" Shido asked.

Mukuro smiled, nodding a bit.

Soon enough, the two were on the sky drop, with Mukuro sweating a bit, and Shido realizing how familiar the situation was.

"...Can I get off?" Mukuro begged.

"Sorry, it's too late, and we're about to drop." Shido answered.

Mukuro gulped, and soon the drop came, although Mukuro surprisingly found herself calm about the entire thing.

"This isn't as scary as I thought it would be." Mukuro realized.

They finally reached the bottom, soon disembarking from the ride.

"Wow, you took that fall like a champ." Shido praised.

"I did, but how did I handle it so well?" She wondered.

"Hmm... actually, I've heard people train in Zero-G before going into space because of reasons related to preparing for motion sickness, maybe your time in space has desensitized you to that sort of thing?" Shido guessed.

Mukuro blinked, and shrugged a bit.

"I guess that's the best explanation we have." Mukuro replied, looking around.

"Can we try that next?" She requested.

Shido saw her looking towards the haunted house, and soon looked towards her.

"OK, but you might wanna stay close." Shido suggested.

"O...K?" Mukuro agreed confused.
The two walked inside, and as they did, Mayuri looked around from the bathroom area. While she was scouting the area, another of the shadowy creatures passed by her line of vision, and once again she failed to see it.

This particular one's unique trait, aside from the yellow eyes and aura, was the fact it had *four eyes*, not two.

"Come on, please... let me see something." Mayuri begged.

The shadowy beast looked at her, and gave her a mocking look by stretching out his face to mimic a long tongue giving a raspberry.

Mukuro held onto Shido's arm tightly, still shaking from the horror she just had to experience with all the fake, but convincingly real monsters and props in the Haunted House, as they headed back to the Takamiya Household.

"That was so scary..." Mukuro whimpered, crying a bit.

"Sorry about that, you just seemed so excited, I couldn't bring myself to tell you what was gonna happen." Shido apologized.

Mukuro looked at Shido, soon nuzzling her face into his shoulder a bit.

"...It's OK, you held me close every time something scared me, that was really sweet of you." Mukuro admitted.

"You're welcome, and I'll make your favorite tonight as a way to cheer you up, how does that sound?" Shido offered.

Mukuro blushed a bit, soon smiling as she nodded.

"I'd like that a lot, thank you." She agreed.

The others all watched from the window.

"Wow, even though she made a bad choice from something she didn't know, it still ended up good." Tohka whispered, adding to her date plan notes.

"That was the kind of scene that my Silver Bullet series liked to focus on." Nia stated.

Natsumi smiled, turning around.

"My turn's next, and I've already got a great place in mind!" Natsumi exclaimed.

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*March 24th, 2052 - Tenguu Shopping Arcade*

Shido, wearing a red short-sleeved coat with a black shirt, khakis, and white shoes walked into the arcade. Only moments have her entered...

"Oh, Shido!" Natsumi sang.

"Wow, that was fast-"

Shido suddenly went silent, soon seeing Natsumi's outfit.
It was almost identical to the police outfit that she cosplayed in after having her powers sealed, especially in how she wore it, though it was instead a light green button up shirt that slightly showed the black bra she had underneath, the same skirt as before, only purple with the bottom edge marked by an orange stripe, and fishnet stockings.

She wore her usual shoes, and to top it all off, she had a hairpin with three flower charms attacked on the right side of her head.

"What do you think Shido, don't I look amazing?" Natsumi asked, winking for emphasis.

Shido has a slight nosebleed, but quickly covered it.

"Y-You look... uh, kinda sexy." Shido said quietly.

"Aw, I knew you'd love it!" Natsumi smiled.

She tackle-hugged Shido, which caused his head to get caught in an *intentional* Marshmallow Hell for a few seconds.

Once Natsumi was down, she took the flustered Shido's hands.

"So, ready to have fun?" Natsumi asked.

"Sure, just... don't break all the game machines like Tohka did." Shido replied.

"Eh?" Natsumi blinked.

Shido chuckled nervously, scratching his cheek.

"When I first met her while she was in her Inverse Form, and brought her here, she... broke every game she played." Shido explained.

Shido recalled the fighting game where Tohka punched all the nodes, the first in the series of game machines she broke, where she smashed into it so hard for her last blow, the machine imploded from her unnatural strength.

Natsumi's eye twitched before clearing her throat, and looking away slightly.

"Come on, let's enjoy the arcade. I'm gonna beat every high score here, then win one of every top shelf prize they've got!" Natsumi said, her eyes sparkling like stars.

'And now I know why she came here, though I'll admit that side of her is cute.' Shido smiled.

Soon they began playing the various games together, with Natsumi burning through all the available games, winning the jackpots or scoring high, gaining tons of tickets in the process.

On occasion, Shido watched her play normal arcade games, shocking everyone nearby as they saw her raze her way into the high-scores.

"Natsumi, just how many people did you have to transform into to gain those skills?" Shido asked.

"Sorry, but that's a secret." Natsumi giggled.

Natsumi soon used her tickets to get all the prizes she wanted, and stored them away using Haniel.

"So, anything else, or is that it?" Shido asked.
"I'm ready to go home now, I'm a bit hungry anyways." Natsumi replied.

As they continued walking, the two soon neared a photo booth area, the others were watching nearby through a sit-down game area, although the Yamai twins were distracted as they played against each other.

"What are these?" Natsumi wondered.

"Oh, these are photo booths, they're basically enclosed rooms take pictures of you." Shido explained.

Natsumi suddenly blushed and covered herself.

"T-They take pictures, in an enclosed room!?!" Natsumi asked, her voice shaking.

"What's wrong?" Shido asked.

"It's just... I'm not very comfortable taking pictures in enclosed rooms." Natsumi admitted, blushing still.

Mio's eyes suddenly widen, as if she remembered something important.

"Oh, then we don't have to do it-" Shido replied.

"N-No, this is a date, if we wanna make it special then... we need a picture." Natsumi stated.

She entered the booth, but when Shido tried to follow, the others suddenly saw her kick him before he could, surprising them. Natsumi peaked out her panicked face.

"NO WAY, DON'T COME IN HERE, HOLD YOUR HORSES YOU BAKA, BAKA, BAKA!" Natsumi screamed, pulling her head back in.

"I'm... confused." Shido wondered.

The others all got close and whispered, with Kotori speaking up first.

"Is she that camera shy?" Kotori asked.

"No, I think I know what's wrong here. The only time she took a picture in an enclose space... it was when I did your examinations, back when I was still Reine." Mio answered.

The girls all went white, realizing what just happened, and worse... they couldn't say anything because that would count as *interfering* on their date.

Soon, the picture was printed out, and Shido took a look at it... before he screamed in shock.

"Ah, why'd you look at it in here!?" Natsumi asked.

"Why are YOU naked!?!" Shido demanded.

Mio quickly grabbed everyone, making them all flee the arcade before they were noticed.

"Because Mio said that whenever I was in an enclosed room, I had to take my clothes off to take a picture!" Natsumi explained.

"That's only for *examination* pictures!" Shido stated.

Natsumi went stiff, and soon turned red as she realized the fact she both failed to look into that detail
further, which was unlike her, but also just got naked in public for no reason. She shrieked a bit before fainting into Shido's arms.

"...Oh boy."

Shido and Natsumi headed back home, the latter hanging her head down in embarrassment.

"I'm really sorry about all of that..." Natsumi apologized.

"It's alright, you had an honest misunderstanding there, and it isn't the first time that someone being a Spirit made them miss something obvious." Shido replied.

Natsumi chuckled a bit at that, rubbing her head.

"...Uh, would you still keep that picture as a memento despite that I'm-" Natsumi inquired.

"Uh... well, I guess it was part of your ideal date, so... well it isn't like it'll hurt anyone." Shido replied.

Natsumi smiled a bit.

"So, what's gonna be for dinner tonight?" Natsumi asked.

"How does spaghetti sound?" Shido offered.

Natsumi makes an excited face upon hearing that, and as they head back into the house, Mayuri looked around for any odd signs... the fact she once again found nothing made her slam her head against a wall in anger.

"I feel like something's out to make me suffer!" She exclaimed.

Once again, a shadowy creature slithered by, this time having a more wiggly shape to its body.

~March 25th, 2052 - Private Tokisaki Train

Shido blinked a bit, standing at the sight of a private train owned by the Tokisaki family, or more specifically, owned by Kurumi's parents. He looked down at the tuxedo he was wearing, suddenly realizing why Kurumi had requested it.

"I knew Kurumi was rich ever since she said she and Saya used to attend Rindouji, but this is... wow." Shido stated, walking inside.

"Shido!"

Shido looked and saw Kurumi, who was wearing a black and white dress that Shido noticed was similar to a maid outfit. There were various red ribbons placed all over it, as well as two matching ones tying her usual hairstyle.

She was seated on a small table, with a small picnic basket placed in the middle, and her beloved kitten, Macaron, resting on her lap.

"Wow..." Shido repeated.

"Don't keep a lady waiting Shido, take a seat." Kurumi smiled.
"O-Oh, right!" Shido stuttered.

Shido soon sat himself on the table, and the boat took off for a small trip.

"I hope you enjoy this lunch I made for us." Kurumi smiled.

Kurumi took out the food from the basket, and while it was definitely made from some fancy ingredients, the actual food made by said ingredients was simple... and as Shido expected, somewhat cat styled.

Shido tried not to snicker a bit, while Kurumi blushed a little, smiling.

"I can't help it, cats are cute, right my little Macaron?" Kurumi stated.

"Meow."

Shido chuckled a bit.

"Yeah, they're cute, but not as cute as you." Shido remarked.

Kurumi's face went red at that, puffing up with a little steam.

"S-Shido, I didn't know you could flirt so boldly." Kurumi replied.

The two enjoyed their meal as the train made its small trip around Tenguu City, the two just talked with each other, occasionally laughing as they enjoyed the simple company they had with each other, or when Macaron did something particularly adorable.

After a bit of time, Kurumi went silent, smiling a bit.

"Kurumi?" Shido asked.

He soon noticed Kurumi start to cry some happy tears, surprising him a little.

"Kurumi, what's wrong?" Shido asked.

"I'm sorry, I wasn't trying to worry you, it's just... I'm so happy." Kurumi sniffled.

Shido blinked a bit.

"This just makes me think back to how nearly a year ago, I was an unknowing pawn to Westcott, and I had been suffering over Saya's death for so long, without even realizing my memories had been altered... when that comes up, I get so scared at what could have happened to me." Kurumi stated.

"Kurumi..." Shido breathed.

"But then, I remember how I met you, and everything you said to me... I was lost in the shadows of my own power, and another stealing my light. That didn't matter to you, even when you saw me hurt someone, even when I scared you half to death, you still said you'd save me, you became my shining light. That's when you pulled all those miracles, and Saya returned to my life." She smiled.

Kurumi sniffled a bit more, and soon Shido walked over, giving her a hug, slightly surprising her.

"Shido?" Kurumi asked.

"We have the right to shed tears, even when all they're filled with is our happiness, it just shows how
much the things we have are worth." Shido smiled, rubbing her back.

Kurumi smiled again, sniffling a bit more as Shido kept hugging her, and Macaron nuzzled into her lap a bit.

Meanwhile, Mayuri was nearby doing her usual watch, and teared up a bit as she heard their words.

'That was... so beautiful, just like in those romance novels I read!' Mayuri thought.

As that happened, Mayuri was hiding on part of the train, continuing her watching... once again missing the shadowy creature that she couldn't see. This one's eyes were absent, or were just as black as its skin, and looked like they were wearing a cloak.

Shido and Kurumi were soon walking home, with Kurumi holding Macaron in her arms, as everyone saw them near the Takamiya Household, they moved away from the window.

"They look really happy, I wonder what they did on their date?" Yoshino wondered.

"Considering Shido's wearing a tuxedo, yet doesn't feel as uncomfortable as when he entered the private diner during Miku's date... no offense." Kotori mentioned.

"None taken." Miku replied.

"It seems like maybe it was something simple or rustic, Kurumi does give off this kinda relaxing, gentle vibe at times." Kotori answered.

Tohka nods slightly, adding to her notes.

"Uh... anyone know what Origami's doing right now?" Kaguya inquired.

Everyone looked to see Origami in something similar to a meditative stance.

"She's been like that for a while now." Yuzuru mentioned.

"She's probably talking to her parents, and maybe Chinami if she knows anything, about some dating tips." Rio answered.

"Oh yeah, you put the former's souls into her, while we saw her do the latter ourselves." Nia recalled.

After a while, Origami's eyes opened, and she stood up.

"I'm gonna go take a shower, if dinner's nearly done before I'm out, someone let me know." Origami stated.

"Got it!" Tohka replied.

As she was in the shower, Origami thought about what her parents, and Chinami, had just said to her.

"Don't necessarily try something flashy, being simple has its own charm, like retro stuff." Mr. Tobiichi's voice echoed.

"Try to have your date fit your personality, often enough, it helps show you're trying to be yourself." Mrs. Tobiichi's voice echoed.
"Have at least one surprise, usually predictable things are boring to most people." Chinami's voice echoed.

Origami breathed.

'Last time we went on a date, I had no idea what I was doing, and kinda let Shido guide me, not to mention Kurumi's threat distracted him a little.' Origami thought.

'But, as the old saying goes: "if you chase it from behind, you can't overcome death", I can do this.' She thought determinedly.

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March 26th, 2052 - Tenguu City's Starbucks

Shido waited by the entrance to a branch of Starbucks Coffee in Tenguu City, waiting for Origami to show up. Shido was dressed in a navy shirt with a dark blue plaid button up collar, and white plaid lines, long gray pants, and black sneakers with white tips.

"S-Shido, I'm here." Origami's voice spoke up.

Shido turned, and blushed as he saw Origami in a cute pink and light blue blouse, with a white cardigan on top, a short white skirt, light blue sneakers, and pink heart charms attached to her usual hair clips.

Origami blushed as Shido saw her, her shy side picking up.

"H-How do I look? It isn't too girly for you, is it?" Origami wondered.

"Not at all, it really suits you." Shido admitted.

From afar, the others were all watching the date as usual.

"Makes sense he'd say that, we all know Origami's a tried and true girly girl whenever her super genius side isn't showing." Kurumi giggled.

"That suddenly explains how she and Tohka are besties." Mukuro replied, nodding a bit.

Mio sweat dropped at that, looking at Mukuro.

'I don't get that logic at all...' Mio thought.

"Pick clothes that fit your nature, good, good..." Tohka whispered, adding to her notes.

Origami took Shido's hand, and soon they began walking.

"So, where are we going, Origami?" Shido asked.

"I did my planning a bit differently, so you'll see soon enough." Origami answered.

They stopped by a strange restaurant with a turtle sign on it, but words implying something related to energy drinks, making Shido feel nervous as Origami checked her notes, looking around before spotting something.

"Ah, over here." Origami stated.

Shido was soon pulled by Origami into a small art gallery, surprising Shido again, but it a different
way he was more comfortable with.

"A gallery." Shido inquired.

"It felt simple, and relaxing... no good?" Origami asked.

"No, it's fine, I guess it kinda fits you too." Shido admitted.

Origami smiled at that.

'Mom and dad's advice worked, thank goodness.' Origami thought.

After leaving the gallery, Origami finds another of her notes' rendezvous points, and soon looked to see a small shop, a simple 100-yen shop.

The two walked through, and Origami soon stopped as her eye caught something.

"Hey Shido, can you buy me this?" Origami requested, showing a necklace with a heart charm.

"Sure thing, I guess you want it as a date memento from me?" Shido replied.

"That's one half of why." Origami mentioned.

Shido blinked.

"And... the other half?" Shido asked.

Origami blushed from embarrassment.

"I... didn't bring any yen with me." Origami admitted.

Shido blinked before chuckling slightly, and petting Origami on the head, making her blush before she smiled.

Shortly after, the two walked as the sun was setting, everyone else watching from afar again, with Origami looking at her new necklace as they reached her notes' final rendezvous point.

"Hmm..." Origami wondered.

After a bit, she spotted a building known as "Dream Park", and guided Shido over.

"Here's our last stop Shido." Origami remarked.

"Huh!?" Shido exclaimed.

The others all looked confused, until Nia's eyes widened at the building they were nearing.

"That's a love hotel!" Nia exclaimed.

"EH!?" Everyone exclaimed.

They went in, and Kotori held out three fingers, slowly folding them until the two walked back out, Origami's face red as her hair covered her eyes in shock and embarrassment.

As that happened, the sound of the bell tolled once more, with another shadowy creature showing some white feathers on it could be seen.
Back at the Takamiya Household, Origami and Shido had returned from their date, the former smiling at the latter.

"Thank you for everything, Shido." Origami smiled.

"Same... although, that last bit surprised me a bit." Shido chuckled.

Origami blushed in embarrassment.

"I'm sorry, I didn't realize Dream Park was... that sort of place..." Origami apologized.

"Don't worry about it, the worst that happened was we just walked inside." Shido replied, sweat dropping a bit.

Origami blushed a bit more, soon showing the necklace Shido bought her to him.

"I'll take good care of this, and treasure it forever." Origami promised.

Later that night, up in the Fraxinus, the search team reported in like usual.

"Sorry, but we haven't gotten any results. Mayuri's been especially stressed over it due to feeling like she keeps missing something." Rinne reported.

"I see, we still can't take any chances, so my apologies on how boring it is." Ryouko apologized.

Ryouko soon focused on Mayuri's screen.

"So, what do you have so far?" Ryouko inquired.

"Each time Shido was on a date, I heard the bell sound again, which means something has to be connected to us Spirits." Mayuri explained.

"In other words, it isn't random." Kannazuki noted.

Everyone on the ship sighed.

"At this rate, I think we'll need a vacation." Ryouko groaned.

Kotori sat at the table, grabbing one of her usual Chupa Chups from a cup. As she did, Mana walked by and sat down.

"So, it's finally your turn?" Mana mentioned.

"W-why are you asking me like that?" Kotori blushed, giving a strange look at Mana.

Mana gave a cat smile, smirking a bit.

"I'm just curious, I remember how the last time you went on a date with him, you had a funny incident with a go cart car?" Mana snickered.

Kotori blushed, and soon spun her lollipop to smack Mana's finger with it.

"Ow!" Mana winced.

"Sheesh, what was that for?" She asked.
Kotori looked away and blushed, now really embarrassed, the Arusu twins looked at the sight as Marina chuckled a bit.

"Really, sis?" Maria asked.

"What, it ain't hurting anyone." Marina replied.

Maria face palmed, and seeing her eyes were covered, Marina took the tasting dish they head, and dripped a small drop of acid into it.

"Depends on your definition Ms. Sister Sadist..." Maria mumbled.

Maria took a sip of the tasting dish, and soon her face when purple as her face puckered, said acid that Marina added being very potent citrus acid!

Marina covered her mouth and laughed loudly, using her other hand to hit the table.

'MARINA!' Maria thought, her mouth looking like it had swallowed itself.

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~March 27th, 2052 - Tenguu City Supermarket

Shido was wearing a dark blue jacket with black shirt underneath, gray pants, and black shoes as he waited for Kotori by the market doors.

"Shido, over here!"

Shido turned, and when he did, saw Kotori wearing a red buttoned-up shirt with long sleeves, though she had some of the top buttons undone to show a bit of cleavage. A black and dark red plaid skirt, with black socks that reached up to what people considered "Grade B" Zettai Ryouiki with some brown boots.

"Hey Kotori, glad you made it, so are you ready to go?" Shido asked.

"No, because this is where the date's happening." Kotori answered.

Shido blinked at that.

"Huh?" Shido questioned.

"Origami was pretty simple with her date, so... I figured that I should do whatever I want as long as I want it, nothing flashy, and that's happening by starting here." Kotori explained.

"I don't get it, but... alright then." Shido replied.

Shortly after, they began shopping for certain ingredients, and it was only then that Shido realized what Kotori really wanted to do on the date.

"Oh, now I think I get it, last time we did this was before the Tenguu Fire back when you were still my honorary sister." Shido stated.

"Yeah, and I figure since we hadn't done it for a while, anything out of the ordinary would be fair game for a date." Kotori replied.

"Guess that's true in a sense." Shido agreed.
Kotori soon gasped, noticing something, and Shido saw her run up to the stand where Chupa Chups were placed. Kotori picked up one, realizing that she hadn't seen the flavor before today.

"They have a new flavor!" Kotori cheered.

"I guess you'd like me to buy you that?" Shido chuckled.

"...Yes please." Kotori replied, blushing a bit.

As they walked home, Kotori looked at Shido, who was carrying both of the bags, and soon took one before grabbing his hand.

"Kotori?" Shido questioned.

"Just let me hold your hand, alright?" Kotori replied.

The others all looked confused upon noticing the two comes back early, and then peaked as they walked into the kitchen, finally showing everyone what Kotori's actual date plan had been. Making some Salisbury steak in the form of hamburgers alongside Shido.

"Oh man, watching this is making me hungry!" Tohka said, drooling slightly.

"What food doesn't make you hungry upon looking at it?" Mio joked.

Kotori styled one of her Salisbury burgers a certain way, and soon showed it to Shido.

"Look at this, Shido!" Kotori remarked.

"Oh, a tanuki, that's cute." Shido praised.

