

Chapter 06:

Love at first sight?

Green put her hand in front of her mouth, since she was yawning heartily. It wasn't surprising to see her tired: Last night, she had been ungently thrown out of her comfy bed to carry out her duty, or her holy mission, as Pink liked to call it. Green liked to call it sleep robbery; and she had only just returned from Hokkaidô! The occurrences on their class-trip were still fresh on her mind and bothered her whole being, since she paid close attention to her little bell, which was hidden below her shirt now at all times - just as if she'd be paranoid. She just couldn't imagine how it could have gotten lost. She just couldn't imagine how someone could have stolen it from her – she would have noticed... but it was as unlikely as her simply loosing it. She would have noticed if it would have dropped to the ground, wouldn't she? The body of the Wächterin even reacted if she placed the little bell half a meter away from her on a table. But there was something which bothered her even more than the bell...

„G-Gary?!“ Green stared at her opposite in a shocked manner, as she clasped her just returned bell to her chest and felt, how her body got better and better by second. But Gary just stood there and observed her closely. He still hadn't moved an inch. Since he didn't reply nor react in any other way, Green leaned forward in her bed. She wanted to stand up and approach him badly, but for one she didn't want to rouse Sho from her sleep, since her head lay close to Green's figure on said bed, and on the other hand she knew she wasn't physically able to do so at the moment. „Gary, what the hell is going on here!?!“, she whispered, trying to control her shaky voice. Finally, he was responsive to her. He shook his head and said: „I will explain you everything, but not in here.“ Gary gave a hint towards Sho, and Green knew what he meant.

„You should rest first. We'll talk later.“ With this he turned his back on her and before Green could do or reply anything, he left her room and all the Wächterin could do was staring at his leaving form, slightly taken aback. Green had to wait four whole days for his „later“: four days, while growing more and more impatient and displeased, since she just couldn't stop thinking about the events and hypothesized a lot; and as time went by, they got unlikelier and unlikelier. She was on the brink of ultimate despair, and Pink really didn't help one bit. Green had called her straightaway when she had recovered somewhat, and finally got a hold of her. It took a load off her mind when she listened to Pink's squealing voice, but this relief didn't last for long, since soon enough the same voice started to annoy her. Pink told her about some kind of nightmare, which had absolutely no contiguity whatsoever and was nearly forgotten by Pink. Although Pink had forgotten the content, she felt that it was of great importance to explain everything to Green and said one listened, trying to find a deeper meaning to Pink's

dream. But after only five minutes she decided she wouldn't tell Pink any of her own happenings, since she had a huge headache from her voice. She would take matters into her own hands.

And it also happened that way, when she met Gary coincidentally in the hallway. She had already opened her mouth to argue with him, but he interrupted her, saying they'd meet on the last day on the clearing Green had fought against the demon.

Great, now she had something new to chew on with her mind. First of all, he knew of the demon's appearance. For a second, he knew of their fight and for a third she'd love to rip his head off, because he made this so terrible stretching. Because of that her greeting was rather unfriendly when they finally met on the clearing.

„I should really kill you, you bloody idiot...!“ She stomped through the white snow towards him and flashed her eyes angrily at him, since he leaned arrogantly on a wall and answered piercingly: „In fact you should do that. But from what I can see you didn't transform your weapon.“ Green's gaze relaxed, but still remained skeptical.

„Just what is happening? Why do you know of all this stuff? Don't tell me...are you also a Wächter?“ Gary started to laugh. Not too loud, but more chuckling to himself. Green blushed, since she felt kidded.

„No, Green, more like the opposite.“ The girl got pale and took a few steps backwards, but weirdly enough she didn't waste one thought about taking her weapon.

„You are... a demon?!“ She took a deep breath and he could easily see all these questions and thoughts forming in her head when he answered in the affirmative.

„To be accurate, I am a Halfdemon.“

„But why did you rescue me then?“ Gary knew beforehand that this question would arise sooner or later, and he knew what he had to answer:

„Because I didn't want you to die.“ This simple statement made Green blush and put her off her stride. Contrary to Gary, who remained serious.

„You... really don't want to kill me?“, the Wächterin asked unsure.

„No.“

„Then, what are you doing here, being a demon and all? Do you kill people?“

Gary signified a headshaking, before answering:

„I'm doing the same thing you do, Green. I'm earning my degree.“ A wry smile appeared on Green's face when she raised her eyebrows.

