CHAPTER 26

I heard one voice shouting loud the name that made everyone screams, I don’t know if scared or threated. Scared is me looking around and seeing a place full of people of different species, faces and anatomies that I should scream louder to overlap all this noise. I have no idea what each one would react with a presence of a “creature” that never more was seen. I just turned back and quickly I ran until the door to get away from there and at exact moment that I crossed the door, I felt one hand – or a lot – holding and pulling me inside of this crowd with curious eyes. I held at the wood door and it was difficult with a lot of hands holding me in every part and pulling me. I was trying with all my strength to get away from there until that one strong wind blew at my front with a velocity that nobody could notice what provoked it. What I could notice is other hands holding on my chest and shoulder and lifting me with a spin, turning all around with people flying or departing from me. Just after that I had my paws on the ground, dizzy with this crazy spin that I felt like one right music.

I was feeling a presence of someone holding me and I was recognizing by the touch and the fluffy who is the person that made this spin. Tanuki was on my side with his hands stretched trying to protect me against a crowd curious because there is a sacred creature inside of this restaurant, if it’s really. Looking into their eyes, many are scared, others angry while few are curious. I am the center of attention, the show is me; this is the main reason why everyone wants me.

– Alright, people! – Tanuki shouted to call attention. – Nobody touches on him if not everyone will get hurt. We didn’t come here for a fight.

I am surprised that Tanuki is using these daring words to threat the people from this simple village.

Come on, Vanz! Simple they have nothing.

– Are you protecting a demon? – one shouted and made a murmur increases between them.

– “He is a kitsune”; “He is the curse”; “The fat is cursed” are the phrases that I hear while Tanuki keeps quiet with the crowd in circle fasten us.

– He isn’t a kitsune – Tanuki tried to calm down the situation, even I seeing that it isn’t working. They are closer than never. – These creatures are extinct.

– He has eyes of one – one wolf pointed to me and I just backed off. – We never saw these eyes before.

– He has a different spirit – other one shouted. – I can sniff this monster.

Every time that one says, others shout louder to create a mess of arguments. I never felt myself so ill-spoken. I heard a metallic sound echoes into this place; I give a look at right and one is lifting a sword, the other with chains, arrows and so on. Now I am feeling witch hunt from long centuries. They scream and they are ready to hunt me, maybe kill – what is completely worse. Did I come here to meet the Sunomono village and I am received with threats and swords?

I just know that I was doing the enough to not get away from Tanuki and I was waiting that he would grab me and jump, break the roof and take me away from this nightmare. He was quiet at his pose, holding a leaf on his fingers and ready for some attack, not enjoying how is going the “conversation” while I have to wait his next action in pure adrenaline.

– Hold on!

Suddenly one voice shouted louder than the murmurs and this was enough to make everyone gets in silence, looking around where was the origin. I and Tanuki did the same, but I don’t know what impedes him to grab my hand and get away while these people are distracted with the silence. We aren’t seeing who called our attention. The situation just got notable when part of crowd opened the way and was revealed a big man of dark skin dressing long clothes and sat with one chopper glass. It’s incredible that everyone is quiet watching the subject that had the daring to call attention in the middle of chaos. Also, a kitsune for these people is the same than one finds gold and everyone makes the possible to take.

With few seconds in silence and seeing no movement, the man lands his hands on the knees and lifted with the notable effort by the size. Looking at us, he looks everything less reliable. I can’t describe exactly his appearance, but what I can say is that he is fat, gray hair and has a dry and prancing muzzle. I was feeling frozen in the middle of people frozen watching this suspect coming in slow steps.

– I don’t know why such euphoria because of one simple man – his voice was rough maybe because of drink he was carrying on the hand. I don’t know if it’s exactly a drink. – Looks like that you never saw a fox in your entire lives.

Nobody dared to speak one word against his argument. All the eyes are frozen on him and he was very close. He is a pig, very tall and fat looking at me with such admiration where I got disturbed with some facts: he has only one ear and eye, all located on the left side, what is a horrible scene to see in one person. He looks to be some retired warrior or, worse: a yokai.

– Centuries and centuries that we never more saw what is exactly a Kitsune – he left a little burp escapes –, why would he be one?

– He has eyes of one – one shouted in angry tone. – Look at his eyes.

– He has wizard iris as the Kitsunes – other one shouted behind me.

– This is so silly like to confuses fish with Onamazu – he laughs from the fun arguments. Fun I see nothing. – He can be a weird mix of Bakeneko or just some intruder from the other side of Sunomono. Kitsunes are considered exotic and disappeared long years ago.

“Intruder from the other side”. I had lifted my eyebrows before this argument and looked at Tanuki to see his reaction. He knows about the portal that takes us for the other side. Everyone was discussing in whispers between arguments and doubts. Also, they are close to grab me and cut me, eat, pull, steal, whatever they want.