Kotori blinked, looking at it, and groaned as she realized the ears weren't long enough.

"It was supposed to be a bunny..." Kotori sighed.

Kotori went to try her new Chupa Chups, but Shido took it from her and wagged his finger.

"After you have your burger." Shido stated.

"OK..." Kotori agreed.

Shido soon smiled, petting her head.

After a while longer, Shido put the remaining touches on the burger patties, smiling as he finished.

"And done!" Shido declared.

From afar, the others watched, only for Tohka's stomach to rumble.

"No, stop rumbling, this is their date... I do want one but, no interfering!" Tohka stated.

Her stomach refused to listen, growling louder, and then again, growling longer each time.

Kotori noticed them, and snickered a bit.

"Why are you guys just standing there, yours are getting cold."

Everyone's eyes widened at that.
"It isn't interfering if I invite you, right?" Kotori smirked.

Everyone cheered at that.

Soon, everyone was seated at the table, with Seigo arriving back shortly after Kotori made the offer.

"Thank you for the food!" Everyone stated.

Tohka took a bite, and her eyes watered.

"DELICIOUS!" Tohka exclaimed.

"5 Stars!" Mukuro added, giving a thumb's up that somehow twinkled like a star.

"Great cooking as usual." Kotori smiled.

Shido chuckled at that, and soon Mayuri noticed her cup ran out of dressing.

"Oh, excuse me, need more dressing." Mayuri mentioned.

As Mayuri walked to the fridge, unaware of the shadowy figure with a flaming head looking at her. When she went to grab the dressing... everyone suddenly paused.

"Do you all feel something weird?" She asked.

"Yeah, but I can't put my finger on it." Shido confirmed.

Hearing that response, the shadowy figure instantly rushed out of the house, just in case they managed to somehow see it.

~March 28th, 2052 - Tenguu Subway Station

Shido sighed as he looked at himself, wearing a wig and bandages on his head, as well as a brown cloak. He was currently cosplaying as Nia's favorite male character that wasn't from her own series: Tokiya.

Based on Nia, and her request for his outfit, it didn't take long for Shido to have a good idea of what she wanted for their date.

"I can't tell if it's a good thing, or a bad thing, that I'm able to read Nia like a book." Shido sighed.

"Oh, Shido!" Nia sang.

Speaking of the devil herself, Shido turned to face her as she came close, only for him to have a slight nosebleed at what he saw. The character Nia had chosen was someone wearing a silver Qipao with gold lining, and many flower designs across it, as well as two black buns in her hair, and silver heels.

Her Qipao was pretty much outright fanservice based on nature, having a huge open cut-out in the shape of a star... showing Nia's current lack of a bra, the Qipao's high slits had also revealed she didn't have any underwear on either.

The character in question was Xing Zhan, who was Tokiya's best friend and later wife in the series they came from.
"I... that's... oh my god." Shido muttered.

"I knew you'd get a kick out of that, best couple couple's cosplay ever!" Nia giggled.

Nia hugged Shido's arm, purposely causing his elbow to slip into her cleavage.

'Why do some of the girls in my harem do this, loosing... brain... circulation!' Shido thought, his upper face going fully red.

"Come on Shido, time to start our date, to the cosplay event!" Nia cheered.

'I knew it!' Shido thought.

Nia dragged Shido towards the building holding the event, and soon they saw many other people also dressed up in costumes as well, many turning as they noticed Nia.

"Hey, isn't that her?" A guy asked.

"Yeah, that's Nia Honjou, the girl who Souji Hasegawa studied under, and who finished her manga for her!" A fan-girl squealed.

Nia chuckled, waving to some of the people staring at her.

'Well, that ended up happening pretty fast.' She thought.

"Who's that guy with her?" Another girl asked.

"Don't you see their costumes? If they're dressed as Xing Zhan and Tokiya, that's gotta be her boyfriend!" A fan-boy answered.

Nia soon blinked a bit, and smirked as she got an idea.

"Yep, this is beau here, anyone who wants a picture feel free to get it!" Nia exclaimed.

"What!?" Shido shouted.

Soon a bunch of fans crowded around, and Nia forced Shido to pose for pictures, including some particularly... saucy ones. By the time it ended, Nia had to help Shido off the ground, a few kiss marks caused by Reiryoku on his face as they slowly dissolved away.

"Nia, you... are very... dangerous." Shido gasped.

"Oh, you know you love me." Nia smirked.

"...Yeah, you're right about that at least, please tell me that was the word of what I'll have to go through?" Shido inquired.

Nia gave a cat smile, and Shido flinched.

'It isn't, is it!?' Shido mentally screamed.

Nia collected a bunch of anime DVDs, manga books, and video games as they were walking around. They did a few events together, though while they were fun, Shido's face showed he was nervous because he knew Nia still had something in her dating plan.

Eventually, it made itself present when a couple's contest came into view.
"I... I... I think I figured out what else you want me to go through." Shido paled, sweating noticeably.

"Oh, don't worry, this is pretty tame in comparison." Nia giggled, with a certain gleam in her eyes.

For obvious reasons, Shido didn't believe her at all.

While that was happening, Mayuri could be seen walking around the Cosplay Event area, dressed in a large Tanuki suit she moved using her power over electricity.

"I feel ridiculous in this thing..." Mayuri whispered.

The bell sound tolled once again, and Mayuri immediately began turning in an attempt to find it. Like before, she missed the shadowy figure as it scurried across the walls, showing some mechanical parts on its body.

It instantly shot through the wall, escaping to the outside.

Shido looked somewhat drained as he, and Nia, left the Cosplay event. Nia smiled happily as she held the grand prize they managed to win.

"I... don't ever want... to deal with that again." Shido panted.

"Oh, don't make it sound like you didn't like it." Nia teased.

Shido groaned.

"Now it's time for the last part of our date!" Nia cheered.

"There's still more!?" Shido exclaimed.

Nia took out Raziel and wrote in it, the words being: "Swap our cosplay with the outfits I left in my room back home."

Before Shido even realized it, his Tokiya cosplay was replaced with some kind of team outfit, with Nia wearing the same.

"What's this?" Shido inquired.

"Our team uniform, you and I are gonna win the grand prize in a tag-team video game tourney!" Nia cheered.

"Wait, really?" Shido blinked.

Nia snickered at that, knowing what Shido had thought she'd try.

"Really, did you think I was gonna make you do something more, I don't know... sexual perhaps?" Nia joked.

"NIA!" Shido exclaimed.

"Just teasing you, now come on Shido, time to win the grand prize!" Nia exclaimed.

Nia grabbed his arm, dragging him to the event.

"Whoa, you don't have to pull me!" Shido mentioned.
"And risk you not following?" Nia remarked.

As the others watched nearby, they all sweat dropped a bit, with Origami even chuckling at the sight.

"Nia's probably the boldest of us here." Origami stated.

"What do you expect when she doesn't draw the same line with teasing as me, at least Shido's gonna come out in one piece... I hope." Natsumi replied.

About an hour later, Nia and Shido were finally back home, with Nia hugging the grand prize they managed to win tightly, a blush on her face as she smiled brightly.

"Can't believe was Super Smash Bros. Multiverse, guess not only was it fun, but it was the best game I could be your tag partner for." Shido smiled.

"You should tell me these things more often, my online friends are gonna be so jelly about this." Nia giggled.

Soon they stopped by the door, and Nia looked at Shido for a moment.

"Hey Shido, close your eyes for a moment." Nia requested.

"...You're not gonna pull some kinda joke on me, are you?" Shido asked.

"If I wanted to do that, I'd tell you to turn around, besides... aren't the others watching from a distance?" Nia mentioned.

Shido chuckled.

"OK, good point..." Shido replied.

Shido closed his eyes, and with a blush on her face, Nia neared Shido before kissing him on the cheek. Shido's eyes widened as she blushed, with Nia walking into the door, turning with a blush filled smile.

"I'm not sneaking a move in if its only on the cheek, so it's still fair game for these dates." Nia giggled.

"Thanks for the date!" She smiled, closing the door.

Shido stood there like an idiot, holding his cheek as he kept blushing before he smiled a bit.

"...Nia, please never change." Shido said happily.

As everyone watched from afar, all eyes quickly turned to Mio, who soon sweated slightly.

"What? Stop looking at me like that!" Mio begged.

"Your date's next, so how are you gonna do it?" Natsumi asked.

Mio goes white as she's reminded of the fact, a metaphorical soul leaving her mouth as it flooded her thoughts.

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March 29th, 2052 - Raizen High, Entrance Gate
Shido stood by the gates to Raizen High, whistling as he looked at the clock, waiting for Mio to show up. He was wearing a dark teal short sleeved T-Shirt with a single pocket on his upper left, navy blue jeans, and white sneakers.

"Oh man, I'll admit... I'm kinda nervous about this one, I haven't really gotten to spend any time with Mio since that time." Shido realized.

"Uh... I'm here now."

Shido turned, seeing Mio walk into view, though compared to the other girls, she clearly looked uncomfortable about the date she was about to embark on. She was currently wearing her usual outfit, which was the same as the one she was wearing when she first appeared, but much more colorful.

Her hair tie, and the ties on her hoodie, had rainbow strings, with her sleeveless strap dress still being pink at the top, but slowly shifting to light tones of each rainbow's color until ending at a light purple that was nearly a wisteria color. Her actual hoodie was whiter in color, though with its short sleeves being a bit bigger, and baggier, tan previously. Her green plaid shorts simple had the plaid stripes change to rainbow colored, leaving only her socks unchanged as her sneakers were now marked with stars in the colors of the rainbow.

"Uh, so... I guess I should ask this despite I'm wearing the same thing, but... how do I look?" Mio asked.

"You look great." Shido answered.

"Yeah, thank you..." Mio replied, looking away slightly.

The two just stood there awkwardly for a few moments, with the silence only breaking once Shido cleared his throat.

"So, where are we going exactly?" Shido asked.

"Oh, uh... I didn't choose anywhere, so... you can decide." Mio answered.

"Alright then, I think I know where we should go first." Shido smiled.

Shido started walking, with Mio followed shortly after, the others all watched from afar in a slightly worried manner.

"I'm a bit worried about how this date's gonna go." Nia stated.

"I agree, it doesn't feel like Mio's trying." Miku agreed.

Tohka gave a worried look, and soon moved to a different page of her notes, writing something in it, making everyone look as she did.

Eventually, the two stopped by a small cafe, making Mio blink as she seated herself at a table, and Shido went to buy their food. When he came back, he held out a chocolate flavored crepe to her.

"Oh, thank you." Mio thanked.

'He knew what my favorite flavor was, but how did he know that, I never said I love chocolate crepe... hey, wait a minute.' She thought.

She remembered what happened on Valentines' day, where she devoured a ton of chocolate while
everyone could clearly see her doing so.

'Oh... I guess that was what made him buy me a chocolate crepe.' Mio thought, sweat dropping a bit. The two both began eating their crepes, and as they did, Shido noticed something.

"Hey Mio, hold still a second." Shido stated.

"Hmm?" She inquired.

He got closer to her, and wiped off a small bit of creme off her cheek, making her blush as he licked it off his finger afterwards.

"There we go." Shido smiled.

Mio's face suddenly went red, some steam coming off of it.

From afar, Tohka raised up her notebook, making Mio notice it read: "Just take a deep breath if you're jittery." Once she saw that, Mio did so, managing to calm her nerves a bit, though Shido noticed her breathing deeply.

"You alright?" Shido asked.

"I-I'm fine!" Mio replied.

'S-stop doing this to me body, I'm... I'm not in love with him, I can't be... not when I saw him as my nephew for years!' Mio thought in a panic.

After finishing, Shido lead the two of them to a theater, where a new comedy everyone was talking about was playing.

"So, we're watching that new "Unluckiest Lucky" movie?" Mio asked.

"Yeah, I figured this would be a good time to see it." Shido answered.

Mio blinked before shrugging, and soon they went into the theater, quickly putting on headphones the theater provided, a choice that was made so people could still hear the movie should a majority of the audience start laughing from it.

As the movie began playing, laughter quickly started. As the movie's name implied, it was about a girl named Lucky, who was somehow both incredibly lucky, while also incredibly unlucky at the same time, which had hilarious effects on her everyday life as the two forms of luck mixed together.

While the two laughed through the movie, Mio unconsciously found herself resting her head against Shido's shoulder, and before either of them knew it, the movie ended with Lucky's good luck eventually overcoming her bad luck after managing to create a paradox that dispelled the latter.

"That was really funny, the movie's praise was well earned!" Mio approved.

At that moment, she suddenly realized where her head was, and her face went red, and her eyes became spirals as her senses were overloaded. Shido held her steady as this happened.

"Hey, Mio, are you OK?" Shido asked.

'W-why did I do that!?' Mio asked herself.
Shido sweated a bit, and soon thought of something, helping her out of the theater.

"I know, for our last spot of the day, let's visit the new Zoo they attached to the Aquarium." Shido suggested.

Mio briefly nodded, and they quickly began to head over. As the others watched them leave from outside, and as Mayuri listened for the sound of the bell tolling... nothing!

"That's weird, why can't I hear the bell?" Mayuri wondered.

"Maybe it's still too early for it?" Origami suggested.

Mio's eyes sparkled as she saw the various animals at the zoo, including some newborns that lead to a special discount event to see all the baby animals.

"They're all so adorable!" Mio squeed.

"I know, this isn't the first time I've seen a newborn animal either, me, Mana, and Kotori all got to see one of our old neighbor's dogs have puppies a few months after we moved in with them." Shido replied.

Mio didn't hear it, still distracted by the cute baby animals, Shido blinked before he chuckled at Mio's strong interest.

This same fascination continued upon walking into the aquarium, which also had a fair share of its creatures recently give birth to their young, and then Mio noticed something on one of the walls.

"Let's see... come by around 3:30 pm, one of our Dolphin's is about to... give live birth!" Mio exclaimed.

Shido soon saw Mio look at him with a begging look, soon seeing it was 3:25, and he nodded.

"Of course, I'd like to see it too." Shido agreed.

"Thank you!" Mio shouted.

Mio soon rushed up, pulling Shido's arm as she did, and stopped by the area where the Dolphin in question was about to have her baby.

Everyone waited for a while, and after a long period of time passed by, the baby Dolphin finally escaped its mother's body, officially being born as she helped it reach the surface for its first breath of air, making everyone cheer.

"That was so precious." Mio said, sniffling a bit.

After all of that was over, the two sat on a bench back in the zoo area, and Mio looked towards Shido.

"I'll admit it, today was... fun." Mio stated.

"Thanks, I had a blast myself." Shido replied.

Mio blushed a bit at that, turning away slightly... after a bit, she took a deep breath before speaking.

"Shido, how do... you feel about this?" Mio asked.
"Huh?" Shido wondered.

"Only three months ago, you know me as your Aunt, and now all that's suddenly changed... I'm not, but you still saw me as such all that time... just as I had thought you were my nephew." Mio explained.

Shido went silent at that, pondering a bit about the question he was just asked.

"Everyone seems to think I'm in love with you, and that I'm destined to be in your harem, but... what am I supposed to think with how things were before?" Mio questioned.

"Well, if I had to say anything about that... I guess I understand how you're feeling, and I get how expecting your views to change that fast aren't gonna just happen." Shido answered.

"I mean, I've already seen how similar your personality is to Tohka's, and even with the differences I've noticed, that's hard to register... just like the fact you were Reine, but also not Reine at the same time." He explained.

Shido breathed a bit, but soon put a hand on top of hers, making Mio blush a bit.

"That's why, I think it's best you figure things out, and on your own terms." Shido answered, smiling a bit.

"Shido..." Mio breathed.

"Realize how you truly feel, and be sure of what's really in your heart, if that feeling turns out to be romantic love towards me... I'll be willing to give us a chance. In the end... only your heart can give you the answer to that question." Shido remarked.

Mio blushed a bit, holding her left hand to hear heart as she felt it beating faster, with Shido completely unaware.

Shido soon stood up, getting Mio's attention as he extended a hand.

"You ready to head back now?" Shido asked.

"...Yeah, let's go." Mio smiled, taking his hand.

To two walked back home, and as they did... Mio closed her eyes as she felt her heartbeat again. She was confused to how she felt, she didn't know what to think, but... she was beginning to wonder, maybe the others were right?

All she knew it whatever the right answer, and the wrong answers, truly were... she still had a lot to consider before she could confirm what she really felt. All she knew in regards to how she felt for Shido was this...

...He had a kind heart.

~March 30th, 2052 - Tenguu Plaza

Tohka was currently standing at Tenguu Plaza, checking her hair, and her appearance, through a mirror she was holding in her right hand. The others were all watching her from a nearby bush area, this time including Mana, Rio, Rinne, the Arusu sisters, and Mayuri.

She was currently wearing a gold sleeveless tank top that stopped briefly above her belly button, a
purple tie-up jacket with a lavender collar area, dark plum jean shorts with a black belt that had a gold buckle, and a pair of sneakers that matched the same colors as her signature butterfly ribbon.

As kept waiting, she heard footsteps behind her, and her ribbon flapped upon realizing what it was, turning happily as she threw the mirror away (which landed on Nia's head) and waved towards the boy she had been waiting for.

"There you are, Shido!" Tohka exclaimed happily.

Shido walked up to her, revealing he was currently wearing a black jacket over a white long-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, and finally, white and blue sneakers.

"Sorry about that, Tohka, did I keep you waiting?" Shido asked.

"No way, not at all!" Tohka smiled.

Everyone chuckled as they watched from nearby, sands Nia who was rubbing her head.

"Tohka's really trying to make him feel better, she's been here for the past hour!" Mukuro chuckled.

A brief black & white montage was shown, with the others watching for a whole hour, seeing only the clock hand move, and Tohka shifting around every once in a while.

"Darling's early too, about 15 minutes I think." Miku mentioned, a sweat drop on her left cheek.

"Well, we've been sitting over here for just as long, so we're no better." Mio remarked.

Tohka smiled at Shido with closed eyes.

"You really dressed up for the date, you look really beautiful." Shido Complimented.

"Beautiful? R-Really!?" Tohka repeated, blushing with a smile.

Tohka giggled, grabbing Shido's hands.

"Come on Shido, let's make this our best day ever!" Tohka exclaimed.

"Yeah, I'm looking forward to it." Shido replied.

The other girls all turned away briefly, sweat dropping a bit.

'She's clearly the main harem girl, why else would she say that.' They playfully thought.

Meanwhile up on the Fraxinus, a signal began once the two held hands.

"Tohka's date has initiated!" Mikimoto announced.

"If things go as expected, then the sphere should disappear once the remaining Reiryoku bonded to Tohka stabilizes." Ryouko stated.

Kawagoe turned to face her.

"We still haven't been able to figure out what the sphere is for, other than the brief connections Mayuri's made." He stated.

"I guess all we can do is keep close watch, are you keeping an eye, Seigo?" Kannazuki asked.
"Loud and clear." Seigo said via headset.

With that, everyone checked the sphere on the analysis screen, only small parts of it showing purple Reiryoku, were left.

Tohka and Shido were soon seen in the Tenguu Nakamise Shopping Distract, standing to the soup famous for its Fried Soup Dumplings as they ordered a box for each of them to enjoy.

"First, we'll have these!" Tohka cheered.

Tohka began eating, blushing as the heavenly taste.

"Amazing!" Tohka stated.

"Alright, I'm next." Shido stated.

Shido took a bit of his, unfortunately, he forgot his heat sensitivity was vastly different from Tohka's, and his mouth began to burn.

"HOT!" Shido cried out.

"Shido, open!" Tohka stated.

Shido did so, and Tohka quickly placed a water bottle to his mouth, he drank it all in seconds as he breathed.

"Thank you, Tohka." Shido breathed.

"I'm just glad you're OK." Tohka smiled.

"Alright, where to next?" Shido asked.

"Next up, the Takoyaki shop!" Tohka exclaimed.

Shido blinked a bit.

"Then we'll have skewers, crepes, yakisoba, snow cones, calamari and corn dogs!" Tohka added.

"Wait, all we're doing is eating?" Shido asked.

Tohka nodded.

"After observing everyone's dates, it was clear what I wanted to do, and then I noticed the one thing they all had in common was everyone barely ate, so my date plan is..." Tohka answered.

"Bonding over the joy of eating together!" She exclaimed.

From afar, with all of the others, Natsumi looked away, her cheeks swelling as she tried not to laugh at that claim.

Tohka smiled a bit, and soon noticed Shido's flabbergasted look.

"...You don't like it?" Tohka asked worriedly.

"I-It's not that, you just surprised me a bit." She replied.
"Though, now it makes sense why I didn't feel like I should eat anything, so I'll stick with you until the end." He smiled.

Tohka smiled back, and the two soon walked to the takoyaki shop. Shido held out two fingers on one hand, while Tohka put both hands together with a finger out

"Excuse us, two large bowls please!" They both requested.

Soon, they both walked away with a loud of takoyaki each, and soon enough... everyone heard Natsumi's stomach rumble, making her blush.

Before anyone said anything, the same happened to everyone else.

"...Tohka tends to know good food, doesn't she?" Kaguya mentioned.

"Indeed she does, perhaps we should try some of the places they visit." Yuzuru remarked.

Rinne gets out her wallet, going to the dumpling stand.

