

Their Morning Routine

Morning in Jutengai. For about... 3... 2... 1.... And now it's noon. Noon in Jutengai, home to the Bakemono. That is to say, home of the Beasts. Men with the visage of animals, or rather, animals built like men. Either way, it is now noon. And for most they have been quite active all morning. For others, their day had just begun. A simple stone home, one you'd think belonged to a pig, given it's a complete pigsty. Kumatetsu was the owner of this place; a bear with a foul mouth and fouler attitude, as reflected by the decor: Bottles, clothes, and other unmentionables littered the floor. The only space that could be considered even remotely clean, and that's a slim margin here, was a couch and a large mound covered in a blanket. It rose and sank slowly, a low snoring echoing as the crimson bear man slept half on it, with his legs sloping onto the couch. He nestled on the mound, sinking into whatever it was as his eyes opened. Stretching up and sliding back onto his couch, he stretched as he yawned, followed by a smacking of his lips and itching his chest. Sliding out of bed, still fully dressed from the night before, he casually picked his nose while regarding the rising mound. "Oi, wake up" he sound, nudging it with his foot. A low growl rolled out from it, and the blanket was pulled harder, revealing a pair of large and thick white furred feet. "Oi! I said wake up!" he repeated, kicking it hard.

"GRRRR!"

Rising up came a silvery tiger head with a mop of messy green hair. The blanket around the mound slid as he ascended, revealing a massive stripy belly attached to the feline. Running a hand through his hair, the beast glared at the bear. "Yeah yeah, you're grumpy. But for once be useful and put some rice on while I get some eggs" Kumatetsu grumbled as he walked out of his home, scratching his ass as he did so.

Yawning and stretching again as he made wandered out into the sun, the bear bakemono went round to the chicken coop. The fowl scattered as he grabbed eggs by the threes. "Hmph, might not even be enough to feed that lardo" he scoffed, even though there was plenty in the bowl he carried.

Expecting little as he got back into the house, he couldn't hide his disgust as the lardo in question had propped himself up into a sitting position, his massive gut cupped and spilling over his crossed legs. There was a bottle of booze in hand that he was quietly drinking from, his glare and own look of disgust fixed completely on the bear. "Still not talking today, huh fatso?" Kumatetsu jeered.

“Fatso” snorted loudly as he drank what little was left from his bottle. “Funny, I remember you being way more shouty before you got your ass beaten. Where’s that guy? He’s way more interesting than you” the bakemono continued.

The tiger’s lip rose, revealing an arsenal of sharp teeth. “Yes?” the bear asked, cocking an ear towards the creature with his ear cupped around it. “Well?”

The creature snorted, his lip lowering as he tossed the bottle at Kumatetsu, the glass missing his ear by an inch. “Jeez. For the “Great Saint Beast Byakko”, you’re a disappointment” the bear chided. “And you didn’t put any rice on. I swear, if the Lord hadn’t asked me to do this for him I’d let the others take your head. And you know what you dumb demon? I’d laugh when they did so! How does that make you feel?!”

Byakko glared venomously, his lips crumpling in a clear sign of suppressing the desire to shout harsh, angry words. He was clearly trembling with rage to the point his eyelids were slits. But, he just snorted and put his vast back to the wall, and closed his eyes. “HEY HEY HEY! No more sleeping for you fatty! You get plenty of that already” Kumatetsu barked, smashing his foot against the demon’s belly.

It jiggled like jelly, and almost sounded like a drum whenever he hit it. The tiger seemed unperturbed by this, though he did seem to be clenching his jaw with the impact. After the twentieth stomp; actually, the twenty-first stomp, the bear just gave up. “To hell with you. Or... to heaven with you? AH! Whatever!” he snapped, waving his hand dismissively at the grouchy demon.

“Is this a bad time?”

“Heh, every time is a bad time with these two.”

At the front door, or the lack of one, was a man who resembled a pig in a black robe, and a monkey man with a coin purse tucked into his belt. They both seemed to be keeping their distance from just outside the doorframe. “Eh, I’m just trying to get this lazy tub of lard moving. He’s slower than a turtle” Kumatetsu complained.

Byakko's eyes opened into a glare, focused right on the bear. "Oh, now *that* got your attention huh? Don't like being compared to turtles? Why? Did one bite you on your giant butt or something?" the bakemono jeered.

The tiger's right eye twitched, and his lips clenched again. "Come ooooo! Say something!" Kumatetsu insisted.

"After all the fuss he made when he came here, I don't know why you want him to say anything now!" the monkey man remarked.

"It's better than watching him glare at me all the time. And it's no fun if he doesn't say anything back" the bear complained.

The pig men held a pained look as he swapped from Kumatetsu to Byakko and back again. "Shouldn't you try to be playing peacekeeper here Hyakushubo?" the simian asked.

"I... am a monk in training Tatara. And, I want to but, how could I of all people play devil's advocate to a literal devil?" he asked.

"He's nothing more than a blubbering pussycat" the bear asserted. "All this demon stuff is nothing unless he's all about gluttony. Since all he does is *eat*" he added over his shoulder.

