THE ASTERISK WAR

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CENTRAL ASTERISK, MAIN ARENA—THE SIRIUS DOME

CHAIRMAN OF THE FESTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MADIATH MESA
THAT'S THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE? HE LOOKS PRETTY YOUNG.

MAGIATH MESA IS A SEIDOKU-KAN ALLUM.

WHOA...

Huh...?

Ah!
IT'S ABOUT TO START, RUR., JUUS...  

THE FESTA WILL ALWAYS BE THE HIGHEST FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT IN THE WORLD...

THE STAGE FOR INCOMPARABLE EXCITEMENT AND DRAMA...

IT'S ABOUT TO START, HUH, JULIS...

...YES.

...THE ONLY CONTEST THAT CAN SHAKE YOUR VERY SOUL!

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THE FESTA BEGINS---
I'm here at the Status Dome, the stage for the first match of the tournament!

Now, not that I think there's much need—but let's go over the rules!

During that time, a field of 256 competing teams will be narrowed down to the best 32.

The Eesta takes place over two weeks.

Pham Thi Tran-san, an alumna of Jie Long Seventh Institute, will serve as our commentator.
AND THE MAIN TOURNAMENT IS WHERE THE SCHOOLS ARE AWARDED POINTS.

THAT'S RIGHT.

THE MATCHUPS FOR THE MAIN TOURNAMENT WILL BE DECIDED BY LOTTERY.

UNCONSCIOUS

THEIR CONSCIOUSNESS OR IF THEY FORFEIT, THE MATCH IS DECIDED.

BADGE BROKEN

WHEN BOTH MEMBERS OF A TEAM LOSE EITHER THEIR SCHOOL CHESTS ...

OR...

THE SCHOOL CHEST SYSTEM WILL ANNOUNCE THE OUTCOME.

SO, LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE PRELIMINARIES!

THE RULINGS ON THE PROGRESS OF THE MATCH ARE AUTOMATICALLY DETERMINED.
AH!

BROKEN BROKEN.

WOW—WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

NOW, THIS IS THE FIRST ROUND OF BLOCK...

...IN THE FIRST ROUND OF BLOCK...

AND IT'S OVER! BOTH BADGES HAVE BEEN BROKEN—THAT'S THE MATCH!

THAT'S SEIODO-KAN'S TOP-RANKED FIGHTER, AYATO AMAGARI, ALIAS MURAKUMO!

RAAAAHHH!

A NEW RISING STAR, HE'S MORE THAN LIVING UP TO THE HYPE!

NEXT UP IS THE INTERVIEW WITH THE WINNING TEAM.

HEH-HEH, I EXPECTED NOTHING LESS.

NO MATTER WHAT THEY ASK YOU, BE AS VAGUE AS YOU CAN.
NO NEED TO WORRY—I HAD TRAPS Laid WITH MY FIXED ABILITY.

YOU DIDN’T EVEN ACTIVATE YOUR LUX.

In any case, we got through the first round without revealing our combination attacks.

Looks like Saya and Kirin are doing pretty good too.

Let’s try to keep doing that.

Yeah.

Yeah, let’s.

Why don’t we have a light lunch?
Even for the FESTA, there are a lot of people out here...

We probably can't get into any kind of restaurant at all.
WHAT'S THAT? A FIGHT?

TAKE THAT!

SHOULD WE CHECK IT OUT?

DON'T YOU EVER LEARN?

I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING ABOUT IT...
DON'T YOU GUYS KNOW SETTLING OLD SCORES IS OUT OF STYLE?

UHH...

YAAA-ARGH!

SH-SHUT UP!

GETTING EVEN'S A MATTER OF PRIDE!

BIKU-CRACKO
Hey! What're you looking at?

KUWA (CHUKU)

Woo! Whistle!

That's... Irene Urzaiz!

Huh?
NICE. THAT SAVES ME SOME TROUBLE.

IF IT AIN'T THE INFAMOUS MURAKUMO.

SO THIS IS THE GUY...?

EXACTLY WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE WITH MY TAG PARTNER?

LAMILEXIA.
I got no business with you. Stay outta this.

Those guys wanted to pick a fight with me.

Even so, to accept a challenge in a place like this is absurd.

You could easily be disqualified for this. A fighter...

Who gets into a brawl during the festa... is too dangerous to ignore.