"One party sized order, please." Rinne requested.

As that happened, the sight of one last shadowy creature with sharp blades jutting from its body was scene, making the same symbol the first had seen in a certain spot. The symbol faded before anyone could notice, and it soon vanished.

The sphere in the sky briefly flashed, with Mayuri failing to notice it due to everyone's small snack break.

After a bit, Shido and Tohka were in the bakery, both buying some Kinako Bread, and then visited the end point for Tohka's date. The signature spot for Shido's and his harem, Tenguu Viewpoint, or as Tohka had chosen to nicknamed it? The "Sephira Viewpoint."

"No better place to end this date." Shido mentioned.

"Yeah." Tohka smiled.

As the Fraxinus crew watched the last bit of Reiryoku stabilize, the others all gathered nearby, getting the couple's attention.

"Oh, hey everyone!" Tohka waved.

"So, all the dates are over then?" Origami asked.

"Yeah, seems like it, notice anything about the sphere Mayuri?" Shido asked.

Mayuri looked at it, notice it starting to fade, albeit slowly.

"Yeah, I see it fading... still, I wonder why I kept seeing what I did?" Mayuri mentioned.

Everyone blinked at that, wondering what it's purpose was.

The bell sound went off again, but unlike the times before, the end result of the sound was very different as everyone suddenly showed a surprise look.

"Huh? Is something wrong?" Mayuri asked.
Mio turned her head, making the Electric Spirit stare in confusion... until the moment she realized what that meant.

"Wait, you can see it now!" She asked.

"Yeah, and it's huge!" Mana answered loudly.

Right at that moment, the systems of the Fraxinus suddenly began blaring like crazy.

"What's going on!?" Ryouko asked, with everyone struggling to find an answer.

The sphere began to condense and rippled in a fairly grotesque manner, but that was nothing compared to the moment it shrunk. The symbols across the city fired off from their locations to hit it, which led to the entire sky going dark as the sun turned a dark purple color, and the sky began cracking!

"This feeling... it's that odd worry I felt during every-" Mayuri realized.

She screamed as her sparking actually shocked her, leaving her to fall onto her knees.

"Mayuri!" Mana shouted worriedly.

[The time is now!]

The imagery of a Sephirot Tree formed into the sky, only for it to flip upside down as it turned black, showing it's true form.

...The Tree of Death, the Qliphoth.

"What's going on?" Shido wondered, fear across his face.

"No... he's back!" Mio panicked.

Westcott's laughter began echoing across the entire City, right as the Spacequake Alarms went off.

There you have it, the end of the Mayuri Judgment adaption, and now... the signal to the final arc, which is also the endgame battle for the entire story. We only have one movie, and the epilogue left to clear, so get ready for the Mio Salvation movie! The signal for Westcott and the Devil's return from the Inverse Void has begun, and everyone's within the crossfire.

With how the Qliphoth form, I think it's safe for me to tell you now that you were seeing Demons during every instance those shadowy creatures showed up, or more specifically? Apparitions of them. If you remember the artificial Qlipha Crystals that Westcott created, then I think you know who these Demons happen to be, meaning our heroes have a certain set of opponents to fight against.

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

-Spirit Bond Levels & Passive Abilities-

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically) 

Origami - 100%, MAX (Teleport Dodging)
Yoshino - 99% (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 99% (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn’t work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 99% (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - (Summon a second copy of an Angel)

Natsumi - 99% (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 99% (Flight)

Yuzuru - 99% (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 99% (Pain Reliever)

Maria - (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - (Share a mental link that can be turned on and off at will)

Nia - 99% (Photographic Memory)

Mayuri - (Disrupt any Reiryoku near him with a special magnetic field)

Mukuro - 99% (Safely use all 100% of his body's physical power)

Mio - Maxed (Ability Currently Unknown)
Chapter 73

This is it everyone, the countdown for the final 5 chapters are here, with this being number one in that countdown. I welcome you all to the final movie, and arc for the entire story before the epilogue... Mio Salvation! This is a three chapter battle where everyone faces against Westcott, the Devil, and the remaining 10 Demons of this army; if they fail, then the destruction to the world will exceed what Choronzon was ever capable of.

As the name should already tell you, this is Mio's arc in the story, as this is where she'll officially join the harem, and as the most powerful Spirit... well, she's gotta be able to fight one battle in this story. Not to mention, the fact that Westcott has the Devil with him means that just like she's the daughter of God, the fact Westcott's got the Devil inside of him makes him the closest thing to his son.

How this movie works is that each chapter represents a phase in the fight; for this phase, we'll be starting with the Demons themselves, since if there's anything that should go first, it should be them. The most important thing I'll add? You might be wondering, if this is the end, what am I going to do about the other Spirits' Ethereal Forms?

My answer to that? Simple... they're all gonna show up! How they will show is a secret, but I can say the way it works won't be the same as with Tohka and Origami, simply because trying to cram multiple scenarios like theirs' will make things a bit messy ^^; *chuckles awkwardly*

Anyways, that's the deal with the Ethereal Forms, so keep your eyes out for it.

Now, let's get this battle started!

() - Angel Talking
[] - Archangel Talking
{} - Demon King Talking
«» - Spirit's Code Name
○ - Important Term, Phrase, or Detail
「」 - Insert Song Beginning, or Ending
【】 - Voice made by an Announcement, or through an Announcer
 devast - Electrical Voice or Machine Speaking

Chapter 73, Movie Chapter/Finale: Mio Salvation, Part 1

The bell sound went off again, but unlike the times before, the end result of the sound was very different as everyone suddenly showed a surprise look.

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Mio turned her head, making the Electric Spirit stare in confusion... until the moment she realized what that meant.

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[The time is now!]

The imagery of a Sephirot Tree formed into the sky, only for it to flip upside down as it turned black, showing its true form.

...The Tree of Death, the Qliphoth.

"What's going on?" Shido wondered, fear across his face.

"No... he's back!" Mio panicked.

Westcott's laughter began echoing across the entire City, right as the Spacequake Alarms went off.

"Quick, someone get a reading on this! Something's happening!" Ryouko ordered.

Typing on the screens, a result was found.

"Analysis complete, the readings match that of an Inversion at a stable level... it's a Demon reading!" Kawagoe announced.

"Demons... so, he's finally throwing down the hammer." Ryouko replied, her face full of sweat.

Each of the circles on the floating Qliphoth Tree began to spark, before immediately firing something towards the ground. Upon striking the ground, the shadowy creatures from each date had finally revealed themselves.

"What are those things?" Maria asked, shaking in fear.

"I'm not completely sure, but considering what they just came from... I think we're seeing the real deals." Marina theorized.

The Spirits all looked at her.

"No way, these things are real Demons!?" Mana exclaimed in shock.
As if to use their panicked state to stab the wound further, the Demons grabbed their shadowy skin, and suddenly began ripping it off. The loud sound of shredding could be heard as their true forms were revealed.

Keeping the unique differences between them, the dark non-black colors of every Spirit's Inversion (except for the one representing Kurumi's) were seen as the colors of the Demons' skins, along with eyes resembling hypnotic swirls. They had jagged, zig-zag shaped teeth, with long, sharp, fork-like tongues whipping around without an end; a heated liquid of green, black, purple, and brown shades were dripping/flying out.

"Oh god..." Tohka breathed, turning a bit green.

Sandalphon manifested by Tohka's side as a purple orb of light, "staring" at the purple-colored Demon.

("Nahemah... no doubt about it, he's the real one. This is the true form of the Demon King!") She exclaimed, shaking in anger.

{"I know you are, but what are you!?"} Nahemah mocked, cackling as he said it.

All of the Demon Lords suddenly screamed feral shrieks from their mouths, unleashing an explosive shock wave that destroyed the entire area in an instant. Seeing the sight of flying Reiryoku about to pummel the evacuating citizens, Ryouko turned to Kannazuki.

"Quick, the Yggdrafoliums!" She ordered.

"Right!" He replied, putting on his signature headset.

The Fraxinus removed its invisible realizer's effects, and instantly shot all of its Yggdrafoliums.

"Bound Warp!"

A large barrier formed across the city, leaving everyone to run to the shelters under its cover... though the first wave of attacks was enough that it was already cracking!

"The Yggdrafoliums have taken 13% damage, another hit like that could completely destroy them!" Kanzaki warned.

Hearing the transmission, Satan began to laugh.

{"Sounds like fun!"} Satan shouted in glee.

"Is he going to... damn it! Artemisia, deploy all available AST members immediately! Don't let him do what he's trying to do!" Ryouko ordered.

"Understood!" Artemisia replied.

Everyone in the AST was instantly deployed, flying towards the area that Satan was... only for shadows to suddenly rise up as Lucifuge began to multiple form them.

{"Going somewhere?"} Lucifuge mocked.

"Elohim!"

Lucifuge suddenly turned his head, and saw a familiar black-haired Spirit rushing at him.
"Zafkiel!"

Gunshots began firing off at the army of Lucifuge clones, freezing them all as the Nibellcole began hitting them with shots. The real deal flew away, growling a bit.

"We've got no choice... everyone, we need to stop the Demons!" Tohka warned.

"Everyone, go after the Demon that shares their Demon King's name, it's our best shot at taking them down!" Nia agreed.

All of the Sephira Spirits rose their hands into the air, followed by familiar glows.

"Ehyeh!"
"Yod!"
"El!"
"Elohim Gibor!"
"Eloah!"
"Adonai Tzabaoth!"
"Elohim Tzabaoth!"
"Shaddai El Chai!"
"Adonai Melek!"

Everyone formed their Astral Dresses, and instantly flew off to counter their respective Demons, with a panicked Mio looking around, unsure of what to do. The others all changed into their Astral Dresses, and instantly circled around her.

"Huh?" Mio blinked.

"They might go after you, so we'll watch your back!" Rio promised.

"Uh... yeah, thanks." Mio replied, still giving a nervous sweat.

Mayuri gave a nervous sweat as the Spirits finally began to intercept their Sephira's opposing Demon.

"The question is... can they even fight those monsters?" She questioned.

"Eh?" Mana blinked.

Tohka swung a slash wave with Sandalphon, with Nahemah not even bothering to evade the attack. The energy hit him, only to scatter into harmless particles.

"What!?" Tohka gasped.

Yoshino unleashed an icy cyclone from Zadkiel, followed by Kotori firing a Megiddo blast, and the Yamai twins using their Raphael's arrows. All three Demons were hit by the attacks, but just like Nahemah, the attacks didn't do anything.

{"That tickled!"} The Demons said in unison.

They all unleashed their own versions of their elements, all striking their opposing Spirit hard, and shredding/shattering parts of their Astral Dresses when they did.

Seeing what just happened, Origami immediately aimed Metatron at Satan, firing a continuous storm
of light beams.

"I can't let him destroy the barrier!" She screamed, trying to push herself.

{"Too late... I already did."} Satan smirked, dark steam leaving his mouth.

Origami suddenly heard a huge shatter, right as Satan began to cackle. A sudden storm of light exploded across the City, making buildings explode, and causing many to scream as their lives were... instantly snuffed out.

"No..." Origami breathed, tearing up.

Coughing through the dust, Artemisia and the AST got out of the rubble, only to see some of their own lying limp on the ground.

"They're... dead..." Saya realized.

"Damn those Demons, they'll pay!" Ashley roared with rage, taking to the skies again.

The other AST members followed her, having little else to say in such a horrible situation. Tohka was slammed onto the ground, with Nahemah landed on her, and grabbing her head like a stress ball.

Feeling the pain on her head, Tohka screamed loudly.

{"You can't even hurt us! The power of the Nahemah Crystal renders your Sandalphon Crystal useless! You are nothing compared to me!"} Nahemah mocked, cackling every second he did.

Origami tried to aim Metatron's blasts at Satan, firing with everything she could... only for the pale Demon to instantly teleport before her, and strike her in the gut.

'Nothing's... working...' Origami gasped.

{"Oh? Strange, it seems extra souls are living in you, perhaps even family? Such a thing... is a delightful way to break you!"} Satan smirked darkly.

Origami's eyes widened, and immediately tried to react.

{"Once again, you're too late!"} Satan laughed.

The Light Spirit suddenly frozen, and then lurched back as she felt phantom pain strike her, causing three souls to fly out of her body. The sight of her parents and Chinami's souls lingered... then shattered apart.

"No... no!" Origami cried out, eventually crashing into the ground.

Kotori screamed with anger, trying to slash against Asmodeus with all she could, even though every slash failed to do even a scratch of damage to him. Raising his arm up, he tightened it, showing pulsing veins.

{"And you're supposed to be one of the strongest beings in this world? I think you need a nap!"} Asmodeus mocked.

Kotori's head got slammed by his fist, and her Angel shattered instantly. The attack slingshot the Flame Spirit into a building's rubble, making her lose consciousness in an instant. From there, the
Astaroth pushed Yoshino into Zadkiel, Lucifuge's army overwhelmed Kurumi before trying to trap her in her shadows, Baal began turning the shreds of Natsumi's Astral Dress into snakes that constricted her, the Yamai twins felt themselves going numb as Adramelech's twin heads breathed a dangerous gas on them, Lilith screamed so loudly that Miku felt her mind break down until she collapsed, Nia felt her own manga villains attack her within her own mind, and Mukuro was locked into the ground by strong gravity.

"No, get up! Please get up!" Mio cried, covering her head as she begged for it to stop.

At that moment, the Qliphoth Tree suddenly blinked, and the non-Sephira Spirits were all knocked aside as a cage suddenly sprouted under the spot Mio was standing on. Cage-like roots bound them to the ground, while the Spirit of Origin screamed, being dragged to the non-existent circle for Choronzon.

"Mio!" Shido screamed, struggling to move.

[That's right... cry!]

The Spirit of Origin turned, hearing the vile laughter of Westcott and the Devil's voice, merged as one.

[Suffer... bleed... cry... and fall to despair as I destroy everything! Take away all your father failed to protect twice!]

Mio began to tear up, causing Shido's eyes to widen.

"How dare you..." He grunted, pushing up against the cage roots in vain.

[Are you upset with me, Shido Takamiya? It doesn't matter now. All of your efforts are for naught! Your Spirits are all defeated, and even if they weren't, they can't do a thing to my strongest Demons! I have the original Spirit in my grasp, ready to snuff the life out of in any moment, and you... you're powerless to stop me!]

Hearing this, Shido growled as he got even angrier, and began pushing enough to slightly stand.

"Is this all you can say? That suffering and pain, sadness and fear, hurt and ache are all things you enjoy!? You don't really believe such cruelty is the way of life, you just want an excuse to enjoy the sick hobby of endlessly damaging everyone and everything!" He exclaimed.

One of the cage roots snapped off, surprising the unseen Westcott, but only for a moment; before he knew it, Shido was caught by three new roots to replace the broken one.

"Tohka... Origami... Yoshino... Kotori... Kurumi... Natsumi... Kaguya... Yuzuru... Miku... Nia... Mukuro... all of you, please lend me your strength... because..." Shido begged.

"Because no matter what, I will save Mio!" He screamed, showing the situation had failed to give his heart even a shred of negativity.

As that voice echoed out, Nahemah suddenly felt him hand burn as Tohka began glowing rings of light from her body, surprising the Energy Spirit as she looked at herself.

{"It burns! Why the hell is touching her burning me so much!!"} Nahemah demanded an
answer, still screeching in pain.

The other Spirits began seeing the same glowing rings, with those who were suffering something, or had lost consciousness, all returning to normal as they suddenly felt the flow of life return to them.

"My body... it feels so light and warm!" Yoshino said in awe.

"What's happening?" Kotori questioned.

At that moment, ten orbs of light appeared from each Angel, and began circling around.

("My fellow sisters, do you see? This is what me and Metatron remembered... what we were meant to protect. Just what kind of evil can lurk within the innocent. Has this horrible man, who has revived the Demons that slaughtered our fellow Angels, finally opened your eyes!?") Sandalphon questioned.

("It has!") They all shouted together.

They all shot back into their respective Spirit, making the glows become even stronger.

("Then let us finally stop his madness! Shatter the despair, and renew this world's greatest treasure... it's hope!") Metatron screamed as a battle cry.

Hearing those words, both Tohka and Origami realized what was happening.

"Origami, this is..." Tohka stated.

"Yeah, let's lead the way for everyone else!" Origami agreed, wiping away her tears.

「Date A Live: Opening Theme」

Both of them took a deep breath, and the fated moment came.

"Ethereal... Shift!"

Tohka's body was covered in purple Energy, and once it did, she felt her Astral Dress begin to transform.

By the time it was over, she was once again in the angelic outfit that was her Ethereal Form, and the intense light she made began healing injured civilians who had been losing in a battle with death until that moment.

"Shekhinah!"

Tohka reached out to her Angel, which immediately transformed into a white version of Nahemah, with purple glowing lines. Swinging a few times, Tohka's Ethereal Form finally settled itself.

"Ethereal... Shift!"

Origami was wrapped by a white light, and her Astral Dress began transforming as well.

Like with Tohka, she was once again wearing the more angelic outfit that represented her Ethereal Form, which caused the same effect. Her Archangel's wings were currently folded, and completely clear, showing they were inactive.
"Lucifer!"

The wings lit up, and spread out to fully represent their angelic nature as their rainbow glow formed once again.

[W-what? How are you using that power right now!??]

"Everyone, this power... call it out! Activate your Ethereal Forms! We're sure you can do it now!" Tohka exclaimed.

The other Spirits were surprised.

"All of us?" Yoshino blinked.

"Both of them did it... can't hurt to try taking a leap of faith for a miracle in this kind of situation." Kotori replied.

Taking a deep breath, all nine of them shouted it together.

"ETHEREAL... SHIFT!"

Yoshino was the first to feel it, with blue ice and water swirling around her, and transforming her Astral Dress into a new form. It became light blue where it was once green, and ivory where it had been white. The dress gained some ruffled triangle-like edges that extended out to have diamond edges, while its traits had fused like the dress she had been given after being sealed, only with some clothes made of liquid-like light.

As for her hat, it had changed to become more like the cap she wore after being sealed as well, with the bunny ear bows having extended out further, and grown much larger in size, making it look like her hat had actual four ears overall. Finally, it was topped off with the same boots she wore in... well, everyone had noticed the pattern by that point, only light blue in color.

She raised her hand up, and shouted...

"Remiel!"

Water swirled around her, solidifying into what could only be described as an angelic/divine-looking vehicle shaped like a bunny, and made of light-blue platinum metal that took the form of solidified yet still flowing water.

"Whoa..." Yoshino breathed.

"About time you finally reached your true strength!" Yoshinon called out.

Hearing that, Yoshino looked to see Remiel smiling at her, showing a certain silhouette as she gave her signature laugh.

"Yoshinon... you're back... you're back!" She cried in joy.

Next up was Kotori, who was wrapped by red flames. Her usual kimono became a golden-orange color, and revealed more cleavage from her ample breasts, with platinum-pink trims at the end of the sleeves that burned with gentle flames like the movement of a wisping cloud, a pair of wraps with a red-to-orange-to-yellow, and pinkish-platinum sash wrapped around her, the shape in front now having a slight heart resemblance.
Unlike her previous forms, she no longer had her horns, which had been replaced by a pair of golden phoenix feathers, with her ribbons becoming white in color; the designs of which had become silver with sapphire blue outlines. Finally, the streamer-like scarf that wrapped around her arms had become a translucent iridescent color, and had doubled to look like she had two on each arm rather than just one, tough also had a slightly torn look to slightly look like they were burning.

She clapped her hands together, making them blaze in the colors of the rainbow.

"Samael!"

To Kotori's pleasant surprise, she got two upgraded axes, rather than just the one she had been expecting.

"I got two of them?" She said in surprise.

Kurumi was next, being hugged by black shadows that turned her outfit into Yuuki's, then added the floral designs of Shincho's outfit to it, followed by Masayoshi's cross charm necklace swinging underneath as it wrapped itself around Kurumi's neck. The final change occurred from Kinshu, who turned her Astral Dress from a black color into a white one, and adding some details from her Cassiopeia corrupted Astral Dress.

The roses in her hair becoming a beautiful bright red, and her Astral Dress' secondary color shifted from blue, to a noble shade of black, representing it was a darkness used for the forces of good, and for justice. The back of her gloves, and the tips of her boots, gained a unique crystalline clock symbol on them, before her clones' eye patches overlaid across her eyes.

One by one they vanished, and soon... the sight of a familiar golden clock appeared in both of her eyes! The left eye had the same shape as before, but the clock in her right eye instead had a 4, 3, 2, and 1 in place of the XII, III, VII, and IX respectively. The Reiryoku covered vanished, showing herself to the world once more, spinning a few times to emphasis her current form.

She made a crossing motion with her arms, and reached to grab something.

"Leliel!"

From the sky, a pair of white guns with black markings, and twin chambers fell into view. Kurumi grabbed them before finally seeing herself.

"Did... my clones tied to my Nibellcole technique and I just fuse?" Kurumi questioned.

Natsumi's body had green debris change into cloth, merging with her Astral Dress to make something new. Upon finishing, the sight of its new look was revealed to have change from its black and green color, to a white and green-tinted Platinum color.