The feline snorted loudly as he closed his eyes, returning to a restful (enough) slumber. "Tch, they should've executed him when they had the chance, now look at him" Tatara said, rubbing his chin as he eyed Byakko's fearsome belly and pudgy physique. "His neck's so thick nothing short of a weapon Artifact Spirit could cut it" he exclaimed.

"Yes. He definitely is... larger, since we last saw him. Is he" the pig began, but paused as he turned away. "*Oh why am I worrying about the well-being of a literal demon here? Well, considering who's supposed to be looking after him....*"

"Is he what?" Kumatetsu demanded.

"Is he getting enough... exercise and... nutrition?" Hyakushubo asked.

“All he does is eat anything he can get his fat hands on and sleep” the bear answered.
“Granted, he’s been here a month. Can’t understand why he got so big already” he remarked.

“Maybe he really *IS* a demon of gluttony? But don’t they have big mouths on their bellies?” the monkey wondered.

“I don’t know, and I don’t care. All I gotta do is keep him alive, and I can still be considered a candidate for Lord. Now are you two coming in or what?” Kumatetsu demanded.

“We’re... happier outside” the pig man answered with a pained expression.

“Ehhh you two worriers. Look at him, he’s harmless! If I put my hand near him he just growls at me and that’s it. All bark and no bite!” the ursine bakemono insisted.

“*Has* he tried to bite you?” the monkey asked.

“A few times. He stopped trying after I punched him in the nose” the bear shrugged.

“Then we’re happier outside” Tatara stated.

“Yes” Hyakoshubo nodded.

“Then feel free to stare at him while I prepare some food. A beast’s gotta eat” Kumatetsu said as he went to the kitchen to put some water on.

His two guests stared at his back, and then to the obese demon who was staring at the two of them. A nervous sweat inched down the backs of their heads, and then, Byakko idly licked his large, very sharp teeth and bounced his eye brows suggestively. “I-I think we’ll go” the pig declared.

"Ye-yeah" the monkey added.

And then they left. "Buncha wimps" the bear scoffed testily.

It seemed pretty clever in the start. After that damn demon materialised in Jutengai and got his sorry butt captured, he was going to be put to death for all the damage he caused. But the Lord, for whatever reason, decided to spare him. And then, he decided that Byakko would live with Kumatetsu. He'd even get paid to supplement his income in order to maintain the demon. And he was sure maintaining him. Peeking out from the kitchen, the bear observed the tiger staring off vaguely into space. *"Now what's that empty head of his thinking about? Food, probably"* he deduced.

"P-please Lord Suzako, I can explain!"

"SILENCE! I expected humans to get past Genbu, but you Byakko? Our expert hunter? You've brought shame on the Saint Beasts."

"Just as well I was there to deal with them, Lord Suzako."

"Yes, we are grateful for your diligence Seiryu. But you, Byakko? You've disgraced us!"

"Please Lord Suzaku!"

"ENOUGH! Byakko, you are to be stripped of your title, your rank, your powers, and you are to be cast out!"

"Please Lord, how could that even be possible? We're trapped here!"

"I know that! But, there is a loophole. You will be banished, forced to wander the planes of existence with no hope of return. I care not for which world you may end up in, but that world will be your tomb. This will be your punishment for your failures!"

"LORD SUZAKU!"

“Hey lardo! The rice is ready!” the bear called out. “It would’ve been ready sooner had you gotten your fat ass moving earlier” he added deridingly.

His mind come back into focus, Byakko stared at the vast bowl of rice placed on his side of the table. The bakemono was already cracking eggs into his bowl and mixing them up. “Well, come on and eat! It’s the only thing you’re good at!”

Rising slowly, the demon’s vast height became apparent as he crouched, to avoid hitting his head. And with the blanket gone, it was revealed that he was wearing nothing but a fundoshi gripping tightly his fat rolls and junk, while his ample belly covered some of his modesty. His massive feet **stomping** audibly, the creature forwent a chair for the floor, his chest still level with the table as his vast rump hit the ground with a **THUD!** He stared at the mountain of rice before him with utter dissatisfaction. “Come on and eat already. And add some eggs too. Get some nutrition like the busybody told you too” Kumatetsu snorted while eating his brunch.

Reaching over, the tiger grabbed several eggs, and tossed them into his mouth. He defiantly chewed, the shells **crunching** in his jaw as he stared daggers at the bakemono. “At least break them first tubby! The crunching makes my fur stand on end” he complained, his mind off his food.

Byakko stuck his yolk-soaked tongue out as he took a few more eggs and crunched on them as well. “This is going to keep being a thing with you, isn’t it?” the bear asked.

The demon smirked as he took the last of the eggs and ate them as well, grinding the shells with his teeth. “I hope your poops hurt” Kumatetsu childishly sneered as he scarfed down his yellowed rice. The demon smirked again as he continued chewing. “And you’re doing the dishes” the bear added.

Byakko snorted loudly as he closed his eyes and dipped his head. “He-HEY! Don’t think pretending to sleep will get you out of this tubby!”