Even so, to accept a challenge in a place like this is absurd.
THEN WHY DON'T YOU SHOW ME...

OH YEAH?

...HOW YOU'D HANDLE IT?!

OOH, BETTER REACTIONS THAN I THOUGHT.

GUESS I SHOULDN'T JUDGE BOOKS BY THEIR COVERS.
THAT'S...

...THE GRAV-SHEATH.

SO, YOU TWO ARE THE TYPE...

YEAH. LET'S.

...TO TURN TAIL AND RUN?

LET'S GO, AYATO.
Amy. THAT IS IF YOU CAN RUN AWAY.
After I told you again and again to stay out of trouble!

Are you getting into fights again, sis?!
I let you out of my sight for one second...

How did this even happen?

Well, uh...

Look, Priscilla, it's just...

Ah!

Ah (cry)

I'm so sorry...

...that my Onee-chan's causing trouble for you!
Just say it!

Ugh, fine...

Why do I have to—?

You apologize too, Onee-chan!

Oh no, it's nothing...

Sorry 'bout that. Now get out of here.

You have to apologize and mean it!

I'm so sorry!

I'll give her a good talking-to!
I suppose we'd better watch out for her.

What she said to me was, "My business ain't with you."

Even though I was the one who confronted her.

I wanted to see if she'd give anything else away, but...

Anyway, I suppose we'd better watch out for her.

She had some particular reason to go after you.

Anyway, why'd you talk to her like that?

You really didn't notice?

The city guard's here! We'd better not stick around.

Time to go!
FIFTH DAY OF THE PHOENIX – SIRIUS DOME

BLOSSOM—SEMISERRATA!

HURRAH!

EEEK!

THAT'S THE MATCH! WINNERS:

AYATU AMAGIRI AND JULIA ALEKSA DON RIESSFELD!

JUST ONE STUPID QUESTION AFTER ANOTHER...

REALLY...

DON'T THEY KNOW WHEN TO STOP?
BY THE WAY, AYATO...

...I BROUGHT SOMETHING FOR US TODAY...

IT'S VERY SIMPLE, SO DON'T GET YOUR HOPE UP!

YOU MADE LUNCH!?
I'll try one right now, then.

...MM. Pretty good!

H... how is it?

Oh, cool!

PAA (BEAM)

KAAM (BEAM)

BA SH! (SHY)
 Aren't you having any, Julis?

...? Well, sure, I will, but...

Ayato... don't you think...

You've been paying too much attention to Sasamiya and Toudou lately?

It really doesn't seem very fair...

I'm fighting for you, Julis...

Nothing can change that.

Umm...
I can't believe he said that...

..., we should check on the other matches...!

Oh, yeah.

You know...

So...

...Their match was today too.
SO, WE HAVE TEAM MacPHAIL-HOOKE MAKING THE FIRST MOVE.

WHAT COULD THEIR TARGET BE?

THEY'RE BOTH KEEPING THEIR DISTANCE FROM IRENE VIZAIZ.
The Gravisheath is a powerful Daga Lux with the ability to control gravity.

...that as long as an opponent keeps moving, they can avoid its effects.

But we understand its power can only target an area, which should mean...

I heard there's never been a student before...

...who could withstand the side effects.

...is its energy consumption.

That means if we can prolong the fight...

...we have the advantage!
...we'll see what this girl can do!

and while we're buying time...

sheesh...

everybody always tries...

...the same damn thing...
LIKE I SAID...
...NO ORIGINALLITY!

STOP you...

NGH...

HOLD ON TIGHT.

I'LL GET TO YOU IN A BIT.

ONE DOWN.
You'll regret underestimating me...!

Damn you...

Randy Hook—unconscious!

Zun (sigh)

Woo!

Hey, you're pretty tough...

...Kornephoros.

Take this!

Zuu (crak klumph)

Blast Nemea!
Maybe I did take you a bit too lightly.

Owww...

Onee-chan!

I'll only take a little.

Sorry, Priscilla.

Guess I got no choice...

Out of respect for your strength, I'll let you see my full power for a bit.
SEE, THE GRAVISHAETH DEMANDS BLOOD AS THE COST FOR ITS POWERS.

NORMALLY, FIGHTING WITH IT WOULD BLEED YOU DRY IN NO TIME.

THAT'S WHY IT TRANSFORMS THE BODY OF THE USER TO TAKE THE COST FROM AN OUTSIDE SOURCE.
OKAY THEN. HERE GOES!