Even more, while still generally the same, the witch like aspects were now gone, making her more like a cute magician, or a white mage as some video games would define it. Anything with a bat like theme on her outfit, or dark in nature; now had a stronger resemblance to a fairy, or something attributed to light. It could almost be said that she had been purified by those who didn't know any better.

Holding out her finger, she moved it like firing a pop gun.

"Sariel!"

What looked to be a magic wand version of Haniel appeared in her hands, making Natsumi blink.
"Uh... why do I feel my transformation was something meant for fan-service?" Natsumi questioned, feeling something was off.

The Yamai twins were pushed back to back, feeling orange winds blow around them, until they were shrouded by a small tornado. When it faded away, they saw themselves in what looked like their Astral Dress in a platinum-white color. For Kaguya, she saw accents of bright red, while Yuzuru saw the same in light blue colors; the former's focused on the dress' top half with her shoulder cape, and the latter's focused on the bottom half that had her signature shorts/mini-skirt.

For the actual design, it kept the design of the twins' usual Astral Dresses, but the various straps on their Inverse Astral Dresses were also present, though their appearance had lost any dominatrix-based aspects, instead being artistic to fit the superhero-like aspect their usual Astral Dresses had.

Also, the boots they had didn't possess the heels, nor did the sight of any chains or locks appear anywhere on her, and the gloves had simply become part of their sleeves. The light-cloth bra-like area had overlapped with that part of the Dress' "shirt", as did their stockings.

Both of them put their hands together in response.

"Anauel!"

Two bows shaped like a star with their middles, and bottom two points, stretched to assume the frame of said weapon, appeared in their hands. Kaguya's had a sharp and pointier look to its frame, while Yuzuru's was smoother and more rounded.

"Yuzuru... I'm not sure why, but it feels like we're both two and one together!" Kaguya said excitedly.

"It's as if our hearts have merged through the Raphael Crystal, as I feel it's whole right now." Yuzuru agreed, giving a warm smile.

Miku was bathed in her own sound waves, singing music during every moment the transformation began. Her Astral Dress unraveled, swirling into the energy before it came back in a new form. The flower on her crescent moon charm suddenly bloomed, which prompted the other flowers to become a lovely bright red, while the area by the crescent moon had large cherry blossom petals spread out like a feather charm, blending with the white ones.

The rest of her dress began reforming, with the skirt area revealing her legs as it merged with the two streams in the back, taking a glossy wing-like shape as it went from its yellow color, into a lovely deep indigo.

The blue changed into a golden platinum, and the rest taking a lovely blue-pink gradient; following that, her gloves became a light indigo, revealing more of her fingers, leaving them to only wrap around her low middle finger areas, and then her stockings took a similar hue before a few diamond cuts were seen. Then, her heels became lower heeled boots, with a yellow moon symbol appeared on their sides.

Her choker soon came undone, changing into a streamer-like scarf that resembled the one she wore when Shido went berserk, but it had pink start designs on it while also wrapping her arms and behind her neck. To top it all off, the area of her dress that showed her cleavage opened up a bit, showing more of it before the ruffles near it extend, with sun-like symbols forming as they glowed orange at the tips.

Raising her hand like she was making an idol pose, she took a deep breath.
"Sachael!"

Multiple indigo orbs appeared around the area, followed by two translucent keyboards made of gold light appearing by Miku's hands.

"Amazing." Miku breathed, looking at her Archangel.

Nia had silvery paper fly around her, veiling her from view as sketching like motions were seen inside. Grabbing the nun hat of her astral Dress, and pulled it off before her body glowed to showcase the change. Her normally dark-colored Astral Dress changed to become mostly platinum with bright white markings. Her sleeves shredded become short, freeing the rest of her arms, and her wrists. Her pen flew to rest on her left ear, with the crests combining behind it as a hair charm.

Her nun hat soon settled behind her, causing it to transform into a small shoulder cape, and her "underwear" soon glowed to transform itself into small shorts of sort, taking the original black scheme of her normal Astral Dress, but with the same white design lines reflecting her status as a manga artist. Finally, her church like charms shifted to look like actual objects coming from heaven, and her boots became more like those like Tohka, and the others' Ethereal Forms, normally wore.

Forming her new pen in midair, she motioned to write with it.

"Harahel!"

The evolved form of Raziel materialized in her hands, which was a golden-colored tome, making Nia look at it in awe.

"I like this thing already!" She said with a toothy grin.

Finally, yellow stardust seeped into Mukuro's body, making her eyes close before spreading her arms out. Her unique Qipao had whitened, and gained pink-tinted platinum accents across it, with even more noticeable space-based designs across it.

The bits of fluff in her sleeves, and her "socks" had small flap streamers coming from it like her main dress, though with V cuts near the end, and her boots had become more like Tohka's, only with a more divine look added to them. Finally, it was all topped off with her unique bun ribbons splitting into two, and then lengthening a bit, giving themselves something like an S-shaped curl to them.

Slowly closing her arms together, she made a motion with her hands to hold something that wasn't there.

"Jophiel!"

Her Archangel manifested itself, revealing the divine staff it had now become.

"So, this is your new form, Michael..." Mukuro remarked in awe.

At that same moment, the non-Sephira Spirits all felt their bodies get supercharged, which allowed them to shatter the cage roots that were holding them down.

"Whoa, anyone know what happened!?" Mana asked in surprise.

"I can't be certain, but... it seems that due to his will to rescue Mio, the words of hope behind Shido's promise gave you all the hope the Sephira Spirits needed to access their Ethereal Forms." Rinne theorized.
"Then, that would mean-" Shido realized.

"As we don't know how this happened for sure, this may be our only chance to win. Shido, make sure you save Mio!" Rinne shouted.

He nodded his head, looking at the non-Sephira Spirits.

"Come on everyone, let's go!" He declared.

They all nodded in reply, flying up towards the other Spirits, with the Demons all looking nervous at their Ethereal Forms.

{"GET THEM!"} Nahemah roared in rage.

Swinging a few slash waves at Tohka's form, Nahemah was backed up by Astaroth and Satna, who unleashed their own elements at their opposing Spirits.

In response, Origami curled her body, releasing a wave of concentrated light lasers.

"Eat this!" Yoshino shouted.

"Hiyah!" Tohka screamed.

A maelstrom of ice fired from Remiel's mouth, and a dozen slash waves were released by a single swing. Satan screeched in pain as the light managed to strike through him, fellow by ice freezing onto Astaroth's skin to the point it dug through it, and Nahemah having his left arm vaporized.

{"This can't be!"} Asmodeus panicked.

"Everyone!"

The Sephira Spirits all turned as Shido flew in with the others.

"Come on, we need to save Mio, together!" He exclaimed.

Everyone nodded their heads, and with anger in his voice, Nahemah shrieked loudly, causing all of the Demons to fly into each other. They melded into a shadowy mess, which then expanded into a familiar tree, causing everyone's eyes to widen as they saw...

Choronzon!

{"You aren't going to stop me this time! For the sake of my master, I shall destroy you!"} Choronzon roared.

"This time won't be any different!" Rinne exclaimed.

Choronzon's tree-like body connected to the Qliphoth symbol in the sky, swallowing Mio inside of it. More eyes opened across its rotted trunk, and with a chilling breath sound, unleashed a storm of everything while shooting off its roots.

Tohka began the attack by spinning with Shekhinah held out, cutting through the attacks like a buzz saw, allowing Origami to fly around to position herself for the perfect spot to unleash a barrage of light beams. The ultimate Demon King screamed as it felt pain, which only got worse as both Yoshino and Kotori unleashed beams of their respective elements, which gave a strange burning sensation from their conflicting temperatures.
"Let's see... found her!" Nia shouted.

Pointing to the white eye on the bottom, Choronzon screamed louder, sending an even greater barrage. Unfortunately, a bunch of shadows swallowed it up, with Kurumi's clock eyes counting down as she used up power, the newer one only decreasing when the first ran out of time.

"Nifty of this other eye to have extra storage." Kurumi chuckled in excitement.

Natsumi aimed at all of the broken shards of Choronzon's body, which instantly turned into comets that smashed into its body. The Yamai twins both spun around each other, unleashing a deadly typhoon that Miku's voice began amplifying. Spinning inside of it, Mukuro got up close to aim Jophiel at the main eye.

{"Not again!"} Choronzon's voice boomed in denial.

"Take this!" Mukuro screamed.

The beam blasted the deadly tree, which gave Mana the chance to grab Shido by his collar.

"Shido, go for it!" She cheered.

He nodded his head, with his eyes glowing as he spun around with all ten of his harem's Angels in hand. Tightening his grip on Sandalphon, he made the first slash, and then swapped to Metatron.

"Eat this, and this, and this!"

Choronzon screeched as each attack from each Angel cut through his skin, eventually opening a hole to where Mio was. The Spirit of Origin's eyes widened as she saw Shido, who instantly grabbed her cage, and pulled the bars apart.

"Mio, don't worry! I'm here!" He grunted under a smile, reaching out for her.

"Shido..." Mio breathed, with tears falling from her eyes.

{"You bastard, get out of there!"} Choronzon demanded.

Hearing that, Shido nodded his head, right as Mio grabbed his hand.

"Alright, goodbye then!" He replied.

Choronzon's eyes widened as he fell out with Mio at his side, soon fly up towards where the others were.

"Mom, do it now!" Shido screamed.

"You've got it!" Rinne replied.

Taking a deep breath, she focused her power, with the other Spirits all throwing out their hands to empower it. Choronzon's eyes widened before he charged his counterpart attack.

"Harmonic Convergence!"
"Chaotic Divergence!"

The two blasts hit, but due to the Ethereal Forms gathering together, Rinne's attack won the day, and burned right through the Demon King's body.
"Yes, we did it!" Rio cheered.

At that moment, the sound of Choronzon's voice was heard as the remains of its body kept moving.

{"You... really think that the battle... would be won-"} Choronzon questioned mockingly.

"As simple as that!??" A familiar female voice screamed.

Everyone's eyes widened at that, as it was one that normally yelled in rage at the Spirits... yet was supposed to be dead.

"That voice, it's..." Maria gasped.

"It's Ellen, but how?" Marina questioned.

Ellen, now revealed to how somehow become... or possibly had always partially been Choronzon in some manner (when considering Westcott was the Devil's reincarnation), kept laughing as she threw her roots into the sky.

The cracks already formed began pulling apart even more until finally... an evil, even larger, and black-colored version of the Deus that the group had fought after freeing Kurumi could be seen. This was the machine they nearly had to fight near the end of last year... the dreaded Diabolus!

"Time to unleash our full power!" Ellen screamed loudly.

[Yes, the beginning of the end starts now!]

Choronzon's body suddenly rooted itself inside of the Diabolus, making the machine even larger, and making spots of it glow as Choronzon's roots merged into it as an endless power source, and defense against its core.

The next round of the final battle was on the horizon.

And there you have it! Because they were the top and bottom of the Sephirot, and Mio had been with them, all it took was Tohka and Origami using their Ethereal Shifts at the right moment everyone was gaining power, and the others were able to follow. Essentially, this time it was Shido's hope that mattered, along with Mio's presence, rather than the Spirit's personal hope.

Big twist with Ellen having survived somewhat in Choronzon, huh? For anyone asks how that's supposed to make sense? Well, to answer that... it doesn't! The only logic that needs to be understood for this is Westcott is a reincarnation of the Devil, and could pull a trick like this; it isn't much different to how he could suddenly restore the Demon Kings their original forms, and merge into Choronzon in the first place.

Seems like the Choronzon Havoc arc may have gone exactly according to Westcott's plan... maybe.

You've probably noticed by now that the battles of this chapter were based on the battle scene of the Mayuri Judgment movie. I'll say now that next chapter's battle will also have traits of it as well, leaving only when Mio to show up to be otherwise, and it'll make sense when Mio
herself can finally join the battle to save the world.

Extending from that, you might be wondering if that means anything about Tohka's Full Form, right? My answer to that is... that we'll see, because who knows what will happen? For now, all that you need to know is that Choronzon returned, and seems to have fused with the supposed to be deceased spirit of Ellen, and is now fused with the Diabolus for the second round of this final battle.

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

Shido's Passive Abilities:

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 100%, MAX (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 100%, MAX (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 100%, MAX (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 100%, MAX (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - Maxed (Summon a second copy of an Angel)

Natsumi - 100%, MAX (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 100%, MAX (Flight)

Yuzuru - 100%, MAX (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 100%, MAX (Pain Reliever)

Maria - Maxed (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - Maxed (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or an object)

Rio - Maxed (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - Maxed (Share a mental link that can be turned on and off at will)

Nia - 100%, MAX (Photographic Memory)

Mayuri - Maxed (Disrupt any Reiryoku near him with a special magnetic field)

Mukuro - 100%, MAX (Safely use all 100% of his body's physical power)

Mio - Maxed (Unlocks the Sephira Spirits' remaining Ethereal Forms)
Chapter 74

This chapter is the second round of the three for this arc finale, and... I need to apologize, because like I’ve done a few times before... I forgot to say what the arc emotion was ^^; *chuckles embarrassingly* This one is unique, because the emotion in question is all of the emotions we've had up until now! That's right, the Mio Salvation arc is a culmination of everything, because with the epilogue, there will be no emotions, just a resolution to the story.

The Spirits have all awakened their Ethereal Forms, and now's the time for them to stand up against the feared Diabolus that was hinted back in the Sephira Fury arc's final chapters, only with Choronzon (who is now Ellen for reasons the heroes don't understand) having fused with it. This means it's a mashup against a bio-organic weapon fueled by the main antagonist and his wife. This is not going to be an easy battle, as the Diabolus is an upgrade of the Deus.

Now to reply to a guest review.

To Guest:
"Oh, nice to see you again ^^"

"And glad to hear you liked it, that your recovery went well, and you're welcome. As for inspiring you to try fan fiction again, that makes me happy since I know what it's like to lose faith in your writing skills. It was thanks to someone else I regained my inspiration to write again myself, so knowing I helped someone do the same feels like I've properly repaid their kindness."

"Well, I don't know how well I could teach you, but I can at least offer you some advice. While I thank you for the offer of telling me about your story, and I do have a few Yu-Gi-Oh! related favorites... I'm afraid that the series lost my interest a while back, so I apologize for that. Though that doesn't mean I might not like another story you plan in the future."

"Good luck to you with your writing! *gives you a thumb's up*"

Now, with all of that said, time to begin this chapter and reveal how Mio finally awakens her powers!

() - Angel Talking
[] - Archangel Talking
{} - Demon King Talking
«» - Spirit's Code Name
○ - Important Term, Phrase, or Detail
「」 - Insert Song Beginning, or Ending
【 】 - Voice made by an Announcement, or through an Announcer
Chapter 74, Movie Chapter/Finale: Mio Salvation, Part 2

"Mom, do it now!" Shido screamed.

"You've got it!" Rinne replied.

Taking a deep breath, she focused her power, with the other Spirits all throwing out their hands to empower it. Choronzon's eyes widened before he charged his counterpart attack.

"Harmonic Convergence!"
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"Time to unleash our full power!" Ellen screamed loudly.

[Yes, the beginning of the end starts now!]

Choronzon's body suddenly rooted itself inside of the Diabolus, making the machine even larger, and making spots of it glow as Choronzon's roots merged into it as an endless power source, and defense against its core.

"Great, now it's a bio-organic life form, my powers can't work on that!" Maria panicked.

"I don't think mine or Mayuri's can either... we're being locked up of most of our battle options the longer this is going on." Marina replied, growling a bit.

The Diabolus unleashed a hellish scream, readying itself as it began growing in size.
"Please tell me that didn't count as a jinx..." Mayuri gulped, noticing the non-Sephira Spirits paling at the coincidental timing.

「Campione: The Power of God Killing」

An alarm began to blare, making everyone see the Fraxinus arrive onto the scene.

")"Stand back everyone, we'll take that thing down! Just lend us all your strength to do it!"")
Ryouko ordered, readying the Mystletainn.

Noticing this, Rinne put her hand up.

"Everyone, we're going to transfer our power to the Mystletainn, give me it to send over!" Rinne alerted them.

"Right!" Everyone shouted.

All of the Spirits put their hands out towards the First Spirit, who soon tossed it into the ship's signature weapon.

")"MYSTLETAINN HAS BEEN FULLY CHARGED, WAITING FOR FURTHER ACTION.")

")"Convergent Magic Cannon: Mystletainn... fire at Maximum Overdrive!"")

The Fraxinus unleashed its ultimate attack at its highest level, slamming into the still growing Diabolus with all of its might. Everyone waited for signs of the damage, and after a few seconds... everyone suddenly began to worry at the lack of what they were hearing.

「Insert SongDisconnected」

It wasn't long before they got an answer to why they didn't hear anything being destroyed, which was the Diabolus eating the Mystletainn beam like slurping up a spaghetti noodle!

"It's eating the attack..." Mio gasped in horror.

Ryouko and the other staff on the Fraxinus all watched in horror, soon seeing their greatest weapon having completely backfired on them.

"You made a poor decision, and now you'll pay the price!" Diabolus shouted, simultaneously using Ellen and Westcott's voices to speak.

The Diabolus unleashed a powerful wave that shot across the city, immediately causing geysers of lava to spew out as the sky turned a dark red, with those in the shelters beginning to panic as they began shaking; the power shorting out seconds after only made their fears grow worse.

"W-what's going on!?" Yoshino panicked.

"The Diabolus... it's destroying the whole world just by existing on it..." Mio answered, her eyes shaking.

"It's what!?" Everyone exclaimed in horror.

"At this rate, Tenguu City will be the conduit that marks the world's complete annihilation by a small supernova in... less than an hour!" Mio revealed, starting to hyperventilate.
Dread and horror filled everyone's eyes as they heard this

"Quick, get us information! We need to form a plan!" Ryouko ordered, sweating heavily.

Right as she said that, the ship's systems suddenly went black as everything shut off, with sparks flying form the systems. Everyone screamed as the consoles began exploding.

"What's happening!?!" Kannazuki shouted.

"I... don't know..." Ryouko breathed, a worried look on her face.

The Diabolus' eyes lit up, causing the AST to all crash into the ground as their CR-Units struggled to protect their Maryoku.

"Come on, don't give in... we have to make it to them!" Artemisia grunted.

With the worst wave passing, the CR-Units regained their strength as they flew into sight of the battlefield. However, they quickly wished they had been late upon arriving.

Before anyone knew it, the entire Fraxinus was suddenly hit by a storm of beams that came out of nowhere, making explosions go off across its frame. The Spirits all watched in horror as the ship continued to get attacked, exploding even more until it hit the ground... then outright imploded!

"Oh my god..." Cecile breathed, covering her mouth.

"I didn't see anyone try to get out, which might mean... no one did." Leonora replied, crying as she saw the sight.

"Everyone..." Artemisia breathed, closing her eyes.

The AST leader screamed as once again, this battle made her feel powerless to do anything that wasn't watching innocent people lose their lives.

"No..." Tohka breathed.

"Those bastards, we'll make them pay!" Kurumi cried, aiming her Archangel at Diabolus.

She screamed as she fired her shots at it, managing to actually show signs of doing damage.

"It's working! Everyone, attack it at once!" Kotori shouted.

Tohka immediately slashed a hurricane of slash waves, with Origami unleashed a thick blast of light beams. Following that came a blizzard from Yoshino's hands, and Remiel's mouth. Kotori unleashed a cyclone of fire, with the Yamai twins enhanced the tempests of their combined bow attack.

Natsumi had the land rise up, then become like a pillar of nuclear energy that lacked radiation, giving Miku a chance to unleash a meteor-sized impact of her sonic scream. Nia ripped out some papers that immediately slammed pure force against the dark machine. Finishing things up, Mukuro fired her signature spatial beam attack, which had a locking effect added to it, hoping it would disrupt the Diabolus' systems.

"Give it everything!" Shido shouted, unleashing all his harem's elements in a Roaring Slash Blast Wave.

Mana screamed as she fired off a void blast, with the Arusu sisters and Mayuri combining their elements to make an unstable reaction against the diabolic machine. Finishing things up, Rio and
Rinne blasted out a surge of their power, turning it into a swirling stream.

Everything reacted together, creating a powerful flash that engulfed the Diabolus' body inside of it.

"Nothing could survive that." Artemisia remarked.

However, she was proven wrong when the Diabolus showed it did survive, albeit with incredible damage across its entire body.

"Holy crap! It took that all, and survive it!" Mana exclaimed.

"The good news is the attacks are working, let's just hit it again to-" Mayuri replied.

Suddenly, the Diabolus glowed as it immediately healed from the damage, having Choronzon's roots extended to become replacements over the damaged areas. Seeing this, everyone gasped at the sight.

"No way!" Natsumi exclaimed.

"Does this mean any damage we do will just be undone?" Miku worried thought aloud.

"You misunderstand, the attacks did work." Mio clarified.

Everyone looked at her, while she stared at the Diabolus with a deep focus in her eyes.

"Your attacks disrupted its flow of power, but there was just too much for your scattered attacks to physically destroy its body, letting it recover. You'll need more, and there's only one way to do that.” Mio explained.

She immediately grabbed Tohka's hand, confusing her and the others... until they saw their Astral Dress start to glow. All of them created a ring in the air, which soon overlapped above Tohka, and created a rainbow of energy within it.

That energy rained down onto Tohka, causing her Astral Dress to change back to its original form, but then start changing again.