„You know - if anyone else would have told me just that, I wouldn't have believed it. But I have no choice but to believe this since *you* said it; you're such a goddamn careerist.“ He took that as a compliment. Green shook her head and started to stomp closer again, until she was only a meter away from him. She looked up to him and indicated a small smile, which fazed Gary slightly.

„Since you are a demon, you must surely know how to fight.“

„Yes?“ His queasy feeling grew even stronger...

„Are you *good* at fighting?“

„What are you playing at?“ Devoid of any forewarning she clasped his hands and beamed at him, with something like childish euphoria shining in her eyes. Gary didn't like this, but he wasn't sure why. He didn't like the weird sensation of her hands, neither did he like the feeling inside of him. He didn't know what it was and he couldn't understand it. And he strongly disliked things he couldn't comprehend.

„We could join forces! You just said you don't want me to die and I'm not that great at fighting, I could really need someone who supports me!“

„I-I don't think that sounds like a good idea...“

„Why not?“

„Didn't you listen to me? I am a dem-“

„A *Halfdemon*“, Green interrupted Gary.

„That doesn't change the fact that we are natural enemies. You are a Wächterin.“

„Doesn't mean *we* have to act like that, too. I don't consider you as my enemy, even if you're sometimes extremely annoying.“ This statement put him off his stride in turn, since he couldn't apprehend how Green could be so easy-going with the whole affair and how she could come up with the idea of them working together anyway.

Green noticed his contemplation, but misinterpreted it:

„Well?“

„Green...“ She let go of him and said grinning (apparently sure of this issue, even if Gary wasn't too keen with this idea), that she would give him some time to over think the whole concept, till they'd be back at school. Having said this, she abandoned the conversation and had already turned her back on him, when he stopped her:

„How can you be sure I'm not lying to you?“

Green laughed when he said that and answered in a laughing manner:

„I don't even think you *could* lie, Gary!“ She turned around afterwards and just wanted to leave speechless Gary there, when she decided otherwise. With a smile on her lips she looked at him across her shoulders and said something she had never said to anyone before:

„Aside from that I trust you.“

Since then Gary hadn't been at school – which had functional reasons, as Green knew. That's because her new neighbor and fellow fighter to-be was ill. He had probably caught a virus in Hokkaidô and had to stay in bed because of influenza. One day after their arrival back home, Green had visited him with the aim to persuade him to support her in the upcoming fight. But she realized rather quickly that she was on lost ground here. He was sick, as unlikely as it sounded after considering that he was a demon after all. The Wächterin had rubbed his nose in that, but he had only responded in an annoyed manner; he said, that even he would be allowed to get ill sometimes and that it would have something to do with the fact that one half of his blood was human. Green noticed during this conversation that Gary didn't seem to like the issue of his human half, and it didn't matter whether she asked him something or mentioned it. Apparently he saw himself more as a demon. Could it be that he was ashamed of his human half?

Pink wasn't delighted about Gary and his demonical being at all. She reckoned, Green should kill Gary right on the spot. After all he was a demon, and Wächter usually kill demons, and vice versa – that were her words, which sounded rather serious. Yet Green shook these words off and didn't want to listen to anything like that. She was way too excited with the idea of having a fighting partner, rather than bothering herself with natural laws. She wasn't sure whether it was because she didn't think Gary would be capable of using violence on her, or whether it was because of her subconscious tendency to break rules.

Nevertheless, Pink gave no thought on capitulation and acted pretty annoying with her childish nature. She insisted on escorting Green all the time when she decided to visit Gary and eyed the two of them sceptically. Green had visited him three times in the course of the week after their class-trip and these three times had managed to sicken Pink, too. Now, Green had two patients, even if Gary couldn't be considered a "patient", since she only brought his medicine. Green herself had remained unaffected and felt as alive and kicking as she usually did, when she sat in her maths class. Okay, "kicking" was a bit exaggerated, since she had killed a demon last night, too, but at least she wasn't ill.

Green gazed out of the window, since the lesson didn't manage to spark her attention in any way. Instead of that she stared into the white sky on this grey day in November and pondered how long it would take till winter would rule over Tokyo.

