



# YOTSUGI STRESS

HEROINE BOOK 8: ONONOKI YOTSUGI

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TRANSLATION: HAREMLESS

“Unlimited Rulebook.”

Ononoki Yotsugi said, as she unleashed whatever that move or more like that brute force attack was called, blowing away half of the monkey aberration that I, the Afflicting Cat, and that young girl vampire were barely holding our own against.

In other words, that corpse doll exterminyated the aberration that the vampire and I were having so much trouble with, just like swatting a fly. Ah—I guess just saying that would’ve been simpler, nyan?

Essentially, the two of us were saved from the brink of death by that emotionless tween girl, but I still had a little trouble wrapping my head around it. Maybe it’s because I’m just stupid.

No, that’s nyot it.

The vampire looked just as out of it as me. I knyew that the two of them weren’t on very good terms from the little bit of their conversation I heard (I guess I’m more sensitive to what goes on between people because I’m a cat), but regardless of that, it was written all over the vampire’s face that

she nyever thought she'd see the day when she'd be saved by that corpse doll.

In actuality.

She... didn't really save us.

"That's right. I was just doing my job."

Ononoki Yotsugi said. That doll, or whatever she was, it was always a mystery to me, said without batting an eye after driving off the monkey aberration, wearing a raincoat, that seemed to be able to control the rain.

I wasn't sure whether the nyame she told us upon arriving was her real nyame or nyot.

"I wasn't planning at all to save you Afflicting Cat, or you mysterious vampire."

"Who are you calling 'mysterious vampire'. You know who I am. Just the other day, me, you and that girl who's always lost, the three of us teamed up on my lord."

The corpse doll seemed completely unconcerned, simply turned her head to the side and asked, "Did we actually do that?"

"Well, like Oshino-onii-chan always said, 'People can only save themselves'. Though I guess there aren't actually any 'people' here."

"..."

"..."

Right.

She could quote that Hawaiian shirt-wearing man all she wanted, but right nyow there was only an Afflicting Cat aberration, a vampire aberration and a corpse doll aberration here. I guess that monkey that ran off was also an aberration, nyan.

"More importantly, like I just explained, mysterious vampire, we should head for that park as soon as possible, that lolicon's waiting for us."

If a lolicon was waiting there, I wouldn't want to go to that kind of park nyo matter the reason, but I guess it was a code of some kind.

"Ka ka. Well then, sounds good."

The vampire said with a quiet nyod, then quickly left. I could tell that there was something urgent going on, but how could she drag me out here

then leave without even saying thanks, and on top of that leave me here alone with this emotionless girl, nyaa.

“... And we may as well get rid of that monkey too.”

That doesn't sound very safe, nyan.

From what the vampire told me during our fight with the monkey, it was an aberration that killed aberrations; a specialist of sorts. It could destroy a stray cat, or rather a stray aberration like me, on a whim if it felt like it.

Even if her goal wasn't to save us, that corpse doll had driven off the raincoat monkey before it crushed us to pieces, so there's nyo way she would save us from the frying pan just to throw us into the fire.

Please don't, nyan.

“Afflicting Cats aren't my area of expertise, so I'll leave things where they are... Good thing I wasn't here with onee-chan.”

“...”

“Hmm? What's with the face? I said I'll let you go this time, so hurry up and get out of here. You seem like you've got a lot to deal with anyway.”

“...”

I mean.

I guess I should be pretty happy that she just let me go. I am a little angry being ignored like that, but I really do have a lot to deal with nyow. Nyeither of us have time to deal with each other.

But there was still one thing that I wanted to ask this rather professional aberration before leaving.

Maybe it'd be better to ask “Oshino-onii-chan” or “onee-chan” but I ended up asking this familiar (a shikigami I think).

“... You don't really seem stressed out, do you.”

“Hmm?”

“It seems like you never get stressed out or lost or conflicted about anything. That must be nice. Do you just decide to do everything and nyever regret any of it?”

I got that kind of impression watching her blow away half of the monkey aberration. Nyot trying to save us, but with nyo hate toward the monkey aberration either.

It seemed like she was just doing it because she decided to.

With a professional sense and business ethics.

Just like a proud professional straightening their tie before a long day in the office.

Saying "It's just business".

I felt jealous of how she could cut off all of her emotions and just act.

Actually.

I guess it's not quite the same as being "jealous".

Actually it's completely different.

Like hell I'm feeling jealous.

I am those emotions, that stress.

I'm her innocence.

Like a beautiful white kimono, her stress.

"Actually, I guess I've never regretted anything before."

The corpse doll replied right away.

But to me it just sounded like she was following the instruction manual, reading out of a manual of all the answers to the questions she imagined she'd be asked.

"In reality, it's probably the same whether I've regretted anything before or not. Emotions are just another tool to me. But I guess that's the same for humans too."

"... Hmm? What do you mean?"

"By feeling stress that they aren't really feeling or don't have to feel, humans play and the like, don't they? To me they're like tools of my trade, and to humans they're like tools to play with, but in the end emotions are just tools."

"... What's this. Are you saying that humans need stress in order to mature? Or that humans feel like they can keep going because of some random stress?"

“Both yes and no. People always say ‘Other people’s sadness is sweet like honey’. But really, a person’s own sadness is also sweet like honey.”

Just like how when honey is too thick you get heartburn.

The corpse doll continued just like she was reading words off a page.

Being neither “other people” or “a person” herself, only just as a corpse.

“So,” she reluctantly continued.

“I feel sorry for your master from the bottom of my heart. She’s had all the fun we call ‘stress’ stolen from her by you. Though, you could call my sympathy more playing too.”

“... Hmm.”

That’s a pro for you. She knew exactly what I wanted to say. She saw through the question I was going to ask before I even really understood what it meant.

I guess so.

You could say that my master feels quite guilty about pushing all of her stress off onto me—an aberration that she created herself. But I don’t think that my position is anything to be sad about at all.

We’re not pitiful.

In fact, “The people you should pity are,” I said as I looked up at the corpse doll.

But she had already disappeared.

Without a word of farewell, she had headed off to continue her job.

It just showed with a sort of boredom, completely different from the way that Hawaiian shirt guy hated goodbyes, just how little stress I presented to her, even as a manifestation of stress itself.

She was an aberration that even an Afflicting Cat couldn’t curse. I wasn’t even a threat to her.

That corpse doll.

If humans are just supposed to play and being stressed out is playing, I guess it makes sense that not feeling any stress at all is the same as being dead.

Meaning that, you could say my master has come back to life now that she’s begun to feel my presence.

The vampire to her “lord”.

The corpse doll to her “onee-chan”.

The Afflicting Cat to her “master”.

The three aberrations that had fought together for just a moment ended their brief moment—in which they passed by each other—and their brief misunderstanding, and each went their different ways each for their own “bosses”.

The vampire for her bond.

The corpse doll for her work.

And then, what do I go for, nyan?