"What's happening?" Tohka asked, looking surprised.

"Tohka, you represent the Sephira of Malkuth, which is tied to the Earth... that makes you the only one that can unite the full power of the Spirits into one vessel. At least, unite it in the sense that I'm making you use it." Mio explained.

"I can... feel a new strength!" Tohka noticed, looking at herself.

At that moment, the Diabolus began charging up an attack, which caused the nearby buildings to break apart. Tohka gasped as she saw where it was aimed.

"The Diabolus is about to attack us!" She warned.

"No, we're defenseless and immobile until I can finish this!" Mio panicked.

"We're what!?!" Everyone screamed in horror.

A storm of Dark Reiryoku fired off from the Diabolus' entire body, and right as it was about to slam into the group... Artemisia and the AST all flew into their path, uniting their powers into a combined territory.
"Artemisia, thank god with your timing!" Mana smiled.

She smiled at them, only for the group to see their territory immediately shatter, and then their CR-Units burst apart, making them all fall to the ground.

"Everyone, no!" Maria shouted.

"This is... all we can do..." Saya grunted.

"Please, don't let our efforts be in vain!" Mikie begged, soon hitting the ground.

Seeing the sight, Tohka's eyes widened.

"EVERYONE!"

「Date A Live II: Opening Theme」

Mio and Shido were blown away, with the others covering their eyes as the transformation began. Still screaming, everyone saw their Archangels vanish as Tohka's Astral Dress changed into a fusion of all of theirs, making the Angels float around her.

In her other hand, Sandalphon reformed, but with a new look that made it seem like it had been given a new frame.

"What is this?" Shido asked.

"The power to use every Spirit's strengths in a single entity, but only temporarily." Mio answered.

Tohka opened her eyes, with her power flaring out of the wings that were now part of her Astral Dress, and half of the Angels placing themselves on either side of her body.

"This... is the Full Form!"

Diabolus readied itself, and opened slots on its body to reveal more weapons.

"Zafkiel!"

Out of nowhere, the Diabolus' colors inverted, showing it had been frozen in time.

"She used my powers!" Kurumi gasped.

"Of course, this is what Mio meant by our powers being too scattered. Now they're all in one place!" Kaguya realized.

Holding up her two swords, Tohka readied herself as time resumed around the deadly machine. The Diabolus unleashed a storm of shots, only for Tohka to circle her swords around her, creating a wormhole that ate the attacks, then sent them all right back!

Everyone cheered as this happened.

"Raphael!"

She swung her swords like an X-shape, which caused a tornado of energy shots to slam into the Diabolus, and push it back.

"Camael!"
"Zadkiel!"

Tossing her two swords, they slashed across the machine's arms, burning and freezing the limbs entirely.

"Time to finish this!" Tohka shouted.

Raising her arms up, she whistled a bit, making her two Angels start to curve like boomerangs.

"Sandalphon!"

She caught the sword in her right hand, and it glowed.

"Shekhinah!"

The Archangel flew into her left hand, also glowing the same way.

"Angels Unite!"

Tohka zoomed forward at the Diabolus, which immediately roared before charging at her covered in a thick coat of Dark Reiryoku that vaporized everything in its way.

"Time to meet... your end!" Tohka screamed, glowing with everyone's color.

Spinning around, every Angel managed to attack at once, leaving a huge burst of rainbow to explode across its chest.

Following this, the Diabolus froze in place, making everyone stare as they waited, hoping for the result that they wanted to occur. A few seconds later... the Diabolus' body suddenly began to swell and bubble, making the machine begin to flash.

"This can't be happening...” Westcott and Ellen's voices screamed together.

The Diabolus exploded into nothing but thick white smog, right as Tohka's Full Form vanished, changing back into her Ethereal Form.

' Insert Song End ' 

Everyone cheered as they saw the DEM's greatest weapon get destroyed.

"I did it!" Tohka cheered.

"We've finally stopped the DEM!" Origami cheered in reply.

As everyone cheered... they failed to realize something until a minute or two passed. When it finally did, they saw the world was still with a dark red sky that had been cracked in places, and the land was still getting worse and worse.

"Hold on, if we won... why's nothing going back to normal?” Natsumi questioned.

Mio blinked in confusion, and then suddenly screamed in pain as she held her head, getting everyone's attention.

"Did you really think that this was over?"

Everyone's eyes turned at the sight of the white smog, which suddenly turned black, and began
swirling together.

"The whole point of Westcott letting me reside in him was to revive me, and while I did want to honor that deal... he never said anything about me continuing on my own if he died, and I had already recovered enough to restore myself!"

"The... the Devil, he's... he's alive..." Mio breathed in horror.

At that moment, the smog hit the ground, causing the city to start rupturing in that area as it became an incubator. Following that, a hand rose up, signifying the unseen monster was finally going to reveal its true form to the members of Ratatoskr.

Rising from the ground, the Devil finally came, revealing a humanoid with a six-legged Centaur body. The Devil's skin was a dark crimson red, having neon yellow eyes that almost seared into your soul. His head was hairless, having six black horns resembling a Ram's that were placed on the top, behind his ears, and the bottom of his chin. He had also six arms, which (alongside his feet) had claws like a dragon's, finishing with a spiked tail.

"Oh god... that's definitely the Devil." Yuzuru remarked, noticing the three limbs that numbered the same total.

Laughing loudly, the Devil glared at them all.

"Now, the time has come... I shall destroy this world like I destroyed Heaven! I will finally achieve my goal of wiping out all of reality!" The Devil cackled, opening his mouth to reveal a sickle green viper as his tongue, and the asymmetrical, purple-colored fangs that were his teeth.

"We won't let you!" Nia shouted.

All of the Spirits flew at the Devil, ready to finish him off, until...

"WEAK!"

A sudden wave of power flashed by, making all of the Spirits freeze in place, and then before anyone could react.

They all screamed as their Astral Dresses were suddenly shred apart, and slammed to the ground with fatal force, leaving only Mio and Shido unharmed, with those watching only sure Shido was safe because he had been holding Mio since he rescued her from Choronzon's prison.

"No..." Shido breathed, feeling his eyes shake.

As the Spirits lay on the ground with lifeless eyes, they suddenly twitched, feeling the life return to them.

"W-what happened?" Tohka asked.

("This is... the end for me...") Sandalphon said weakly.

Tohka looked, seeing her Angel begin to dissolve away, leaving the purple spirit of the being it once was to follow. Tohka gasped as she held it, with everyone else doing the same with their Angels.

"Sandalphon, what's happening to you!?" Tohka asked, shaking with fear.

("I... couldn't let you die, when... only my time had already ended. Goodbye, my..."
friend..."

Sandalphon cried, soon going near silent.

At that moment, Tohka's Astral Dress disappeared, restoring her prior outfit as her eyes returned to their human appearance.

"Their powers... they're gone." Ashley gasped.

"He didn't attack them, and that was enough to take them all out." Katie whimpered, holding onto Artemisia.

The Devil laughed at that, raising his hands up.

"Now, the world known as Earth... I command you to start dying! Show the world its fate, starting with this pathetic city, and the country it sits on!" The Devil commanded.

The darkened sky began spreading to the rest of the world, which caused those areas to suddenly experience natural disasters of all kinds.

Tornadoes... hurricanes... blizzards... firestorms... earthquakes... tsunamis... floods... sandstorms... volcanic eruptions... forestation... famine... rampaging wildlife... complete failure of technology... all of which were even happening in places they could never occur.

"Father..." Mio breathed, crying at what she saw.

As this happened, she suddenly fell, which made Shido go after her, though he soon crashed as his harem's loss of powers slowly began to affect him.

"Mio, wake up! Please!" He begged.

She started to disappear into rainbow light, making Shido panic as he saw it.

"Mio, I'm so sorry... I failed you... I failed my father... I failed everyone. The Devil is going to destroy everything, because I couldn't do anything... I was just a useless extra without the power to do anything but support you, so such an end... what could be more fitting for me?" Mio apologized, crying as she neared her end.

"Don't you ever say that!" Shido screamed.

Mio looked at him, feeling her vision starting to blur as she began to go blind with her coming death.

"How can you say you didn't do anything? All your life, that's what you've been doing!" Shido shouted.

"H-huh?" Mio was confused, and struggling to do even hear him now.

"Even with your false memories... you never gave up looking for me and Mana never gave up protecting us! You never gave up fulfilling the wise of my father, and your father in either of is forms! You never gave up the search for the Spirits! From the very start, never giving up has been who you are!" Shido exclaimed.

Mio suddenly felt her eyes widen, and her deteriorating senses began to stop.

"The truth is... no matter what you are, who you are, or what you do? You'll always have been someone that I'll always be proud of! Even after all the pain, the suffering, and the tragedies you've had to live that were real and fake... you've never lost your hope! And because of that, after getting
to know who Mio Takamiya is after these last few months?" Shido continued.

"I'm pretty sure just like the rest of my girls... I love you." He admitted.

Mio's eyes widened at that, feeling tears in her eyes.

"Shido..." She breathed.

At that moment, the maelstrom of confusion in her heart began to settle, and as it cleared, she finally realized it.

"I... I feel the same way, I love you too! If only I had realized this sooner, and hadn't let things fall to this! But now, I can't deny it... I love you more than anything!" Mio cried, finally confessing the feelings she couldn't deny anymore.

Knowing she could disappear at any moment, she moved forward, and took the chance she might never get again... and kissed Shido.

「 Tenkai Knights: Arrival of the Tenkai Wolf 」

At that moment, her body began to glow with an iridescent sheen, surprising both Shido and herself.

"Mio?" He asked in confusion.

"W-what's happening to me? I feel... something growing!" Mio gasped.

A huge wave of power blasted out, creating an odd sensation in everyone, while managing to make the Devil stumble upon making contact with the ultimate Demon.

"What is this!?" The Devil demanded.

Mio's body began floating into the air, before it slingshot itself to the area where the Qliphoth symbol had been. The very Tree of Death representation appeared... before it turned white, and flipped the other way, turning it into a Sephirot representation!

The red sky and the cracks suddenly vanished, undoing all the disasters across the world. The light that began echoing even caused those who had died to suddenly get up, having had their life returned to them.

"No... no, it can't be! How is this possible!"

From the Fraxinus' wreckage, Ryouko and her crew all got up, realizing they were alive.

"Wait a minute, if that's Mio up there, then..." Ryouko gasped.

"She's awakening!" Kannazuki realized.

The Sephirot suddenly shot light at each of the Sephira Spirits, which the ripples caused the Non-Sephira Spirits all felt their pupils whiten once again, regaining the elemental aspects of their powers.

In return, the Sephira Spirits suddenly shot some remnant Reiryoku from their hearts, alongside Shido, into the Sephirot.

"These are the 10 Sephira, and with the bonds formed between them... the 22 Paths have been forged, now all of the aspects are complete. The true infinite light of Reiryoku shall awaken..." Mio chanted, almost as if it wasn't her speaking right now.
"Kabbalah!"

A massive surge of Reiryoku exploded around her, making her look like a rainbow star, shining brightly while somehow not blinding a soul.

Curling into a ball, Mio's body began spinning in place, and that's when everyone saw it happen... her Astral Dress began to form as it glowed around her current outfit, and made them vanish to replace them.

"She did it!" Shido realized, smiling brightly.

A pure shiny platinum sheet formed around her, taking the form of a dress-like Toga that you'd expect to see on a Goddess, suddenly blooming leaves of the same color across the upper rims. Gold accents began drawing themselves around the dress, which stretched near the neckline to create a connecting necklace, it was gold in color, with a shape representing the three veils of the Sephirot, having its tip connected by two strings to the two strands near her neck.

In her hair, the sight of more leaves formed, soon blooming into flowers that by extension, braided some of her hair like with Rinne's, only hers weren't as long. Branching out came the sight of golden ear pieces, which glittered for a brief moment. Finally, the last piece came as a ring attacked to part of her dress' back, with wings forming on each of ten spots (some hidden by her body) that had ten shapes Rio was able to recognize in an instant. Once they were formed, her dress split apart, revealing her bare feet.

Looking closer, each Sephira Spirit felt a pulse, and those ten spots were all filled with ten familiar spheres.

"Wait, are those..." Tohka gasped.

"Yeah, those are the Sephira Crystals!" Origami confirmed.

Finally opening her eyes, Mio took a look towards the Devil, who was shaking in both anger... and to his own surprise, fear. The Sephirot vanished, leaving Mio to descend near the ground, staring at the mortal enemy of her father.

"This is it Devil, because the power that my father left me... I've finally awakened it!" Mio declared, her eyes shining with her restored hope.

Everyone looked at the Spirit of Origin's awakened power, the strength that came from being the daughter of God... the strength of someone that could easily be called a Goddess, just like her current appearance.

This was the true final battle.

Oh yeah, this is it! Mio has finally awakened her full power! While it won't be next chapter that I specifically explain how she did, I think you can all tell that it had to do with that kiss that finally makes her the last member of Shido's harem. As for the others, while they may still be without their powers, I can assure you that it won't be much longer.

Next chapter will end this arc, because now... the time for Mio to fight with the Devil is here! The progenitor of the Spirits, and the progenitor of Demons will finally bring this final battle
to its ultimate conclusion! I'm already excited for the end, so I hope you all are as well, because
what happens next will need to be seen for it to be truly believed!

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^

Shido's Passive Abilities :

Tohka - 100%, MAX (Form a mana barrier automatically)

Origami - 100%, MAX (Teleport Dodging)

Yoshino - 100%, MAX (Dampen enemy territories)

Kotori - 100%, MAX (Healing from fatal wounds minus losing his head, doesn't work on
wounds caused by blunt force)

Kurumi - 100%, MAX (Hide in his shadow, and only his)

Rinne - Maxed (Summon a second copy of an Angel)

Natsumi - 100%, MAX (Transform into Shiori)

Kaguya - 100%, MAX (Flight)

Yuzuru - 100%, MAX (Weight Manipulation)

Miku - 100%, MAX (Pain Reliever)

Maria - Maxed (Restore dying/withered/dead vegetation and plant life)

Marina - Maxed (Remove toxins or other harmful substances, either from a living creature or
an object)

Rio - Maxed (Create a soothing aura of Reiryoku to reduce a sealed Spirit's anger)

Mana - Maxed (Share a mental link that can be turned on and off at will)

Nia - 100%, MAX (Photographic Memory)

Mayuri - Maxed (Disrupt any Reiryoku near him with a special magnetic field)

Mukuro - 100%, MAX (Safely use all 100% of his body's physical power)

Mio - Maxed (Unlocks the Sephira Spirits' remaining Ethereal Forms)
Hey everyone, before we start today's chapter, it's time to give you some important news. Remember when I said some of the story ideas connected to DARL might be getting axed? Well... sorry to say, but that just became official. Except for the DARL Re-Imagining, which has been heavily changed, they've all been cancelled, and won't be happening. So, to everyone who was expecting them, I'm sorry to say they won't be happening.

For the case of the Re-Imagining, it will now be more of a soft reboot for this story. That means some ideas from this story, and other others that I wanted to do for other stories that were never made, will be transferred into that one, which will also have a few new tricks of its own. I won't give away what the new story is, but... let's just say you'll get answers about this spiritual successor to DARL on April 30th :3

Anyways... time for the last chapter of the Mio Salvation movie! As last chapter showed you, we've finally had Mio unlock her powers for the final battle, and everyone else has currently had their powers destroyed by the Devil (though that might not last), leaving everyone to wonder just what the former's powers truly are. After all, while you all know due to Volume 18... no one in the story does. *snickers*

Now to reply to a guest review.

To Guest:
"Glad to hear you've fully recovered, and for the praise about my DAL stories. Even though Season 4 will be the last, I intended to make it shine the most, so I hope you'll enjoy it. As for your planned story, glad you're confident about it, since confidence is something every writer needs. However, for the part about joining us here on FFN? I'm sorry, but I honestly don't know how to help you there, so I apologize about that. I hope you figure it out."

Without any further ado, let the end of Mio Salvation commence!

() - Angel Talking
[] - Archangel Talking
{} - Demon King Talking
"Bold" - The Devil Talking
«» - Spirit's Code Name
任何形式, Phrase, or Detail
「」 - Insert Song Beginning, or Ending
【】 - Voice made by an Announcement, or through an Announcer
♀️ - Electrical Voice or Machine Speaking
Chapter 75, Movie Chapter/Finale: Mio Salvation, Part 3

Finally opening her eyes, Mio took a look towards the Devil, who was shaking in both anger... and to his own surprise, fear. The Sephirot vanished, leaving Mio to descend near the ground, staring at the mortal enemy of her father.

"This is it Devil, because the power that my father left me... I've finally awakened it!" Mio declared, her eyes shining with her restored hope.

Everyone looked at the Spirit of Origin’s awakened power, the strength that came from being the daughter of God... the strength of someone that could easily be called a Goddess, just like her current appearance.

"Amazing..." Seigo breathed, watching from the safety of Ratatoskr’s base.

Looking at the sight, everyone gathered around Shido, who was smiling at the final member of his harem's declaration.

"I'm confused, how did Mio unlock her powers?" Miku questioned.

"Shido hadn't used the key." Nia said.

Everyone looked at her, making her turn to them in response.

"I'm only guessing here, but when Shido made Mio regain her true form, he hadn't actually used the key. He just unlocked a screen door in the way. That moment you two kissed, because all of our powers had been sealed within you... that was the real key. Shido created the final path between us and Mio, and that lead to completing the Sephirot all of our powers represent." Nia theorized.

Hearing that, everyone showed surprise, and yet... it made complete sense!

"So, the key was... love!" Tohka realized.

The Devil roared in anger, with his dark power flaring out in response. As everyone watched, the sight of every Demon that the Devil ever created was revived through this dark power.

Seeing themselves surrounded, the former Sephira Spirits all shook in fear at the threat ready to maul them at any moment, with the Non-Sephira Spirits guarding them.

"That stupid being of purity and creation... why must he continue standing in my way even in his death!? I'll make sure to send you to beyond the grave so that you can share his suffering for the rest of eternity!" The Devil roared.

"No, you're the one that will be the sole suffering soul in this reality... I promise you that!" Mio retorted.

The Spirit of Origin held her hands up, her rainbow-colored Reiryoku began to shine, catching everyone's attention as it shined across the wrecked Tenguu City.

"Blooming flowers that represent life and the cycle of things born anew, I ask you to create a utopia on this earth that bends to my will, and shatters away all evil! Bend the walls of reality for this one area, bearing my will to bring peace and hope!" Mio chanted.

"Samsara of Paradise: Ain Soph!"
The land suddenly flashed for a moment, and was changed into a realm with a huge tree-shaped tower with flowers and branches that pierced the sky. The surrounding landscape now had a monochrome, chessboard-like appearance.

"You think this little trick can stop me!? My Demon army, slaughter everyone and everything in your path!" The Devil laughed, pointing his finger forward upon making his command.

The Demons all jumped, however... they all began to scream in pain, shaking as if something was ripping them apart.

"What? My army should be killing you all, so why are they writhing in agony!?" The Devil roared.

"The power of Ain Soph... as long as something exists within this area, the laws of reality are mine to freely manipulate. If I had to compare it to anything, it's the fully evolved version of the Realizer's territory technology." Mio explained.

Everyone's eyes widened at that, even the Devil's.

"Whoa, so this is the power of Mio's Angel?" Origami remarked.

"No, this is just the power from one of my three Angels." Mio replied with a smile.

"T-three!?" Everyone exclaimed.

Reaching towards her Astral Dress' Sephirot Ring, it began to glow before the Sephira Crystals split into two, and glowed brighter than ever.

"Now, let's return your powers, better than ever!" Mio declared.

She tossed the orbs at them, making the Sephira Spirits all gasp as they felt their Sephira Crystals bond with them once again. However, this time... they felt different than before, as this proved itself as Tohka became the first to regain her Astral Dress.

This time, she had a new chest plating added on, with changed shoulder guards, and her ribbon permanently evolving into a new shape.

"What's happening?" She breathed.

And with that, she felt a strange urge that made her raise her hand, and then...

"Malkuth!"

In her hand came a new version of Sandalphon, with a changed sword handle, and the blade jutting out larger, with two extended areas of the blade near the new hilt.

"This is... my new Angel?" Tohka breathed, noticing it was named after her Sephira itself.

Following her new powers, the others all found their evolved Astral Dresses and new Angels were the same thing. Not only that, but they felt power beyond their Ethereal Forms, likely because this power came from the Spirit whose essence was its very power source.

"Don't bother trying to destroy these powers, Devil, because if you couldn't destroy mine? Then you can't destroy theirs when I've evolved them from the forms you were able to shred into nothing!" Mio warned.
"Who cares? I don't need to destroy those powers to defeat you, not when I can force my own army back onto its feet with my own strength!" The Devil countered.

Flaring his aura out, the Demons finally managed to ignore their pain, allowing them to move.

"Destroy the Spirits, and that bastard's daughter!"

All of the Demons rushed at the Spirits, but they were all suddenly warped to Mio's side, making them turn to face them all. Spreading their wings, they all flew at the Spirit Team, screaming a violent sound as they did.

「 Hundred: My Prayer 」

"Everyone, are you with me?" Mio asked.

"Yeah, all of us." Shido said for everyone, who smiled as their way of telling him.