GO!

TRES FANEGA!

I WENT AHEAD AND INCREASED THE ENTIRE STAGE'S GRAVITY.

HA-HA-HA! THAT WON'T WORK.

THERE'S NO GETTING AWAY.
ALL RIGHT, YOU WIN...

RAAMMM!

THAT'S THE MATCH!

WINNERS—IRENE UZAI AND PRISCILLA UZAI!
GOT IT!

ON YOUR LEFT, TOSHO!
SASHIMIYA SENPAI!!

GOGOGO (STRIKE)

SIMULATION ENDED

EEK!
SORRY, TOUDOU...

HAA...

W... SOMETHING WRONG?

AH! (GIRL STARE)

GOOD LUCK WITH THE PHOENIX!

TA (WAVE)

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE AUTOGRAPH!
OH, NOTHING. I WAS JUST THINKING HOW HARD LIFE MUST BE FOR POPULAR PEOPLE.

I WORRY.
YOU'RE TOO FRIENDLY, AYATO.

IT'S UP FOR AUCTION ON THE NET.

SIGNATURE: AMASHI

IT'S A POPULAR WAY FOR STUDENTS TO MAKE A QUICK BUCK.

THAT AUTOGRAPH I JUST GAVE HER...

YOU SAY THAT NOW, BUT IF WE GET MATCHED AGAINST EACH OTHER IN THE PHOENIX—WHAT THEN?

HMM.

IT HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.

LIKE ME?

DON'T MIND THEM.

YOU HAVE FANS WHO ARE GENUINELY ROOTING FOR YOU.
I feel the same. That would be a completely different matter.

...when I heard you two were teaming up for the Phoenix.

I was surprised, though...

I hesitated a little when Sasamiya-senpai suggested it.

I want to prove how powerful my father's guns are.

But I've made up my mind too.

To do that, I needed a partner to fight with in the Phoenix.
...you and Ayato haven't been partners for very long either.

Look who's talking.

Well, it'll be interesting to see how far a hastily formed team can get.

Wh-- excuse me!

Mmk...

Whimper...

We're better at working as a team than you two are!

As far as technique, neither of you have any problems...

...so it's a matter of synchronizing yourselves to each other. You can't perfect that overnight...
SO THAT'S WHAT WE HAVE TO DO NOW...

I SEE.

IT SEEMS THE WORK WE MUST DO IS TO DEEPEN OUR RAPPORT.

...BUT TOUDOU AND I WILL BE SKIPPING JOINT PRACTICE TOMORROW.

AYATO, I'M SORRY...

SURE.
WHAT ARE WE ACTUALLY GOING TO DO...

...TO DEEPEN OUR RAPPORT?

LMMM...

IT OCCURS TO ME THAT I'VE NEVER ENGAGED IN BEHAVIOR THAT WOULD DEEPEN MY RAPPORT WITH OTHERS.

SORRY, TOUDOU.

I'M SORRY... I'M NOT VERY GOOD AT THIS SORT OF THING EITHER...

WHAAAT?

YOU DON'T HAVE A CLUE!

......

I SEE...
IF WE DO THINGS TOGETHER, MAYBE OUR RAPPORT WILL DEEPEN A LITTLE ON ITS OWN.

WELL, NOW WE HAVE A DAY OFF. WE MIGHT AS WELL DO SOMETHING.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO, TOUDOU?

I WANT TO GO SHOPPING.

WHAT ABOUT YOU, SASAMIYA-SENPAI?

HUH? WMM...

SHOPPING ...?
So, what do you want to shop for?

I haven't decided on the particulars, but I'd like to buy a present.

My father's birthday is coming up.

Oh! I-it's nothing!

For...

For a birthday present...

Oh...

Sorry...

Ah!
WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS YOUR FATHER?

WELL THEN, SOME KIND OF FOOD HE LIKES...

HE WOULDN'T WEAR IT.

...HE DOESN'T LIKE ANYTHING.

...A TIE WOULD BE THE TRADITIONAL OPTION, RIGHT?

...HE DOESN'T DRINK.

THEN...

...A BOTTLE OF SOMETHING?

UHM...

WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS YOUR FATHER?
EVER SINCE I WAS LITTLE...

AH!

SIMPLY PUT, HE'S A MAD SCIENTIST.