Just when she asked herself about that, something threw her out of her thoughts. The tuition was momentarily discontinued. She turned her face towards the board and her mouth opened with surprise in an instant.

„This is your new classmate, Nakayama Siberu." Green hardly believed her own eyes, but it really was Siberu standing in front of the board. All girls were head over heels because of Siberu's confident demeanor and his beautiful looks, but that wasn't what struck Green this time. It was the simple fact that he was indeed in this room; it was the fact that her teacher had introduced him as their new classmate. It wasn't that Green wasn't happy, not at all, she was! She was high-spirited because of him. Her heart skipped a few beats when she noticed that he also looked at her. Green had to admit to herself that she was glad to see him again.

„Is this seat already taken?", Siberu asked, when he had gone through the lines in order to reach Green. Said one would have forgotten all about Gary, and the fact, that is was his seat next to hers, and she would have given it to Siberu, if it weren't for her teacher who ordered him to take the seat behind Green. Green looked backwards across her shoulder to take a look at him. She could have asked him a thousand questions, but her questioning look only managed to draw out a grin, which resulted in her blushing madly.

„Please open your books at page 44!" The students carried out the teacher's instructions and one could hear the sound of rustling books. Yet Sho didn't focus her attention on the book in front of her: she was fully taken with analyzing this new situation. Sho got around a lot and had seen many different people, but she really had to agree that she had only seen a few who looked as beautiful as their new classmate. Just for a moment she asked herself, if he and she

were related, since the gleaming red colour of his hair was definitely a natural one. But Sho knew her family-tree quite well and knew for a fact that she had never heard of someone in her family going by the name of „Nakayama."

Did he have a girlfriend at the moment? Hm, maybe the fitting question was more just how many he had at the moment. Without any doubt this guy was a casanova; Sho had a knack for these things and at the moment Siberu seemed to be interested in Green. Was Sho supposed to warn her about this? But she was rather sure Green had noticed this herself. However, her friend had never really been in love and according to her red face this seemed to be love at first sight. Sho didn't like this at all. But she wasn't entirely sure whether it was because of jealousy or out of concern.

Sometime later Green proudly examined her accomplished work. She had attached a red ribbon on her bag of cookies and was rather satisfied with them, since they smelled marvelous and looked nicely. In addition to that she knew they'd taste well. Green was good at cooking and that also included baking. That had also been the reason Sho had been trying to snatch just one of these small, brown cookies during domestic economy-class. She was in particular absolutely unable to create anything just similar to „eatable", since she usually didn't have to rely on her own cooking abilities. Well, rich people and their advantages.

„Green, you could have at least given me one of them! You sure baked a lot of them...and you do know that mine are only useful for threatening-purposes!" The one spoken to still shook her head, while putting her jacket on top of her school uniform.

„Green, do you think I wouldn't know for whom you've baked all these cookies?" The girl looked up at Sho, since she was kneeling next to her bag, in which she was putting the cookies.

„Well, if you know they aren't meant for you, why are you even asking if you could get one of them?" Sho seemed to be in a bad mood when she answered:

„I think that guy doesn't suit you, Green." Green batted her eyelashes at Sho for moment, before she straightened herself and poked her friend, grinning all the while.

„Well, that wouldn't be called jealousy, would it, Sho?" Said one blushed a little, since she was caught in the act – or at least halfway through. Green's grin widened at that.

„I'm only worrying about you! That's all there is."

„Thanks, Sho, but I think I'm able to take care of myself."

„But these kind of guys only want to have fun."

„Just as I said, Sho. I can take care of myself, it's not as if I'd run around seeing things through rose-coloured glasses." Sho sighed, but didn't seem to want to give up yet.

Thus Green interrupted her:

„Say, don't you have editorial work to do at your paper's desk?" That distraction came off. Sho had to contemplate and shook her head. Green wasn't especially pleased with that answer, since that meant she had to go home on her own, now that Sho couldn't give her a ride. The problem was that the Wächterin had just noticed that it was raining and not just the usual way: the rain was coming down in sheets. And of course Green had forgotten her umbrella at home on this particular day and sadly she still had rhythmical gymnastics to attend, which basically

meant Sho would leave and she couldn't. In other words, Green couldn't go home alongside her, in a warm, comfy limousine.