Mio smiled, and held her right hand up, while resting her left across her chest. For the AST watching from below, it looked like she was singing.

"Great Arcadia that protects all forms of life within unseen walls that can't cage them, shine your endless radiance across the corrupted stain known as sin, and cleanse the world for a great future!" Mio chanted.

"Sanctuary of All Things in Creation: Ain Soph Aur!"

A huge flower bud was seen in the sky, which then suddenly had various lights flowing it that manifested as the form of the Holy Mother Mary.

"Now, please... bloom! Mio announced.

The flower opened up, creating a powerful rain of light that took the form of every Angel that the Demon army had killed, including the souls of the Spirits' original Angels.

"Wait, this is... get away!" The Devil warned his army.

Unfortunately, he was too late to do anything, and the representation of the Angels smashed into all of the Demons, annihilating all but the ones who had taken the form of Demon Kings in the battles between the Spirits and the DEM.

However, the light also ended up healing everyone on the ground, realizing those on the ground were Mio's friends and allies.

"No, you killed nearly all of my Demonkin!" The Devil raged.

Smashing his six hands into one spot, he began charging a dangerous amount of dark power, and then threw it forward.

"Tzimtzum!"

Everything within the range of the attack was swallowed by a void resembling a black hole, putting everyone on edge at what seemed like the fatal finisher to their efforts in saving the world.

"Power of nothingness that exists opposite to Infinity, as this nightmare stands before me, give me strength by not gaining the power to stop it, but rendering this force that threatens me into the
same absence you represent!” Mio chanted.

"Illumination of the Void: Ain!"

Holding her hands together, a pure white sphere of light formed in her palms. Reeling her right hand back, she threw it forward, aiming it right at the Tzimtzum.

The light expanded, and everything it passed by was suddenly restored to its original form, possibly due to the world of Ain Soph working with its fellow Angel's powers to restore it to its previous form. Smashing against the dark attack, Ain's light instantly swallowed it up, and made the Devil's eyes widen.

"Impossible!" The Devil screamed.

The ultimate Demon was struck hard, making him scream in pain.

「 Insert Song End 」

"Whoa... what does that Angel do!?” Mana asked.

"Ain is a formless Angel, and the strongest one I have. I used it to erase the damage he did, and all of the evil he's left behind.” Mio answered.

"It erases things? Oh man, so we beat the Devil!?” Rio gasped.

Mio shook her head, pointing to a rising silhouette in the smoke of her Angel's attack.

"The Devil's too strong for me to destroy that way, we still have to do this the hard way... and I think he's going to get serious after what I just pulled on him.” Mio clarified, staying on-guard.

She was proven right as the Devil survived, with nothing except a white scar on his chest. His surviving Demons were flying around him, and like the Devil himself, they all had murderous looks on their faces.

"Whoa... they seem pretty angry.” Mayuri noticed.

A loud roar is heard from the Devil, causing everyone to become a bit nervous as he and his Demons began emitting their dark auras once again.

"We will destroy you all!” The Devil screamed.

"This is it everyone... the Demons have made their last stand, and now we're be the ones to finally end that stand! It's time to end this battle once and for all!” Mio exclaimed.

"Right!” Everyone replied.

Each of the Demons roared before rushing at their opposing spirit, with the Spirits in question doing the same as they charged towards them.

Tohka flew towards Nahemah, who clashed with her through his bladed limbs.

{"I'm gonna cut you to pieces!”} Nahemah raged.

"Try it all you want, but it won't work!” Tohka countered.
Nahemah shrieked in response, and rushed at the Energy Spirit, swinging his arms across her body... only for his blades to shatter against her armor.

"My blades!" Nahemah panicked.

Tohka raised her Angel, which glowed with power, making it extend with a crystal blade that resembled Halvanhelev.

"Game over, Nahemah!" Tohka exclaimed.

"This can't be happening!" Nahemah screamed.

Tohka cut the Demon right down the middle, making his body swell up before it popped like a balloon full of sludge.

Origami teleported across the area as Satan kept trying to blast her.

"Sit still, damn it!" Satan demanded.

Origami completely vanished from view, causing a few flashes across the battleground. Satan tried to find her... only to feel her hands grab onto his arms.

"No, this isn't... I can't die here!" Satan panicked.

"This is for my family... so you won't hurt anyone every again!" Origami shouted.

She kicked the Demon's back, locking his movements as the impact locked up his movements. This gave her Angel the moment to fully charge its power.

"Kether!"

The beams of light all fired off, and completely vaporized the screaming Demon.

Yoshino flew on Yoshino's new body, Chesed, as Astaroth rushed after her.

"Come here you brat, and let me kill you!" Astaroth roared.

"Yoshinon, are you ready?" Yoshino asked.

"You got it!" Yoshinon replied.

Turning around, they immediately charged ahead... only to vanish from view, catching the Demon off-guard.

"What the!?"

A huge blizzard blew at Astaroth, sending him flying into the air.

"Chesed!"

Yoshinon used the Angel's body to charge, giving a mighty scream before smashing a hole through Astaroth's body.

"N-no way... this is..." Astaroth choked, soon melting away.
Kotori kicked off a few buildings, making Asmodeus looked around everyone, and throw him off.

"Will you stop moving!?" Asmodeus screamed angrily.

"Sure thing!" Kotori smirked.

Hearing that, the Demon suddenly realized that was a red flag, and began burning to impede her efforts... only to fall right into Kotori's trap!

"Gevurah!"

She immediately fired blazing beam from her Angel's tip, which began devouring the ones Asmodeus was creating. The Demon screamed as he felt his own flames being used against him.

"Damn you little brat, damn you!"

Asmodeus raged before being scorched to ashes.

Kurumi flew around Lucifuge's attacks, while also evading his clones.

"You can't run from me forever!" Lucifuge warned.

"Oh, who said I was?" Kurumi inquired.

At that moment, a bunch of shadowy hands suddenly reached out to grab Lucifuge and his clones, making the original Demon see a bunch of Kurumi clones laughing at him.

"No way, how can you make this many!?"

The Demon demanded.

Kurumi giggled before holding her Angel up.

"Binah!"

"You can't do this to me!"

Lucifuge roared.

The shadowy storm of bullets swallowed Lucifuge before her clones dragged him and the rest of his copies into the shadows.

Natsumi danced around on her broom as Baal unleashed his morphing fingers at her, failing to hit her with even a single whip flail of his hands' odd appendages.

"Sit still and let me kill you!"

Baal shouted.

"Said no one over." Natsumi retorted.

Holding out her Angel, she unleashed a green beam before disappearing.

"Netzach!"

Baal looked around, his voice devolving into a growl.

"You brat, come out and show yourself!"

Baal demanded, sparking electricity between his fingers.

"Who said I was hiding?" Natsumi asked.
She revealed herself, only to appear in multiple places at once.

{"Eh!?"} Baal's eyes bugged out at the sight.

Most of the Natsumi's lunged at him, before poofing into bombs that immediately counted down to zero.

{"You've gotta be kidding-"} Baal screamed.

He was blown into chunks of black ooze before he could finish his reply.

Kaguya and Yuzuru began smashing into Adramelech from both sides, slamming across the Demon's body and two heads.

{"You'll pay for that!"} Adramelech's first head shouted.

{"I swear on it!"} Adramelech's second head shouted.

He released his fatal gas at them, only for both of them to release a powerful wind that blew it away.

"Hod!"

Both of them aimed their bows at the Demon, who was caught in a field of turbulence.

{"What!?"} Both heads screamed.

Charging their arrows, the two stood side by side, then fired their arrows at the Demon's twin heads. The shots fired through, carrying the Demon through the sky, until they crossed together.

{"No!"} The first head screamed.

{"How can this be!?"} The second head screamed.

Miku unleashed a sonic scream against Lilith's, who kept raging out his voice without restraint.

{"DIE! DIE! DIE!"} Lilith ranted angrily.

Miku stopped singing to take a deep breath, doing a back flip near the ground.

"I think you need to know the true meaning of an encore is more than a repeat, but responding to the passion that's shown your way!" Miku exclaimed.

"Yesod!"

She released an even greater sound, which completely shattered Lilith's voice, and smashed the Demon hard.

{"My... my body!"} Lilith screeched.

The Demon began crumbling to dust, before breaking apart into the wind.

Nia opened her Angel's pages, being covered in a veil of papers as Beelzebub created a surge of energy shots at her.
"Prepare to meet your end!" Beelzebub declared.

"Oh no, this isn't my end... it's my beginning!" Nia countered, holding up her Angel.

It released a bright flash.

"Chokmah!"

Everything within her pages, revealed to be various sketches of the characters, objects, and etc. of the Silver Bullet manga.

"How much do you have!?" Beelzebub panicked, trying to account for everything.

"You fool, my mind has no limit!" Nia answered.

Every one of her creations flies ahead, shredding the Demon apart with every power they had. Nia marked her victory by turning around, and closing the book that was her Angel.

Mukuro rushed forward, smashing Belphegor with her Angel without rest.

"H-how can you have... so much... power!?!" Belphegor questioned, a confused look on his face.

"Because we have something worth fighting for, and you lack that because you only seek to destroy!" Mukuro loudly shouted.

She spun her Angel in circles, creating a bunch of meteors from solid gravity.

"Tiphereth!"

The meteors slammed into the Demon, making him scream.

"H-how can... Humans be so... strong?!" Belphegor wondered, feeling his vision fade.

He smashed into the ground with increased gravity, soon compressing into the ground as a puff of smoke.

Rio charged ahead, knocking Belial into the ground.

"You little brat!" Belial roared.

"I'd rather be a brat, because you're just a monster!" Rio answered.

Focusing her hand out, she unleashed a beam powered by her emotions, making Belial scream in pain.

"Full power!" She screamed.

The intense feelings she poured it completely vaporized the Demon.

Mayuri had Abaddon locked in a bind of lightning, making him scream.

"Let me go you living piece of scum!" Abaddon demanded.
"I'll let you go, when you reach the land of the dead that is!" Mayuri answered, focusing her electrical charge.

Abaddon screamed as the electricity got stronger.

"Thunderstorm!"

The clouds focused above her, then shot a huge streak of electricity at the Demon, which fried him to just a pile of ashes.

Maria rose up her hands, causing a mass of plants to restrict Leviathan's movements.

{"Disgusting flora, get off of me!"} Leviathan hissed.

"You underestimated the power of plants, just like you underestimated us!" Maria shouted, accelerating their growth.

The plants constricted the Demon, and then made Leviathan pop like a balloon, leaving only a bunch of demonic scales across the ground.

"Didn't expect that to happen." Maria blinked.

Marina smashed her Demon opponent excitedly, with Mammon barely able to see as her strikes blinded one of his eyes.

{"Ugh... crud, why'd I have to get you?"} Mammon groaned.

"Three reasons for that. For the first?" Marina replied.

She gave Mammon a strong right hook to the mouth, breaking some of the Demon's teeth out.

"You're really ugly." She stated.

Then she knee'd him right in the jawline, leaving a dent in his skin.

"The second, you're a fragile wimp." She continued.

She finally began gathering her element, hovering a mass of acid overhead of Mammon, who's eyes widened.

{"Uh oh..."} He whimpered.

"And the third? You're evil, and we all hate that." Marina finished.

The poison was swung down, and wrapped around him, outright eating the Demon like a hungry shark.

Mio, Mana, Rinne, and Shido were all seen standing against the Devil, who opened his mouth, making his lower jaw split, and then reveal another eight rows of teeth underneath the horrible beast.

"Cocytus Breath!"

He unleashed a chlorine gas from his mouth, forcing the quartet to evade.
"Alright, let's see how you like this!" Mana shouted.

"Roaring Abyss!"

Mana threw her fist out, creating a powerful Void strike, which heavily burned the ultimate Demon's face.

"You think that's enough to hurt me!?" The Devil screamed.

"How about this?" Rinne replied.

"Harmonic Convergence!"

The rainbow beam struck the same area that Mana had hit, making an explosive reaction.

"And here's a taste of my own!" Shido exclaimed, using his Over-Limit Spirit Ascension.

"Harmonic Convergence!"

The Devil was struck back again, and as this was happening, Mio appeared right before him, holding out her hand.

"Da'ath Strike!"

Various astrological symbols tied to the Sephirots' circles launched from her hands, slamming into the Devil's body with extreme force as he was knocked onto his back.

"Hey, you have room for more?" Origami asked, the other Spirits following behind her.

"Good timing, having us all here means we've got a surefire way to take this guy down." Mio smiled as she saw them.

Holding out her hand, a bit of everyone's Reiryoku went inside of Shido.

「 Yu-Gi-Oh! 5Ds: Clear Mind 」

Shido's eyes widened before his Spirit Ascension took a form based on Mio's colors.

"This is..." Shido realized.

"The greatest form of your Spirit Ascension, the Ultimate Spirit Ascension." Mio confirmed.

The Devil got up, roaring at them all

"I'll kill you all, witness my full wrath against this world!" The Devil screamed.

He began roaring loudly, gathering every disaster he made earlier around Tenguu Crater, and gathering their power in his hands, and his upper four legs.

"Qliphoth Mayhem!"

"Shido, attack him right now!" Mio immediately alerted him.

While unsure, he held out his hand.

"Sephiroten Strike!"
As the Devil prepared his attack... he was suddenly frozen, with his movements completely locked up.

"W-what is this!?" The Devil demanded, confusion in his eyes.

All of the Spirits began to glow with a Sephirot symbol appearing on his body, alongside spots for the Non-Sephira Spirits to hit.

"Everyone, attack him together!" Mio exclaimed.

"Let's do it!" They shouted in unison.

The non-Sephira Spirits all rushed ahead first, targeting their spots with a charging rush, coated by an aura of their signature Spirit color. The Devil roared, feeling all of his horns snap in two.

"Look, this attacks' really hurting him!" Mana realized.

"Because his Demons are gone, he's vulnerable! Don't let up the attacks!" Mio answered.

Upon hearing that, she saw Origami, Nia, Kurumi, Yoshino, and Kotori all rush ahead, striking the lower five spots of the Sephirot representation.

"You... can't destroy... me!" The Devil raged, refusing to believe what was happening to him.

Following their fellow Sephira Spirits came Mukuro, Natsumi, the Yamai twins, Miku, and Tohka, who smashed the other five. This left only the middle one, which immediately prompted Mio to charge a sphere of Reiryoku into her hand.

"Shido, you and me!" Mio shouted.

"Right!" He replied.

He grabbed Mio's hand, and the two spiraled towards the Devil, who's eyes widened as they smashed a hole through his stomach. His body began cracking, making the Devil glare at them with rage.

「Insert Song End」

Everyone cheered as the Devil looked to have been slain, until...

"You... won't... win this... I refuse... to die here!" The Devil screamed, his body twitching.

The Devil's body crumpled a bit, getting everyone's attention as the horns popped inside of him. Right after that, something crawled out of the Devil, revealing what seemed to be a sphere with tentacles, and six broken horns on its head.

Right after the Devil's body dissolved away, leaving only the thing that came out to remain.

"What is that thing?" Mana asked.

"That must be where this all began, that thing... is his heart." Mio realized.

Everyone's eyes widened.

"He's a living organ!?!" Yuzuru exclaimed, strangely sounding like her sister for once.
Mio shook her head, looking at everyone.

"No, the Devil had to grow strong somehow, it couldn't match my father as it was born. This particular case of a heart would better be described as the original form of the Devil." She clarified.

"In other words, this is the real Devil." Kurumi realized.

"And now that is has... we must make sure he can never come back, as I think this is why we failed before." Mio replied.

Hearing that, every Spirit looked at one another.

「 Date A Live: Opening Song - Instrumental 」

Gathering around Mio, she immediately activated her Ain Soph once more. She did it just in time, as the Devil's Heart tried to leave, only to be cut off from his escape route.

"No, let me out of here!" The Devil screamed, panicking.

"You're done, and it's time for you to finally get the ending you deserve." Mio said, an intense glare on her face.

Mio held out her hands, and an outline of the Sephirot appeared on the Ain Soph's tree. All of the Spirits began moving to an area they represented, making the Devil begin to shake as he futilely tried to escape the Ain Soph's realm.

When they all finally found their spots, the tree bloomed into a rainbow of colors, becoming a true Tree of Life.

"Connecting to the Earth..." Tohka chanted.

"Then reaching to the crown of Heaven..." Origami chanted.

"Giving mercy to the innocent..." Yoshino chanted.

"Or justice to the guilty..." Kotori chanted.

"As we search for an understanding..." Kurumi chanted.

"We find victory in our hearts..." Natsumi chanted.

"Then search for glory..." Kaguya and Yuzuru chanted.

"Leading to a foundation we set..." Miku chanted.

"Created by the wisdom we gain..." Nia chanted.

"Which shows us new beauty in the world..." Mukuro chanted.

"The values that are positive..." Maria chanted.

"The values that are negative..." Marina chanted.

"Seeing what is real..." Rio chanted.

"And cherishing what could be more..." Mayuri chanted.
"Holding strong hopes in our hands..." Rinne chanted.

"Finding the infinite from the nothingness..." Mana chanted.

"The limitless aspect is now complete..." Shido chanted.

With that, everyone's eyes opened up, with all of their power channeling to Mio, and then to one another, creating vines from the tree that created twenty-two connections between the spots they stood before.

"For this is the path of Knowledge we've gained together!" Mio chanted, holding out her hand.

"STOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOP!" The Devil screamed in vain.

Every Spirit followed Mio's lead.

"Ultimate Sephirot Strike!" They shouted together.

A gigantic version of the Harmonic Convergence attack was released by the tree, but this time with one beam for every Spirit, and at ten times the original ability's size.

The Devil's Heart was hit by it, causing it to start breaking down!

"I am... the killer of God, I can't... die here! I won't... I'm... not going to... no, no, no! You can't... do this!" The Devil screamed one final time.

A huge explosion shot into the sky, causing everyone in the world to see it as the Ain Soph disappeared.

However, the Tree they had formed stayed where it was, soon merging with Tenguu Tower, and releasing a huge burst of light across the world. This burst of light caused many to feel a sense of relief.

"We... we..." Mio gasped, soon forming a smile.

The others began making the same smile as Mio's, immediately realizing that it was finally over!

"The Devil's finally been destroyed!" Shido exclaimed.

"We finally stopped Westcott, and the Devil! Their evil's been silenced for good!" Mana cheered.

Everyone who listened heard their words, soon leaving Tenguu City to cheer at the news. Reports instantly started filming, allowing this to spread across the globe, and making many show joy as they heard it.

"We did it... Isamu." Seigo smiled, looking at the sky.

At that moment, a few orbs appeared before Mio, who looked at them as she and the other Spirits released their Astral Dresses.

("Take care, you're the guardian of this world... the remnants of Heaven and the Spirit Dimension will live through you, and the Earth it fused with.") Sandalphon said, the last embers of her soul burning for this moment.
"You mean... this is goodbye?" Mio asked, looking sad.

("We must destroy the Inverse Void... that dimension can't continue to exist, so... it is. Don't forget, we live through our reincarnations behind you, so in a way... this is also a new hello.") Sandalphon confirmed.

Mio breathed a bit, and then nodded her head.

"Then... good luck to you." Mio replied, sniffling as she did her best to smile.

The orbs of light representing the Sephira Spirits' former Angels all flew towards the spot in the sky that the Diabolus ripped apart, healing it up. Before it closed, a bright flash was heard, showing the last remnants of Dark Reiryoku before the power was erased once and for all.

"Come on everyone, let's go home... for good this time." Mio smiled, looking at everyone.

"Yeah, let's." Shido smiled back.

After a war lasting 30 years, and one last battle... it was finally over. Ratatoskr had survived, and won against the DEM, finally giving the souls of over 6 billion the peace they finally deserved.

And that's it, the Mio Salvation movie arc has finally come to an end. *snifflies* Oh man, here come the tears... now that I've finished Mio's arc in the story, there's only two more chapters left, the two chapters for the epilogue. I know this story had to end eventually, but that doesn't mean I'm not sad about having such an amazing story come to an end.

Mio managed to help slam quite a bit of damage against the Devil, and the brief revival of his army. Not only that, but she gave everyone their powers back, evolve their Astral Dresses, and give them even stronger Angels. For these forms, think Tohka's from the Vol 18 illustration where she manages to actually damage Mio, as Tohka does technically have a bit of her power in that state.

The Devil may have been powerful, but it seems that in the end, the unity of the Spirits was too much for her, and it seems God made her his daughter would be able to succeed where he failed. While it is true the Devil's lacking the power he used to, I'll say that's only in the sense he can't use powers like that curse he used to guarantee God would die on a level unlike anyone else in the story, so physically? He was as strong as back then.

Until next time everyone, and stay awesome! ^^
Hey everyone, as you might have noticed, this is not as much a new chapter as it is a recreation of Chapter 76, and as such... you're likely wondering what happened to make me do this? Well, hate to say this, so before you read the next paragraph? I advise you, expect the worst, and if you're already getting a bad feeling or thinking you'll hate this news? *sighs* Then trust your gut, because its right.

After beginning Season 4, things went bad, and then... I hit a wall, the worst kind of wall. No matter what, I couldn't continue the story. It was a horrible feeling, and I struggled to overcome it because I refused to cancel DARL over such a thing. After a while, I had no choice but to ask some friends what to do under the condition I couldn't cancel it.