...HE'S GIVEN ME HIS LATEST GUN FOR MY BIRTHDAYS...

OH...

I REMEMBERED THERE'S A STORE I LOOKED UP EARLIER.

UHM...

I DO, BUT...

DO YOU KNOW HOW TO GET THERE, TOUDOU?

BUN CAMO

REDEVELOPMENT AREA

BUT THIS IS...
THANKS FOR YOUR HBU!!

HOLD ON A SEC, SAGAMIYA-SENPAI.

IT'S A USED LUX SHOP THAT SPECIALIZES IN GUNS AND ALSO CARRIES ILLEGAL WEAPONS.

WHOA.

S-SAGAMIYA-SENPAI, WHAT IS THIS PLACE -?
CUSTOM SPECS FOR HRMS SPECIAL OPS...!

A DK-44 V MODEL!

HUH... THAT'S...

IS THE GENERATOR THE REAL DEAL?

YOU KNOW YOUR STUFF, MISSY.

NOT AN ISSUE. I'LL TAKE IT.

SURE IS.

BUT AS YOU CAN SEE, IT'S A HUNKA JUNK.

THE THING'S TOTALLY BUSTED. THAT OKAY WITH YOU?
GOOD SHOPPING TRIP.

This model uses a special generator that's relevant to his research.

So a genuine article that isn't even if it's broken— is a pretty rare find.

But it has stability problems, and most of them get modified.

Um... is that for your father?

I see... that's good!
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

OH, RIGHT.

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN.

Huh?

OH, I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING...

......hm?

AH...
...I didn't think you'd want to do...

Okay!

...something like this.

Basha

Zabaz splash

Basha

Wai

Wai

Wai (shout)

Wai (shout)

But if you wanted someone to teach you, I think you could've asked Ayato.

No...

Is... is it weird?

Don't say things like that, Sasa-Miyasenpai!
I just wanted him to see my good points...

So I thought, if I could learn to swim without Ayato-Senpai knowing...

But, you know, Ayato likes people like that.

You're a formidable opponent.

Huh?

Okay...

I'm going to get us some drinks. Practice on your own.
Uh-er... I'm so sorry!

...look out!

HM?
ARE YOU TRYING TO PICK A FIGHT WITH ME? IS THAT IT?

IF IT'S A DUEL YOU WANT, WELL, THAT'S JUST FINE! I'LL FIGHT YOU RIGHT NOW!

...DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING...?

J... JUST WHAT...
SEIDOU-KAN's TOP-RANKED STUDENT?

AREN'T YOU...

THE KEEN-EDGED TEMPEST?

... wallet...

AH, NO.
I LOST THE OTHER DAY.
I'M UNLISTED NOW.

...AHEM.

WELL, I MAY HAVE BEEN A BIT RASH TO SUGGEST A DUEL.

WHAT THE...

I'M REALLY VERY SORRY...

I'M... STILL NOT VERY GOOD AT SWIMMING...

BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING, RUNNING INTO PEOPLE LIKE THAT?

YOU NEED TO BE A LITTLE MORE CAREFUL.
A genestella—
no, a top-
ranked
genestella—
who can’t
swim?

You’re kidding,
right?

How embar-
rassing!

Toudou,
are you
okay?

Sasamiya-
senpai...

You can’t
swim, then
get out of
the pool.

You can sit
on the edge
and splash
around a bit
instead!

Oh my... a
friend of
yours? Did
she come
to bring
you your
floaties?

Now, I
must be
going.
...I was in the wrong too.

Why don't you get mad when people talk to you like that?

But...

You really need to grow a spine.

Really...?

Maybe I've just gotten used to how my uncle treated me.

Ha ha ha...

That doesn't give her the right to make fun of you.
YOU SHOULD TAKE MORE PRIDE IN YOURSELF.

PRIDE...?

THEN YOU SHOULD GET UN-USED TO IT.

I KNOW JUST FROM SPENDING A LITTLE TIME WITH YOU.

YOU HAVE LOTS OF GOOD QUALITIES, TOUDOU.

...THEY DON'T NEGATE THE THINGS THAT ARE GOOD ABOUT YOU.

EVEN IF YOU HAVE SOME WEAKER ONES...

THANK YOU...
IT'S KIND OF SILLY TO ASK NOW, BUT...

...CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?

SINCE WE'RE TALKING...

...UM... WHY DID YOU CHOOSE ME...