„I could tell James to pick you up and take you home later. Surely you don't have your umbrella with you." 'James' wasn't the real name of the Minazai's private butler, but they had their fun calling him like that, since it was such a stereotypical butler name. For a long time Green hadn't even noticed that he was named differently in reality.

„No, thanks, Sho. I'll manage to arrive at home on my own, it wouldn't be the first time." Sho didn't like this declaration, as Green noticed in an instant, but even so Sho didn't say anything; instead she waved her goodbyes to her brown-haired friend, who had thrown her sports bag on her back. Nevertheless, Sho didn't go out into the rain without advising Green one last time against Siberu. Green shook her head at a loss and looked through the window, as Sho jumped into the cushy, heated limousine. Now, looking at these dark clouds, she somewhat regretted having refused her friend's offer.

Just great, and in this crappy weather she also had to go grocery shopping.

Green sighed and just wanted to head off to her gymnastics when her day suddenly got brighter. The rain didn't matter anymore.

„Siberu-san!" Perfect Timing, Green thought when she saw Siberu right in front of her, shouldering an umbrella. He grinned, on one hand glad to see her, but on the other hand annoyed that she still maintained the suffix. She walked up to him and asked him whether his first day in school had been a nice one.

„Yeah", he answered, obviously lacking any interest, but that soon changed when he said the following:

„That's because I had a beautiful back to look at."

Green returned his grin, only a slight shade of pink tinting her cheeks.

„Is it your nature to deliver so many compliments?"

„If the girl is as nice to look at as you, yes." Green accepted that reason and her grin changed into a sweet smile. Just like Siberu's.

„Well, should I walk you home?", he asked her, after they had smiled at each other for a few seconds. Apparently he had noticed that she had no umbrella with her. He, of course, had one. Green could easily imagine that he paid close attention to his hair and surely wouldn't like them to be soaked by rain.

Green was happy about his offering, but that was more thanks to his physical presence than due to the practical level. Still she hesitated to accept, since Sho's words still rang in her ears. Hence she said that she had still rhythmical gymnastics to attend and declined his offer with thanks. But he reacted differently, from what she had expected. His face brightened up.

„Rhythmical gymnastics? If it's that, I'll gladly wait for you!"

„Really? You'd really sacrifice your time for me?"

„Well, I'd like to watch you, or would I be a nuisance?"

„What? No, that's not what I meant! Of course you may watch, as long as you remain silent.

But it does take one hour, you know."

„That's nothing to me. Quite the opposite!" Siberu opened his umbrella, since they had to leave the building behind and stride over the schoolyard to reach the gym. He kept the umbrella over her protectively, but also considered closely that his own hair wouldn't get wet. Out of the corners of her eyes she looked at Siberu, still setting foot after foot. Soon enough she turned around, since the redhead had caught her doing it. He didn't say anything, just smiled in a content way. The whole thing felt embarrassing to Green and in order to distract herself and him she asked him to stop in his steps. His smile faded and curiously he watched her stooping to pick something out of her bag. When she finally found what she was looking for, she thrust it into Siberu's hands. Green turned slightly red, when he oddly stared at the biscuits.

„That's for me?" Her face got even redder when she affirmed. Maybe it was a bit too old-fashioned? He casted her an expressive look over the bag of biscuits.

„May I take that as a hint?"

„- as a hint? What for?"

„Considering, that it's finally getting a bit more personal with us." Green's heart didn't only quicken because of his nice words, but also because of the way he once again smiled at her. Practically she was willing to have him on the hook for a while longer, but this smile literally casted a spell upon her. She wasn't even able to get angry with herself, when she approved. By the time he rejoiced at finally being allowed to call her „Green-chan", she also smiled, even if she was basically absolutely against nicknames and suffixes of any kind.

When they arrived at the gym, Green said, that she'd also give him a nickname in return.

„And? What did you come up with, Green-chan?"

Siberu really seemed to appreciate being able to call her that way.

„I'll shorten your name. In turn for you being allowed to call me „Green-chan", I'll call you „Sibi". "

That day, Green trained twice as hard as she usually did, since she tried to avoid mistakes. She wanted to show Siberu her best and above all most beautiful side. But the more she paid attention to not making mistakes, the more mistakes sneaked into her voluntary exercise. More than once she stumbled over equipment and sprawled – not really elegant or presentable. Siberu seemed to find that amusing, just like the fact that her cheeks were still red on their way home because of her many mistakes. She had expected him to make fun of her embarrassment, but he didn't act on that once. He didn't even comment on them, which she was quite thankful for. Surely he knew she was deeply embarrassed.