Eventually, someone pointed out my revisions for Legends of the Heavenly Dragons, and then after seeing Chapter 76, told me the very thing I needed to beat that funk, and give this story the ending it deserved. The downside was that it was not going to be a decision that would make everyone happy, but I realized it was right.

So, time to confess what that idea was. The idea was... *breathes* change the last two movie arcs, and make Ch 76 the first two chapters to end the story.

That's right, this is the first of two chapters that will finish the story of Date A Re:Live, because I'm unable to create a 4th season for this story. I'm sorry to everyone who was excited over what I was doing, but I just can't push this story anymore, my mind just refuses to compromise a way to make it possible, so I've decided to give this story its conclusion over a Season 4.

You might be wondering by now, what's the problem that has pushed me into this spot? Well... nothing more than my own execution. To elaborate on that? Back when I revealed the ties to Heaven and Hell, with the Devil being the true villain of the story, one thing I said was that I had revealed all the remaining secrets of the story, and now I realize deciding that had very close to being the nail to the coffin for this story.

By saying that, I had given a strong feeling of this story being right near the end, and the more I looked at everything from season 4, the more it came to me that I was trying to expand a condensed final battle, and adding more to it at a level that ended up becoming dangerously large for me to manage. With that, it was clear after I came to this realization the last movie needed to be the final battle, especially because of the timing of Mio's introduction.

As such, I'll be changing a few things in the last chapters of both the Sephira Fury, some events within the Mayuri Judgment movie, while the Mio Reminisce movie will be renamed and completely changed to become the true final of the story, and her way of becoming the final harem girl. After that, this chapter and Chapter 77 will finally give this story the conclusion it deserves.

This and the deletion of all the stories that make the Sephira Chronicles series are likely gonna make a lot of you sad, but at this point... it's all I can do. The one upside to this is Season 4's ideas are still around, with some of them in the process of being altered to see if they can be
put in my new DAL story, which is the closest thing we'll get to this story's final season.

One again, I am very sorry that this happened, so now... let's begin the ending that this story has earned in the last year.

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() - Angel Talking

[] - Archangel Talking

{} - Demon King Talking

**Bold Italic Underline** - Major Battle Beginning, or its Result

«» - Spirit's Code Name

○ - Important Term, Phrase, or Detail

「」 - Insert Song Beginning, or Ending

【】 - Voice made by an Announcement, or through an Announcer

「「」 - Electrical Voice or Machine Speaking

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**Chapter 76, Epilogue: The First Stage**

In a secret location somewhere in the world, the sight of a woman, the 67th, and newest Prime Minster of Japan since the previous one retired for the New Year, was seen walking to a building where she was to attend a meeting with a select few.

Once she arrived, the sight of only six others could be seen sitting down at a table, with certain countries' flags behind each of them, which were America, Russia, Germany, China, France, and Great Britain, better known alongside Japan as the seven countries who helped keep the world stable after the Spacequakes began over 30 years ago. Despite the destruction of Europe, the nations of Germany, France, and Great Britain had been restoring themselves through some bits of land that Russia (albeit reluctantly) gave up to them.

Sitting in front of the American flag was a woman with shoulder length light-pink hair styled in a wavy manner and blue eyes, the 50th President of the USA, Alicia Starlight.

The one in front of the Chinese flag was a woman with long red hair held in two Chinese bun wraps and brown eyes, the 11th President of China, Hui Chen.

The one in front of the French flag was a woman with waist length blonde hair and green eyes, the 30th President of France, Renee Primrose.

The one in front of the German flag was a man with short dirty blonde hair and red eyes, the 10th Chancellor of Germany, Adrian Blitzkrieg.

The one in front of the Russian flag was a man with black hair slicked down behind him as his purple eyes glared at everything, the 9th President of Russia, Alexei Vasiliev.

And finally, the one in front of the United Kingdom flag was a man with blue and white hair with orange eyes, the 68th Prime Minister of Great Britain, Lewis Wilson.
"Hmm? Ah, welcome Lady Hikari." Lewis greeted.

The newest Prime Minster, Hikari Nakamura, smiled towards her fellow sovereign for his gesture. She had long white hair with pink eyes, tied up in a pony tail, with smaller ribbons tying up the sides of her hair that framed her face.

"Thank you, and welcome everyone, I'm glad you could all make it." Hikari smiled.

"With that, all of us have gathered here, so now we can all begin." Adrian announced.

Alexei turned his head, grunting in annoyance.

"If you ask me, it doesn't make a damn difference that all of us are here." He remarked.

"We know you don't mean that, you care for your people too." Lewis replied.

"Oh, shut up! I've got no interest in anything about that, much less with you bastards-" Alexei sneered.

Alicia slammed her hand on the table, making it shake a bit as everyone shut up.

"Alexei, I get you've been stressed the last half year over taking in the European refugees, but don't take it out on us. After all, this meeting is to prevent such things from continuing." Alicia stated with a light glare.

Alexei sighed, crossing his arms as he relented his annoyance a bit.

"Wow, taking charge as efficiently as ever Alicia, I'm glad I didn't have to face you in an election." Hui Chen said playfully.

"Eh, I'm nothing special." Alicia smiled in response.

Taking her seat, Hikari quickly got everyone's attention as she breathed out, preparing what she had planned to say when she called everyone to this meeting.

"As most of you remember, last year we all learned the truth of the Spacequakes' origins, and how the very organization that helped us recover had done it for their own benefit... Deus-Ex-Machina Industries, led by Isaac Westcott who started the whole mess. We paid for it with the destruction of Europe from that Choronzon monster, and nearly losing the world if Ratatoskr's quick thinking hadn't saved us." She began, looking serious the whole time.

"Yeah, some of us know that particularly well." Alexei said with a glare.

"Well, what you don't know is that while none of us were aware, Westcott came back for one final strike. His threat nearly destroyed our world, and despite the fact I was Japan's leader... I was powerless to stop it. Like before, it was Ratatoskr and the Spirits that stopped it." Hikari replied.

This caught everyone's attention, even Alexei's usual expression had shifted.

"However, what I did realize after it? That we let Westcott become the man he was. Long ago, there was a village of mages, and while those of us here can't be to blame, it was normal Humans that killed all but four, who have since passed on. The Devil may have had an influence, but we still gave him the means through our own hearts, and now that I understand that...?" Hikari continued, looking down.

"It tells us that could happen again if we don't finally realize the consequences behind our actions."
Hui Chen realized with a nervous sweat.

Alexei's eyes twitched a bit, soon biting his nails.

"OK, so we know that the bastard had worse to hit us with, and he did it in a way that we could do crap about it... there's a reason you had us all called here, so spill it." He demanded, tapping his fingers on his arm.

"Right, I have a proposition that I'd like everyone here to consider, one that our predecessors did 30 years ago, but didn't follow." Hikari answered.

Taking a deep breath, she clasped her hands together as she closed her eyes.

"While it's true that our world has some form of unity and peace, it's not true unity, just a truce to accept each other without getting into any big deals unless a small problem festered under our noses. We can't let that continue anymore. Our seven nations, the ones that took charge when the rest of the world faltered, must truly unite it together. No longer a simple truce, but a full alliance between us all."

Alexei was sure that it had been so quiet, the quietest creaks of their chairs could be heard.

"Hikari, something like that is a big step, and the world may not be able to handle it... are you sure you'd be willing to take that risk?" Renee asked.

"It isn't who's willing or not that's the point, it's the fact that we must strive to make sure a situation like the one that caused Westcott to fall into the dark path that resulted in the scarring of our world. The Spirits will eventually succeed their powers through reproduction, and when that happens, we risk someone becoming volatile from our mistakes." Hikari stated.

She stood up, catching the other leaders off guard.

"Our entire world was put at stake not once, not twice, but three times because we didn't give a damn about the greater whole of it! That's why I'm saying this! Yes, I get that we'll have people who oppose this, and others who will be angry... however, we can't let that fear stop us. If the line isn't drawn now, it may never be, and then we could leave Humanity to become extinct, leaving no one but us to blame for it."

"We can't use a simple solution to solve a complicated problem, and there's no way one nation will fix all these problems alone and divided, so... I ask you all, will you help me protect this world together? Just like Ratatoskr has, I want to bring all kinds of people together, to truly make a difference!" Hikari exclaimed, holding a hand near her heart.

The other leaders looked at one another, and Hui Chen soon stood up.

"I agree, even without being there, I remember the haunting horrors that resulted from the Spacequakes and Choronzon's attack. China already had some darkness before that time, and the fact one of the Spirits had a horrible past shows it's still thriving today, waiting for something worse to grow, so I'm in!" Hui Chen agreed.

"Thank you, Hui Chen." Hikari smiled.

She looked at the others, all of which had slight sweat on their faces.

"Now, for the rest of you... I won't make you follow me, but I hope you will. Just ask yourselves what you feel is best for this world, and if you don't agree with me, then I won't press the issue"
They all went silent, and began to ponder a bit more, though it didn't take long for them to find their answers.

"Everyone here? I think I can trust you, and even if I didn't, this world needs to change. We owe the billions who died by Westcott's hands." Renee agreed.

"Me too! I've heard most of America's people have wanted this for a long time, and this is the perfect chance, so I'll stand by your side!" Alicia said excitedly.

"I shall lend my sword as well. This is a truly noble cause, and I don't see any reason it shouldn't happen." Lewis smiled in response.

"Eh, I guess it wouldn't hurt to try, count me in." Adrian shrugged, smiling a bit.

Everyone looked at Alexei, who was the only one left to agree, it was unsure if he was against them, or with them.

'This isn't just some normal game, our nations have never been on the best terms, and yet... that same mindset created a man like Westcott. It needs to end, and it has to end with him!' He thought.

"I'll do it, being then only one who said no would make me hypocritical." Alexei stated.

Hikari smiled at that, and the leaders all looked at each other.

"This is it then, our world's next stage begins here, and through it, we'll create a bright future for Humanity!" Hikari announced.

"Yeah, let's start our future here." Hui Chen replied.

All seven leaders put their hands out on top of each other, giving their own unique smiles as a result.

Staring out at the graveyard of Tenguu City, one could see Seigo as he stood at the graves of Elliot Woodman, Karen Mathers, and everyone else that had lost their lives over the course of the dreaded conflict with Westcott and the Devil.

"Hey there guys, it's finally over... the threat is gone, and I'm back with my family. They've told me everything you did, and I just wish I could have been here to give my respects much earlier." Seigo sniffled.

Taking a few flowers from a bouquet he brought, each tombstone got a specific kind of flower.

As he stepped back, he struggled not to cry as he felt his wife hug him, who was also fighting her tears despite the smile she was showing.

"Are you OK?" She sniffled.

"Y-yeah, I think I'll be alright... it just hurts they didn't make it to see the world at peace." Seigo answered sadly.

The two held each other close, and then headed back home, where everyone else was waiting.

Back at the Takamiya Household, everyone was resting, still sore and bandaged from the last battle.
Mio in particular was whimpering as Rio changed her bandages.

"Sit still, its gonna hurt the longer you don't get these replaced." Rio sighed.

"Easy for you to say, you don't feel stinging every second!" Mio responded, still whimpering a bit.

Macaron meowed in reply, making Kurumi shake her head.

"That's right, you were the one that overloaded all that power during the battle against Westcott and the Diabolus." The Shadow Spirit remarked, putting a hand to her mouth.

Mio pouted through puffed cheeks, turning her head away.

Chuckling a bit, everyone saw Shido walking in with a cart of recover based foods and water, also wearing a few bandages.

"Now, now. Let's not strain ourselves when we're still recovering." He advised.

All of his girls immediately sighed, relenting to his decision as he gave them their food, with Macaron jumping down to nibble on his bowl of kibble.

As he watched them all, he gave a warm smile.

"So, how has it sunk in for everyone? The fact that it's finally over?" He inquired.

Everyone paused at that, having not considered it until that moment.

"I guess... it doesn't seem real just yet, but we know it us because of these wounds we're nursing right now." Nia admitted.

"And then there's the goodbyes we had to make," Yuzuru sadly added.

Mio in particular got sad after recalling that, so when Shido saw it? He immediately sat down with a smile, and put his arms around his girls, pulling them all around him as he closed his eyes.

"I know this wasn't easy, there was a lot we lost, but... we're still here, and we're not alone. The people will still have get to live, and those who have passed will forever stay alive through our memories." Shido reassured them.

"Big brother's right. This isn't the end, it's a new beginning, for all of us. With everything in done, the lives who were lost ever since the first Spacequake can... finally... have their..." Mana agreed, her voice shaking near the end.

Everyone heard her crying as she began wiping her tears.

"They finally have... their peace!" She sniffled.

The non-harem Spirits all put their hand on Mana's back, letting her cry all she needed, cry for all the sacrifices that had been made to finally free the world from the dark age Westcott had left over it for the past three decades.

Soon, everyone was left in a group huge, as while the fight was now truly over... their wounds still needed time to heal. Luckily, they now had all the time in the world to do just that.

Ai, Mai, and Mii all stood before Raizen High, looking at the place that they'd be graduating from in
"This place has given us some good times, been there for us since the beginning of our journey with Ratatoskr, and now... we're just students here, like we were when we first came." Ai remarked sadly, a sad look on her face.

"Yeah, the adventure's finally come to an end... we've won the fight." Mai replied, a longing look on her face.

"That's... so lame." Mii sniffled, well aware of where things were going.

The trio hugged each other, and it became clear why this was so hard for them... because once they graduated, they'd all need to start going their separate ways.

As they were hugging, Hiroto walked into the area, getting their attention as he did... something.

"Hiroto, what are you doing?" Ai asked.

"Making a wish." Hiroto answered.

They looked confused, until he moved to show them what he was doing.

"I'd like to think this school was a good luck charm, so I want everyone else that applies here to feel that same luck we did." He clarified.

Looking at the wall, the sight of Ratatoskr's symbol was seen drawing on it.

However, the real charm was the words he had written under it, saying: "Our luck was here, and now we'll forever send that message throughout this school."

"You know what? I think you're right, and maybe that's all of us were brought here." Ai agreed.

Mai and Mii both gave silent gasps as they saw Ai's hand on Hiroto's shoulder, making the two wonder if they should say anything about it.

They ultimately decided not to.

Within the Ratatoskr Classroom, which was set to be redesigned for a different function at the school, now that its original purpose had come to an end, the sight of Tamae cleaning things up was noticed.

Turning to the seats, she sniffled as she imagined all of the students in this room she was about to see leave, having earned the right to graduate.

"Feeling alright?"

She turned around, seeing Kannazuki was behind her.

"Yeah, just... taking in the lingering nostalgia before this all changes." Tamae answered.

"Makes sense, I doubt any of us expected this all to end so soon after everyone had gathered together." Kannazuki admitted.

Sighing one last time, Tamae picked up the last few things she needed to.
"Well, guess this is it for the Ratatoskr Classroom... it was good while it lasted." She said, tearing up a bit.

The two began walking out, with Kannazuki taking the lead as they went back to the main school building.

"I wonder where things will go for us now that-"

While distracted by her thoughts, Tamae suddenly felt her foot slip on the stairs, making Kannazuki’s eyes widen as he fell towards her. He immediately caught her before she fell any further, with some papers raining around them.

"Are... you alright?" He asked, a slight blush on his face.

"Y-yeah. Thank you for catching me." Tamae verified, blushing as well.

Katie covered her mouth and blushed as she watched the scene from where she was, neither of them having any idea she was there.

At the former training grounds of the AST, the sight of Artemisia putting her now weaponless CR-Unit into a box was seen, one marked with a delivery destination of Tenguu City's Museum of Natural History.

"We've been with each other all this time, and now... you can finally have your rest. There's no need for the AST any longer." Artemisia said to it, rubbing the box's side.

"Still can't believe that this is the end of our journey as Wizards." Ashley sighed, also putting hers into a box.

Cecile hugged her from behind, surprising the former youngest member of the SSS.

"I know, we all met through our choice to become wizards... with Minerva being the only one I regret meeting." Cecile comforted, then slightly joked.

Ashley's cheeks puffed before she fell into a small laugh, with Cecile and Artemisia joining her.

"Ignoring my little remark there, we all feel what you are. About where we'll be going from here." Cecile continued.

"That's not it..." Ashley replied.

Cecile blinked before looking at her, with Ashley's face struggling not to show what she was feeling.

Unfortunately, that same strength wasn't able to appear in Leonora's face, who instantly began sobbing as she knew what Ashley was thinking about.

"Haven't any of you realized it yet? If there's no need for the AST anymore... there's no reason for us to stay together! We'll be separating, and going our own ways!" Leonora cried, unable to hold it in.

After hearing that, Cecile and Artemisia suddenly felt themselves tearing up, realizing they hadn't considered that.

"Ashley... Cecile... Leonora..." Artemisia cried.

The four all gathered into a group hug, crying as the fact of their likely separation finally came to
"Damn it Leonora, why'd you say it!?" Ashley cried.

"How'd that thought slip by? For us to get separated... we're like family, and now that's getting pulled apart?" Cecile sniffled.

"Maybe it's not set, but... whatever happens, we need to consider where we're all going." Artemisia replied, taking a deep breath.

Holding them close, she sniffled a bit.

"No matter what, I'm glad we had this wonderful time together, no matter how small it was." She smiled, despite her tears.

Everyone tightened their hug, wanting to make this one moment last as long as possible.

Within the main Ratatoskr building, where Shido first got involved with everything after he reunited with Tohka, the sight of Ryouko taking in the sights as others began to clean things up.

"Guess it makes sense the Fraxinus didn't make it through the final battle, if I wasn't going to stay a captain much longer." She sighed.

She felt a hand on her shoulder, seeing Haruko look at her.

"Don't feel too bad, we all knew this would end eventually. Besides, it isn't like we don't have jobs anymore." She reminded her.

"I know, but... I think we all know that slight bittersweet feeling when something you work hard on comes to an end. That's the one downside to succeeding on something, how there's nothing else after you're done, until you start something new." Ryouko replied.

Kotori's mother nodded her head, realizing what she meant.

"What do you mean by waiting? We've already got another project to start, and this one's not gonna end for a long time." Sakura smiled.

"Huh?" Both of them blinked.

"The world needs to truly rebuild now that Westcott's gone, and even more, we have to work hard so history doesn't repeat. The Devil may be gone, but that doesn't mean this is all over. We need to truly work hard together, and make sure this world's a place where no one will ever fall down such a dark path. That is our new job, for all us." Sakura explained, still smiling.

Hearing that, Ryouko laughed a bit.

"Figures, your family always finds the bright side even in what should be something sad." She remarked.

"Of course, that's why I'm a Yatogami." Sakura giggled.

"Then why is that the case with Ren, when he married into your family?" Tatsuo questioned.

Sakura made a locking motion by her mouth, having no intention to give that secret away.
A few days passed, and then... the day finally came. Everyone was gathered in part of Raizen High, where graduation was happening for the seniors, but also... for those tied to Ratatoskr, who had earned the right regardless of what grade they were in for their efforts in saving the world.

Shido was currently sitting with a nervous look, fidgeting his hands in both of his pockets as he struggled to stay calm.

'When I think back, look at how almost a year ago, I reunited with Tohka after all these years... I never thought I'd be standing in the situation I am now. Though, if this is my time to graduate, then I know how I want to move forward from here.' Shido thought.

Soon, the teacher reached a certain name.

"Shido Takamiya!"

"Sir!" Shido exclaimed, standing up.

Walking up to the podium, he was given his diploma by the principal, with everyone clapping as they watched. Rinne and Seigo both cried happy tears, with the former sniffling as she wiped a tear.

"You've paved an incredible path for everyone here, so keep being a good example for us all." The principal asked.

Shido nodded his head, and soon left the stand, leaving the next member of the Ratatoskr Classroom to be called up.

"Tohka Yatogami!"

"Right!" Tohka exclaimed, repeating what Shido did moments earlier.

The pattern continued until eventually, graduation had ended, leaving everyone to give one final applause to the graduating students. Soon enough, all the students gathered in a certain area, where most had their last conversations with each other.

"We raised them well, didn't we?" Seigo sniffled.

"That we did, I'm so proud." Rinne agreed with a nod, wiping her eyes with a tissue.

Mikie looked around, and soon noticed Tamae talking with Kannazuki... with both of them wearing rings!

"No way!" She exclaimed.

She rushed towards them, with Tamae blushing in surprise as Mikie held the hand with the ring, getting a closer look at it.

"This is... an engagement ring!?" She stated in shock.

"Uh..." Tamae began to sweat.

Mikie looked at her with an intense stare, which left Tamae sweating until she was forced to speak.

"OK, I'll talk! The truth is... Kannazuki proposed to me the day after the final battle!" She confessed.

"Oh, my god..." Katie breathed, making the same reaction she had that very day.
Mikie froze for a moment, and then... she ran outside, where everyone heard her screaming in excitement. By the time she made a full lap, everyone saw her jumping around a happy dance.

"She's finally getting married! She's finally getting married!" She sang excitedly.

Tamae blushed in embarrassment, with Kannazuki patting her back in response.

"Kannazuki of all people?" Kurumi said in surprise.

"Actually, when I see it... kind of makes sense." Mio admitted, rubbing her head.