AS YOUR PARTNER FOR THE PHOENIX?

...BUT MOST OF ALL...

YOUR STRENGTH, OBVIOUSLY, AND OUR STRATEGIC COMPATIBILITY, YOUR PURPOSE AND PERCEPTIVENESS...

LOTS OF REASONS.
I could feel it when I watched you duel him.

...the same way Ayato does.

Because you use a sword...

...and that made me think...

...that we'd be sure to go far.

A sword welded with focused intent...

...sincerity, and dignity.

...Yeah!
THAT'S THE MATCH!

WINNERS—
SAYA SASAMIYA
AND KIRIN TOGOGU!
WINNERS—
AYATO
AMAGI AND...

SEVENTH DAY OF THE
PHOENIX—SIRIUS
DOME

...JULIS-
ALEHIA UDN
RIESSFELD!

THEY WERE
DOMINANT
AGAIN TODAY!

THEY
ALSO TOOK
ROUNDS ONE
AND TWO
WITH THEIR
OVERWHELMING
STRENGTH.

WOW,
ARE
THOSE
TWO
STRONG!

CANT WAIT
to see What
they'll show
us in the main
tournament.

TEAM
AMAGIRI-
RIESSFELD HAS
ADVANCED OUT
OF BLOCK C
TO THE MAIN
TOURNAMENT!
ANP, weu...

BUT THE REAL FIGHT IS AHEAD.

YUP, SO FAR, SO GOOD.

WHew... SO WE got THROUGH...

THE PRELIMINARY MATCHES.

OThER THAN THOSE TWO TEAMS, THE JIE LONG TWINS AND THE PENDRAGON TEAM...

THere's LAMILEXIA.

...ARE ALSO ON THE LIST OF THOSE I'd LIKE TO AVOID.

I HOPE WE DON'T FACE SAYA AND KIRIN RIGHT AWAY.

THE BRACKET'S BEING ANNOUNCED TOMORROW, RIGHT?

...THE PUPPETS FROM ALLEKANT TOO SOON EITHER.

NOT JUST THEM—I WOULDN'T WANT TO FACE...

AND, WELL...
BUT THE CONCERN IS HER SISTER.

I DON'T THINK SHE'D BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING DRASTIC AT CLOSE RANGE.

AS FAR AS I CAN TELL FROM THE DATA, THE EFFECTS OF THE GRAVITY-WEAPON'S POWER...

...DIFFER FROM USER TO USER.

...I STAND A CHANCE AGAINST HER ONE-ON-ONE.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

TO BE HONEST, I DON'T THINK...

IN A PURE CLOSE-RANGE FIGHT, MAYBE.

HMM...

A REGENERATIVE, OF ALL THINGS.

BUT THE BIGGEST CONCERN IS HER SISTER.
But she's an extraordinary one. ...who can heal their own wounds—that is, regenerate.

HEALED!

That means a type of Dante or Strega...

If she can not only heal injuries, but also restore lost blood, that would place her in the top tier.

So that's how they deal with the Gravisheath's high energy cost...?

Ah!

She can probably even regenerate lost body parts.

Right... quite an ace in the hole.

Haa...
I was thinking of going to watch the lottery in person.

What about you, Julis?

Do you have any plans?

Well, whatever. There's nothing we can do...

...until the bracket is posted tomorrow.

Haa...

A lot of chores from home have been piling up...

I was going to spend the day making calls and taking care of paperwork.

I don't think I need to tell you this every time, but...

Yes, ma'am.

...please stay out of trouble, will you?
OTHER TEAMS ARE AMAZING, TOO. IT LOOKS LIKE IT'LL BE TOUGH.

ALL THE OTHER TEAMS ARE AMAZING. THOUGH IT LOOKS LIKE IT'LL BE TOUGH.

I'LL DO THE BEST I CAN.

I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU COMPETE IN THE MAIN TOURNAMENT.

FIRST OF ALL, CONGRATULATIONS ON ADVANCING.

AH, YEAH. THANKS.
I DO SHOULDER A HEAVY BURDEN, DRAWING THE LOTTERY.

I'VE BEEN LONELY, YOU KNOW.

BUT JULIS AND THOSE OTHER GIRLS HAVE HAD YOU ALL TO THEMSELVES LATELY.
SORRY, CLAUDIA!

I CAME TO THE COMMERCIAL AREA TODAY WITH SAYA, BUT...