They walked side by side, below the umbrella kept over their heads by Siberu to keep the pouring rain from soaking them. She caught herself again and again looking over to him and she called herself a fool in love, because her heart pounded stronger just by looking at him. Were it his flattering looks or was she...really in love with him? That fast? Green had never been in love before, and thus she wasn't sure how it felt, and when one could say „I am in

love". Was she in love, when her heart sped up, when she did nothing but look at him? It really wasn't a reason to blush all the time. Since when was she one of those shy ones? She had never been one and Siberu was no reason to suddenly become one.

But sadly she had to inform him of something, something which would interrupt their silent, but nice get-together.

„I have to go grocery shopping, sadly", she confessed. Green had forgotten about it or plainly repressed it, since she had been so delighted about Siberu's offer to walk her home. Siberu didn't seem to approve that much either; he looked at her with a frown.

„Can't your parents do that?" Green replied faster than her mind could register:

„I'm an orphan. I don't have any parents." At that he kept silent. For a while they continued walking without any of them saying a single word. Had it thrown him off his track? Green didn't like that. She hadn't intended to evoke any kind of bad conscience in him. She peered to him uncertain, but he didn't meet her gaze, he seemed to be deep in thought and elsewhere. Green pondered whether she should say something, but instead of doing so she linked their arms, wanting to wake him out of his thoughts, which proved to be successful. He looked at her, slightly surprised by Green's sudden approach; but apparently he had no problem with it, since he laid his arm around her shoulders and squeezed her close that way.

„Can I ask you something?", his voice sounded calm and serious.

But Green didn't really pay attention to his voice, she relished this unfamiliar proximity.

„If you're living all alone... aren't you lonely then?" Thereupon Green got a bit thoughtful and without really having to organize her mind the words just came out of her mouth:

„Why is everyone always asking that? Sho also does it frequently... Why do all of you think I'd be lonely? I don't have to be lonely just because I don't have any parents. Of course, it is quiet, but I don't fear loneliness. I don't need anyone!" Her last words held a touch of pride. Her whole life she had been looking in the face of loneliness; often it had been her greatest enemy... even if there had always been people who had given her a helping hand. But none of them had managed to free her from loneliness. Maybe because she had to make it on her own? Because she had to defend loneliness herself? Only after leaving Sho's family to build her own existence she had felt that she had finally wrestled down loneliness.

She grew to be strong. And she was proud of it.

„I don't know", Siberu started and woke Green out of her thoughts.

„I think you need someone who stays by your side, Green-chan." The one spoken to couldn't deny herself a grin and poked his side.

„Someone like... you?" Siberu shot her the same grin and replied:

„Maybe?" Green once again blushed slightly, but skillfully managed to hide that with another grin. She didn't answer; not because she didn't know what to say, but because it was time to say goodbye to the read-haired casanova, since they had arrived at her apartment block. Siberu intended to accompany her directly to her apartment, but Green declined, even if she would have been all too glad to spend more time with him. For one thing, the rest of her afternoon was booked for grocery shopping and homework anyway, and for another thing (which she told him of), she wanted to avoid him contracting a cold from Pink.

„Okay, Green-chan. Tomorrow, then?" The one spoken to had already climbed a few steps towards her apartment block, when Siberu stopped her with his sentence and she turned around once again.

„What do you mean, ,tomorrow'?"

„Do you want to go on a date with me?" Green blinked at him in a puzzled manner, but couldn't stop a smile from gracing her features. She didn't have to over think her reply, since that one was obvious to her.

„With pleasure!" Her next action was also none she had to think about, as she just did it. She jumped the few steps she had just climbed down again and gave Siberu a kiss on his cheek.

Before he could react, Green had already climbed the steps once again and just when the electrical slide doors had opened, she said with a blink:

„See you tomorrow, Sibi!" With that the girl disappeared behind the door and in the entrance hall, which left Siberu standing alone in the rain, looking after her back. Only for a mere moment his face remained dead still, before a smile spread upon his features. However, this smile had nothing to do with joy or similar feelings; it rather resembled a demon celebrating a triumph...

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