Everyone who heard that reply felt afraid of it.

"What?" Mio questioned, noticing their reactions.

"Uh... nothing, nothing at all." Nia answered, trying to avoid breaking into a sweat.

Whistling a bit, everyone turned as they saw the buses arrive, ready to take them all home in celebratory style.

"Come on everyone, guess this is the last thing we need to do for today." Shido smiled.

"Yeah, let's go!" Tohka cheered.

At that moment, a few students held up a banner as the graduating students headed for the bus, and the banner in question had a special surprise on it.

The very symbol Hiroto drew, now being the official symbol for Raizen High.

"I knew that would work." Hiroto smiled.

Soon enough, everyone walked outside, and boarded onto the buses. As everyone drove away, Shido felt his pockets again before turning to face the girls he loved.

"So, what does everyone have planned for their future?" Marina inquired.

"Well... you might be surprised, but I've decided that I'm gonna follow the same line of work as my parents." Tohka admitted.

"Whoa, are you serious Tohka, you're gonna study technological advancement?" Kotori asked.

Tohka nodded, smiling brightly.

"Yep! I know I'll need to study pretty hard, but I've seen the good ideas I've been able to make when I've had the chances, so I feel I should help nurture it." Tohka answered.

Kotori chuckled a bit, making everyone look at her.

"I guess that means I'm going in a similar direction, because I'm thinking of becoming an Engineer for Realizers, just like my parents." Kotori stated.

"Really? That's great Kotori, I think you'll do well in that career." Mana praised.

Kotori blushed, rubbing her head slightly.

"I... I think I wanna do work in nature preservation, and animal care." Yoshino mentioned, giving a shy blush.
"Well, I'm gonna keep up my work in the manga industry. Got a new idea for a manga since I finished up Silver Bullet. Although, that's not all I've got in mind." Nia smirked.

"Same case with me, I'm gonna continue working with my music, and use my songs to reach everyone." Miku replied.

Rio thinks for a bit, and then smiles.

"I wanna study my mom's trick to save Mildred, so I'm gonna be a Doctor one day." Rio stated.

"I'll probably take up some mechanic work, help research in improving communications and networking. I've got the right powers for it." Mayuri smiled.

As everyone kept discussing their dreams and futures, Mio looks at all of them, sighing happily before she looked out the bus window.

'Father, are you watching? This is the world I'll be watching over now... so, thank you for everything.' She thought, tearing up a bit.

"Mio?"

She regained her attention, and saw everyone looking at her.

"Sorry, just saying a proper farewell to my father." She reassured them with a warm smile.

Hearing that, Shido wiped her tears, and then... found the perfect moment to say something.

"Hey, how about we all meet at Tenguu Viewpoint later." Shido suggested.

"Oh? Any particular reason?" Miku inquired.

"You can say that." Shido confirmed.

Eventually, everyone was gathered together at Tenguu Viewpoint, where Shido took a deep breath as he waited for the girls, fidgeting with his left pocket.

'No turning back, I'm gonna do this!' Shido thought, reaffirming his resolve.

"Shido?"

Turning around, he saw all of the girls present.

This was it... he had to do it here and now, because this was a chance he would never get again, now that graduation was finished.

"Everyone, glad you came, but before anything else... I have something I want to tell Tohka." Shido smiled.

Tohka blinked a bit, tilting her head in confusion... then felt Shido pull her close.

"Tohka, for the longest time, we've known each other... smiled together... laughed together... cried together... got angry at each other... then we were separated, and brought back together. More than anything, we loved one another, enough that we made a promise." Shido stated.

"Shido?" Tohka replied, feeling confused.
"Now that we've made it this far, and now that this fight is over, it's time... that I uphold that promise." He continued.

Everyone was a bit confused, even Tohka missed what she should have picked up due to the timing, however... Mana's eyes widened as she realized it before Shido even began to move his body.

At that moment, he pulled something out of his pocket, and everyone began reacting as Mana did as he took out a box, opening it to reveal a simple gold band with an amethyst as the gemstone.

"Tohka Yatogami, will you marry me?" He asked.

Hearing those words, the purple-haired Spirit's eyes began to tear up as a hand covered her mouth, quickly shedding from her eyes beyond her control. It didn't take long before she moved her hand away, showing her smile.

"Yes, of course I will! You don't know how long I've waited to hear those words!" Tohka happily cried as she accepted.

The others all got misty eyed themselves as Shido slipped the ring on, and pulled her into a deep kiss.

"It finally happened." Mana smiled, wiping her tears away.

"I'm happy, but at the same time, it feels kind insulting he made us watch him propose to Tohka when he gave us nothing." Natsumi replied, puffing her cheeks a bit.

Hearing that, Shido made a strange humming.

"Oh, you made a good point. Why didn't I consider doing that? If you were all being brought her, I honestly should have prepared to..." He though aloud, reaching into his other pocket.

At that moment, he pulled out a case, and then opened it. The other girls all showed surprise as they saw what was inside.

Each of them had a ring with a gem that fit their respective color as a Spirit; Origami had a pearl, a sapphire for Yoshino, a ruby stood on Kotori's, an onyx shined on Kurumi's, Natsumi's had a nice emerald, the Yamai twins each got an Amber shaped as one half of a Yin Yang symbol, Miku got an Aquamarine with a purple tint, a silvery crystal for Nia, Mukuro's had a citrine resting on it, and then finally... an iridescent gemstone on Mio's.

'I should have known, he invited everyone here because he wasn't only proposing to Tohka.' Mana chuckled.

Seeing this, everyone suddenly was brought to tears the same way.

"Shido, you idiot." Kotori sniffled.

"Yeah, but you all love me anyways." He replied.

And with that, all of the girls gathered around Shido, giving a tender group hug before he all gave them their rings, and their own kisses.

"So sweet!" Mana sniffled.

"I just hope that no one's watching from a hidden spot, because that's weird and rude." Mayuri remarked.
Right as she said that, Maria's eyes motioned to a tree, where Seigo and Rinne were hiding. The both of them could be seen sweating, hoping that Maria didn't spot them.

'Yeah... not even gonna bother exposing them.' Maria thought.

She turned her head back to the moment, smiling with everyone else.

No one knew what the future held, but with a moment like the one before them? It was enough that made it seem like everything would be alright.

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Aw... *gives a happy snifflle* such a sweet ending, and one that I'm glad I added to the end. Everything's started to get wrapped up, and now, Shido's gotten engaged to everyone in his harem. All that's left is more chapter to wrap everything up, and bring this long journey to the ending that it deserves. For everything who stuck with this story to the end, thank you.

Now, for the last time I'll say it in this story? *takes a deep breath* Until next time everyone, and... *sniffles a bit* stay awesome! TvT
Welcome everyone, to the... final chapter of the story. *breathes* I still can't believe I'm saying
that, but that's the truth. I started this story over a year ago, and now that we've reached the
end, part of me just feels sad about it. Guess that means from here on, finishing "Another A
Live", and "The Dark, but Not Evil" will be a thing, as well as continue Spiritual Successor.

This chapter is pretty big, as for the second half of the epilogue, we're going with the time skip
that I had originally planned for Season 4, and how I end this story? I think you'll find out
how fitting this ending is when I get to the final scene. *giggles* Well, the big thing for right
now is showing how things are going to end, but one thing I'll officially confirm since we're at
the end?

Anyone that's been dead, and stayed that way as of Ch 76? They are all truly dead, so if
you're expecting anyone to revive, then... nope. I'll admit that was going to be a thing for
Season 4, but with how things were ending, the situation made me decide having those they
lost stay gone to help represent why some characters felt a lot of weight behind leaving
Ratatoskr behind.

So, with the revisions made for the last few chapters, you might be wondering which chapters
you should re-read? Chapters 70 through 75 were all changed, but Ch 70 only had a scene
removed, as it was transferred into Chapter 76, so you can skip that one. Mayuri's arc has
minor changes, as I just replaced the Quasi-Spirits with... well, read them to find out. That
means the big changes are all from Chapters 72 to 75.

Now to reply to a few guest reviews.

To Scarmander999:
"Well, at the time you asked this, it actually was complete. Though as of the revising, due to
what I said in the new version of Ch 76, it was until prior to making this update."

To Guest:
"No need to worry, you'll be seeing the Ethereal Shifts of ALL the Spirits during the recreated
Mio arc."

And now, it's time... to bring this date to an end.

() - Angel Talking
[] - Archangel Talking
{} - Demon King Talking

**Bold Italic Underline** - Major Battle Beginning, or its Result

«» - Spirit's Code Name
○ - Important Term, Phrase, or Detail
Chapter 77, Epilogue: The Last Stage

The scene opens to the Tenguu City, nine years in the future, which had become massively more advanced compared to before.

"It's been 10 years since that fateful day I reunited with Tohka, and the conflict between Ratatoskr and the DEM truly began. Following the final battle between us and the Devil, everyone in Ratatoskr had to go their separate ways, as the part of the organization dedicated to standing against the DEM had finally come to an end."

"Having seen the damage, Prime Minister Hikari decided that the world had to unite, or we risked another Westcott. That was enough reason for the seven strongest nations to create the World Alliance, unifying the world for a better tomorrow among the last 3.5 billion Humans that were left on the world. It isn't the perfect solution just yet, but it's definitely getting there."

"A wise man once said that it would take an enemy bigger than Humanity to unite it... that man had never been more right."

Various kids were seen playing, being among the first of the generation after the threat of the Spacequakes, with many adults that had been the teenagers only a decade ago watching them in peace.

Meanwhile, the tree that was created when Mio used her Ain Soph to destroy the Devil was seen, just as healthy and shining as ever. Speaking of Mio, she could be seen washing a memorial for those who fought and died in the fight to save the world.

"The tree that Mio somehow created was still where it had been, and she's been keeping close watch of it. Everyone agreed that it was a symbol of not just our victory, but a reminder to what kind of future we had to work for, and a way to honor everyone we lost. For Mio, it meant more, representing the role she was given at the end... being the Earth's guardian, and the Goddess that watched over it."

Putting the wash cloth away, she took a brief glance at a certain name that said: "God/Isamu Murasame - The one who gave up everything for us"

"I wonder what you'd say if your soul had lasted long enough to see this?" She wondered.

"Hey, Mio!"

Turning around, she saw Rinne waving to her, making the Spirit of Origin smile.

"Coming!" She called back.

Mio dashed over to the First Spirit, and the two headed out to do what they had intended for the day.

"All of us have walked towards different futures, but everyone in Ratatoskr is still connected, and
I know we always will be. Just as I have all my wives by my side... they've all found their own lights of hope from our efforts in saving the world."

A squirrel climbed up the tree, eating a nut as it looked to the blue sky.

In a small house near the outskirts of Tenguu City, the sight of an older Hiroto was seen. He now wore glasses, but otherwise looked the same, and was currently seen speaking with a teenager that was a guest in his house.

"So, what's making you afraid to tell this girl how you feel?" Hiroto asked, holding a clipboard.

"W-well... I'm worried if I mess things up, then I won't get another chance. I really like her, and I think she might feel the same, but... what if I make her hate me because I do something wrong?" The boy asked.

Hiroto smiled a bit, looking at him.

"Just be yourself, because that's who she'll be dating. Don't try to be someone else, look like you have something you don't, or do something big to impress her. Just be honest, and if you're shy or nervous, admit that to her." He answered.

Upon hearing that, the teen went into thought, and then...

"Alright, I'll give it a try!" He decided.

Running out of the door, he caught the attention of two girls who were about to walk into the house. The smaller one soon saw Hiroto, and smiled

"Daddy!" The girl shouted, rushing to him.

"There are my girls." Hiroto smiled, picking up his daughter.

An older Ai giggled as she walked in, having grown out her hair, and gotten rid of her pony tail.

"Hiroto took his knowledge from all those dating sims, and became a guidance counselor for relationship advice. He's helped many a kid with the advice he gives. Most of us were surprised when after our graduation, he and Ai began dating, though Mai and Mii seem to imply they had seen the signs beforehand. 4 years after they began dating, they married and had a daughter."

Hiroto made a funny face, causing his six-year old daughter to laugh.

Tamae was seen setting the table for dinner, right as her husband walked in.

"What's for dinner tonight?" Kannazuki asked.

"That's a secret." Tamae giggled.

Chuckling at their playful banter, he sat down at the table, while Tamae went to get the food.

"Shortly after their engagement, Tamae and Kannazuki got married, with Tamae retiring from being a teacher. Kannazuki does most of the work, while she's the typical stay at home wife. No kids from them just yet, but Mikie's mentioned that could change any day..."
Tamae brought the food in, making Kannazuki look excited at the chosen meal.

Artemisia was seen with a bunch of kids, who were all playing around as she watched them.

"Uh oh... has anyone seen daycare's pet?" Ashley asked, looking worried.

A bunny soon popped out of some pillows, making her eyes widened, while Cecile just gave a small giggle.

"Looks like little Jacky's hungry." Cecile smiled, picking it up.

"Ooh, can I feed him today?" A kid asked.

"Sure, just remember to watch him while you do it." Artemisia smiled.

The kid looked at Cecile, who put the rabbit back in his habitat, while Leonora walked in with some baby carrots and lettuce.

"After a bunch of worrying, the SSS quartet did end up staying together, and began running a day care center. The kids love being there, and any mischief there is always just playful, especially the pet rabbit they've mentioned."

The kid feeds Jacky the carrots, who quickly nibbled them up.

Ryouko was seen at a Gym, with most of the AST members with her, and the Fraxinus Crew running some of the Gym's systems.

"Alright everyone, work it!" Ryouko shouted, clapping her hands to make a rhythm.

Everyone did, working up a sweat.

"Ryouko ended up starting a gym, and most of the AST members followed after they finished college. The old Fraxinus crew even gathered to help run the everything on the technological end. Mana often goes there, still remembering her time as a wizard, while also feeling she had a connection to it because she indirectly helped Ryouko get the idea in the first place."

"Keep it going, don't slow down!" Ryouko shouted again.

Finally, the sight of Mio and Rinne returning to the Takamiya's home was seen.

"We're back!" Mio greeted.

"Hey, welcome back everyone!" Origami smiled.

Origami turned to show she had grown a braid on the side of her hair, with a bin of clothes in her hands.

"And then there's my lovely wives. Origami became a researcher, studying how the effects of the world had changed by the Spirit Dimension's remains fusing with it during the events of 40 years ago."

A familiar rabbit puppet suddenly rose up from behind the couch, giggling a bit.
“Did you two have any secret fun?” Yoshinon joked.

"Yoshinon, don’t make it sound like they're cheating." Yoshino playfully shook her head, rising from behind the couch as well.

Rio pops her head up as well.

"Rio!" She exclaimed for no reason, throwing her hands up.

"Yoshino has seemed much happier since Yoshinon came back, this time existing as an actual living puppet... however that ended up possible? She now works in animal care, even being the one who gave the SSS’s daycare their pet rabbit. As for Rio, my sister is no a doctor, having managed to help Doctors spread the technique that Rinne saved Mildred's life with."

Kurumi giggled as she walked in with Miku and Nia, the latter fixing a crick in her neck from drawing.

"Looks like we're all as carefree as ever." Kurumi smiled.

"Meow." Macaron replied.

"Kurumi's inherited her family's fortune, and now helps manage things for Miku and Nia, giving them good work opportunities without giving up too much family time. Just as they claimed, Miku's still singing her songs, and has ended up the world's top idol from her efforts. While for Nia, she's begun many new manga, still making smash hits, and she's even about to start a new series."

In the kitchen area, Kotori watched as Mayuri fixed up the stove.

"Alright, all fixed up." Mayuri said as she wiped her forehead.

"Thanks, now to get Tohka's food ready before she eats all the furniture." Kotori sighed in relief.

She turned the stove on, right as they heard Tohka's voice chewing something.

"A little help!??" Mukuro begged.

She, along with the Yamai twins, Natsumi, and the Arusu sisters all pulled against

"Kotori is now a Realizer Engineer, helping to create new realizers and territories by using Mio's powers, and her own ingenuity to do it. Mayuri tends to help out on her work, having become quite the mechanic since graduating from college. For everyone else, except for Tohka, who's become an important figure in technological advancements? They're mostly stay at home wives."

"Uh... anyone know where Shido is?" Mana asked, sweating a bit.

"Coming!" Shido replied loudly.

He rushed from downstairs, nearly tripping as he did, and then ran into the room where four of his wives tried to prevent Tohka from eating a couch.

The reason why she was became clear when the sight of Tohka’s huge stomach was seen.

"I've promised to have at least one kid with all my girls, but it'd be tricky to have them all pregnant
"at once, so... I started with the first girl I fell in love with. It's been around 9 months, so it won't be much longer until she gives birth. At least, we think it will, but my mom's not sure how to compare a Human turned Spirit's pregnancy compared to a natural Spirit like herself or Mio."

"I'm so hungry... just one bite." Tohka begged, desperately reaching for it.

"Settle down Tohka, Mayuri just fixed the stove, so it won't be much longer.

"And then there's me, the stay at home dad among our bunch. Considering I've got 12 wives, it made more sense to become one, so I can spend all the time I can with every one of them. Especially since in any day now-"

*SPLAT*

Everyone suddenly froze at that sound, right as Shido looked down to see a wet spot on Tohka's pants, and the floor.

"Did her water just break?" Maria asked.

"Uh, maybe it's just pregnancy wetting?" Marina hoped, giving a worried laugh.

Tohka suddenly began screaming, which made Shido turn to the door.

"Uh... never mind about that."

"Mom, get the car ready! It's time!" He screamed.

The other residents of the house all suddenly froze (or in Yoshinon's case, fell onto the floor) as they heard that.

"Right now!??" Mio exclaimed.

At the hospital, a loud scream was heard from Tohka as flailed around, smashing everything as she began pushing out the baby. Shido shouted in pain, feeling Tohka squeeze his hand like she was trying to break it.

"Uh... is this a normal thing?" Rio asked, sweating a bit.

"Rio, sweetie? I don't think you want me to answer that question." Rinne answered.

She whimpered after hearing her mother say that.

"You did this to me Shido! Why'd you have to get me pregnant! Damn it!" Tohka screamed, her spirit power flaring against the walls.

Everyone ducked as the walls shook.

"J-just hold on... Tohka, it's... almost out!" He whimpered, feeling agony in his hand.

"Wait a minute... Mr. Takamiya? It seems we made a mistake with the ultrasound, there's two babies in there!" A nurse suddenly said.

"What!?" Shido exclaimed in joy, and horror.

Hearing that, everyone felt the room shake as Tohka's stress went up.
"SHIDO TAKAMIYA!" Tohka shrieked loudly.

"Hit the deck!" Natsumi exclaimed.

The entire group fell to the floor, covering themselves as the new few hours made things a bit shaky for that wing of the hospital. Mio was lucky she had reinforced the room in advance, or things might have gotten a lot messier than they already were.

After those few hours passed... the sound of crying was heard, making everyone raise their heads up. A wobbly Shido walked near the door, giving a tired look at them.

"C-come on in and... meet the newest members of our family." Shido smiled.

Following him inside, they saw a tired and sweaty Tohka holding two bundles in her arm. One was pink, and the other blue, showing the genders of the twins she held.

"Hey everyone... say hi." Tohka smiled, tears of joy in her eyes.

The blue bundle looked like his father, but had Tohka's eyes, which looked at everyone. He was currently sucking his thumb, with an expression that made him look more like the crier among the two.

As for the pink bundle, she looked just like her mother, but her hair's tips had the same white gradient her Inverse Form once had, and also possessed her father's eyes. She reached out towards the group, interested in something she could see among them.

"Aww, they're so beautiful!" Miku cooed, letting the girl grab her finger.

The girl giggled as she shook it.

"So, do you have a name picked out for them?" Rinne asked.

"Yeah, we decided on a name for both genders since we expected one, and didn't decide to see their gender." Shido smiled.

He held up the boy, showing him to everyone.

"For him, we've decided on... Shinji." He smiled.

Tohka soon smiled as she rubbed her daughter's nose, making her giggle.

"And her name is..." Tohka smiled, closing her eyes.

"Reine."

Mio blushed at that, realizing they named her after her alias while amnesiac to her Spirit origins.

"R-really?" Mio asked, very touched by the gesture.

Shido nodded his head, making Mio tear up.

"Thank you." She replied.

The twins soon gave a simultaneous yawn, making everyone smile at them.

With their births, the future between Humans and Spirits was set, one that everyone would walked
towards as a family. This was finally the end... of their story.

\text{THE END}

W-well, that's it everyone, after a year of this adventure, the story of Date A Re:Live... has finally ended. *starts crying* As you can see, to really represent this was the end, I decided to have the last scene be Tohka giving birth to the first of the harem's children, who'll be the only official ones you see. To really add to it, she named the daughter Reine, so... there's literally nothing left in the story, a big zero on what's next.

Those who survived have earned their happy endings, while those who've passed on finally have peace, with Shinji and Reine being the first two among Humanity and the Spirits eventually becoming one. *sniffles* Aw man, I can't stop crying over this... I guess that means there's only one thing left to say. To all my readers, I'm glade you stuck with me to the end, and hopefully you'll enjoy the DAL stories that follow this one.

Everyone... thanks for reading to the end, you're all awesome!

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