...BEFORE I KNEW IT, I'D LOST HER...

UH, UM, AYATO?

IS SOMETHING WRONG?
I'll help you look, so let's meet up first.

GOT IT.

Oh... I see.

HAA...

OH—Thank you so much! Right now, I'm...

I-I don't know what to do...

MURUI (Pout)

...just when we were finally going to get some time together.

Sorry, Claudia. That's the situation, so...
TO you,
IPROMISE.

I'M REALLY SORRY! I'LL MAKE IT UP TO YOU, I PROMISE!

BUT REALLY WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS.

YOU'LL MAKE IT UP TO ME? I'VE GOT HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR YOU, THEN.

FU FU.

I DO BEG YOUR PARDON. THAT WAS CRUEL OF ME.

...COME ON, CLAUDIA, GO EASY ON ME.
PON'T

MaTie THIS

HAHPSR

THAN irs

QOTTA BS!

LET'S SEE...

SHE SHOULD BE SOMEWHERE AROUND HERE, I THINK.

HFF!

DAN'T MAKE THIS HARDER THAN IT'S Gotta BE!
WHOAA!

EEP!

HUUH? YOU'RE...

AH!

SORRY!

WHO THE HELL'RE YOU?!

HUH???
Hey! You little...!

Just run!

Hand over the girl.

This way!

Huh?
WE CAN TRAP 'EM IN A DEAD END!

GO AROUND FROM THE RIGHT!

...BUT HE'S NOT GETTING RID OF US THAT EASY!

I DON'T KNOW WHERE THIS BRAT CAME FROM...

TCH.

THEY'RE HERDING US INTO THE REDEVELOPMENT AREA...

THIS IS LESS THAN IDEAL....

WH—! THEY'RE GONE!

DAMN BRATS! GET BACK HERE!
WHERE'D THEY GO!?

WHEN...

NO, PLEASE DON'T APOLOGIZE!

YOU SAVED ME! THANK YOU SO MUCH!

OH... S-SORRY!

SPK-DA (RELEASE)
...BUT WHAT WAS ALL THAT ABOUT?

IT'S FINE...

A-AND THE THING IS... I HEAR MY SISTER CAUSED A BIG BRAWL THERE SOME TIME AGO...

AH HA HA...

OH-- BUT PLEASE DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA!

I THINK THOSE MEN WERE FROM A CASINO IN THE ROTT... LIGHT.

ONEE-CHAN-- I MEAN

...BUT SHE'S REALLY A VERY NICE PERSON!

MY SISTER IS A LITTLE VIOLENT AND SHORT-TEMPERED, FOR SURE...
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOIN' TO MY SISTER ...!?
H-Me

P/PN'T!

T'M

reu/NG

YOU,

AMAOirU'

SAN
sAveu

MB!

...I SURE

HOPE YOU

HAVEN'T LAID

A FINGER ON

PRISCILLA.

YOU BE

QUIET,

PRISCILLA.

WHY

WOULD AYATO

AMAGIRI SAVE

YOU? HE'S

OUR ENEMY.

HE'S

GOT NO

REASON

TO HELP

YOU.

YOUR

ENEMY

...?
YOU DON'T REALLY MEAN THAT, DO YOU...?

ARE YOU SURE? YOU WON'T DO ANYTHING TO AMAGIRI-SAN?

A-ALL RIGHT!

CALM DOWN!

NOPE! NOT A THING!

Say, are you okay? Where are you now?

But I've got a question for you.

What were you doing in a back alley like this?
I'm okay, the problem was solved just moments ago.

Oh, Ayato!

I found Saya just now.

Yay!

Huff!

I can't just leave a debt unpaid...

That's all...

Okay

See you

I was just looking for a friend of mine who got lost.

Don't worry about it.

Ichn... I guess I owe you one.

Look at this.

Is... is that...?
W-W-W-W
WE'VE GOT TROUBLE, MR. PRESIDENT!

...WHAT IS IT?

BUT MISS IRZAIS SAYS SHE WOULD LIKE A WORD WITH YOU...

W-Well, THIS IS RATHER SUDDEN...
Hey, Dirk. Sorry to bother ya.

I don't see people without an appointment.

I thought the cats are supposed to be...

...with her when I'm not there.

Or did you forget that part!??
I assigned cats to her.

Well, I guess they were a little late this time.