– This is a lie! – one cat gave one step forward to bump into the pig. – I know very well how is a Bakeneko and this fox is clearly an extinct Kitsune. I can lick him and tell you if he has an aura of wizard or not – I ruffed when I heard that someone would lick me just to see if I have this hidden power. The murmurs grow low.

– Serious, furball? – Tanuki interrupted putting at my front with a laugh. – Lick someone in public is shameful for a Yokai.

– Shameful? – he shouted buffing in euphoria facing Tanuki. Now I noticed that he has two tails. Normal cat he isn’t. – You protecting this monster is a shame for someone of big balls. Who do you think you are, Tanuki?

– Me? – Tanuki laughed. – I can introduce myself with a duel if you are daring enough for me.

– Alright! Calm down! – I had interrupted them from this fight. I didn’t want to watch other duel scene again, but I don’t know why I was stupid to put at the middle of them to separate. – This duel won’t help in nothing this situation.

– He is right – the cat pulled the topic and put at my front, facing. He was smaller than me, but the audacity is bigger. – Let me lick you and proof if you are really a Kitsune or a faker.

I bended back with the cat daring to lick me just to see if I am this wizard. Besides disgusting, it’s a shame in public. Tanuki was ready to put some order when I saw one hand moving from up to down knocking the cat’s nape, but it isn’t from him; it’s from the pig. The cat bended his spine with the knock and I just looked at pig that retracted for other… attack?

He opened his arms and gave a bellied exactly on cat’s face, throwing him with strength until the roof that kicked and fell behind the crowd. The “punch” was so strong that left a mark on the roof of broken and over the table where he fell. Everyone looked at this scene amazed and the eyes are trading anxious and in doubt what is the next step to give. By their faces – including I and Tanuki – are scared if someone tries something with me that the pig would defend me.

This is other thing in mind: he saved me. Why? More reasons to get scared.

The doubt was so much that everyone began to dissipate, each one returning to their sits and the circle around me opening space, what looks like that everyone accepted the pig theory that I am not a kitsune – and I am not. I wasn’t still safe standing in this bar and I wanted to go at other place that isn’t this crazy side of Sunomono. If I knew that this side is so crazy, I comprehend why nobody knows about them.

– That was close – Tanuki was more relieved with it and pat on my back, but I don’t put my confidence so high; the eyes are over me yet. He said “close” at point that I thought that everyone would fight just to possesses me. This is what I am meeting about them and I am saying like if I was some princess to be coveted. And this idea isn’t good to think.

– I hope that nobody was an arrow at your chest, boy – the pig approached to us greeting with his hand, different from the classic way to bend forward us. – I never thought that someone from other side would meet this side one day and provoke such noise like now.

– I thank you very much – I say blushing and greeting. Tanuki didn’t pronounce, but he was by my side looking at the pig with the hands on the waist. The pig is really big, not only in fat, dressing typical Japanese clothes. – You didn’t need to save me.

– Yes. I could handle the case – I don’t know why Tanuki replied on this way. This was a little rough, but made the pig laughs.

– I know you could, but better we shut the subject up. Long years I don’t see a Tanuki so skillful like you.

– Serious? – suddenly he laughs. – This was nothing. I didn’t show all what I can do – since when did he turn joyful? I was looking at his face thinking very weird. He was marveling him and now is laughing with him. Maybe the praise lifted his mood.

– I wonder. This mark on your forehead must say a lot about you – the pig smiles with a notable comment about Tanuki that reacted surprised. Also, impossible to not notice the mark on his head. After, the pig looks at me. I was ruffling just to notice that only one eye is facing me. – You really have eyes as fire. This explains why the attention fell over you.

– I see – I blushed more by the fact that everyone hunts me than the praise. – I imagine that kitsunes don’t appear here centuries ago. They are seen as threat for the villagers.

– Or a blessing – his laugh returns with his slap on my shoulder. – Depend how you see these fantastic creatures. Why don’t we let this subject for after and let’s sit for a drink? I don’t know if you came for it, but I can compensate your stress paying something for you.

Not matter how sweet and comfortable he can be with me, I never will be fine facing a man of one eye and ear. This is scary. Looks like that I am living some horror story with a weird creature.

Thinking well, my life is almost becoming one.

Before his offer, I and Tanuki traded looks and he pulled a smile like always does. Sometimes I distrust from his confidence. For every type of situation, one smile to lift the mood. But this man saved me from the trouble that I was put maybe in death. I should thank him and accept the invite, if it doesn’t bring more troubles because I still feel the eyes of curious looking at me. Animals, living objects and weird creatures with a short muzzle, pointed nose for down, little ears and lips.