She's a regenerative anyway.

...DIE.

So what if she gets...

...A little roughed up?
Hey, Irene.

Tch. Cats in here?

Who will suffer the most if I'm gone?

The cats just couldn't come out into the open this time...

...because that Seidoukan brat got involved.

They can't let themselves be seen.
WITH THINGS AS THEY ARE, IT'S GONNA BE HARD FOR ME TO FIGHT HIM...

SO THE FACT IS, I OWE HIM NOW.

YEAH, AND THE BRAT SAVED HER.

SO WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO ABOUT IT?

...SO I'M GONNA SETTLE THIS MYSELF. DON'T INTERFERE.

HMPh.

SORRY TO BOTHER YA.

...DO WHATSOEVER YOU WANT.
IF I'M GOING TO BE AROUND YOU...

HAA.

I HAVE TO GET USED TO THINGS LIKE THIS.

FURU (TREMBLE)

UNBELIEVABLE ...

NO. IT'S FINE.

BAN (BANG)

BUT I WILL BE JOINING YOU AT THE TABLE.

VERY WELL.

HUH!? すな!!
NICE PLACE, THOUGH.

DON'T LOOK AT ME.

...BUT HER APARTMENT?

I WAS WONDERING WHICH RESTAURANT SHE INVITED YOU TO...

IT MUST BE BECAUSE SHE'S A PAGE ONE AT LE WOLFE.
WELCOME!

UM, HI. IT'S AMAGIRI.

OH, YOU MUST BE MISS RIESSFELD.

I'M SORRY I DIDN'T GET TO INTRODUCE MYSELF THE OTHER DAY.

ER...

AH NO, ME TOO...
DINNER WILL BE READY RIGHT AWAY.

PLEASE COME IN!

LADIES FIRST!
...HEY.

AFTER YOU INVITED US OVER.

SOME WELCOME, LAMILEXIA.

I DON'T REMEMBER INVITING YOU...

HM.

...GLÜHEN ROSE.
SO HERE I AM, ACCLPANYING HIM.

AHEM!!

WELL, AS YOU KNOW, THIS EXCESSIVELY GOOD-NATURED BOY IS MY PARTNER.

I CAN'T HAVE HIM GETTING IN TROUBLE.

PFFT.

WHAT ARE YOU, HIS MOM?

OHH, SUCH A WORRY-WART.

SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING!

WH...!? H-HIS MOTHER!?
A CHICKPEA AND TOMATO SALAD...

...AND AJILLO MUSHROOMS.

POTATOES WITH AIOLI...

SHRIMP SAUTEED WITH GARLIC AND HOT PEPPERS...

...ANP AJIUO MUSHROOMS.

AHHH!!

OONNN!!

AW, C'MON. WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

ONEE-CHAN! MIND YOUR MANNERS!

AW, YEAH!!
AH HA HA.

HEY!

AHEM!

AAUGH! DOKU (DOKU)
AH! DOKU-NAI

...AND IF YOU START EATING FIRST—

COME ON...

C’MON, DIG IN.

PRISCILLA’S COOKING IS AWESOME.

DOKI! GRADUWAD!

TH—THIS IS GOOD.
CONVENIENT FOR ENJOYING THE NIGHTLIFE, THEN?

WELL, YOU KNOW, IT'S CONVENIENT.

CLOSE TO THE CASINOS.

THIS IS SUCH A NICE APARTMENT.

...YOU KNOW I WASN'T PraISING YOU, RIGHT?

BUT YOU CAN WIN THAT IN THE PHOENIX—ISN'T THAT WHY YOU'RE FIGHTING?

MONEY ...?

IT'S NOT FOR FUN.

...I SHOULd CHECK ON THE OVEN.

I NEED MONEY, SO I EARN IT.
Let me tell you a story.

There was a small country in Southern Europe that, outside of the big cities, was nothing but slums.

And it was in that country where I was born.

Even most Genestella would have died from that. But the next day, my sister had recovered.

And in that place, we didn't even have the required aptitude examinations for Genestella.

So that was how we found out Priscilla was a regenerative.

And one day, one of them collapsed, with Priscilla in it.

There were old buildings abandoned since the Inertia.

As the IEF's power struggled intensified...

See, Priscilla?

These nice people want your help.
THE CONTRACT OUR PARENTS SIGNED HAD THE NOTORIOUS WORDS "SPECIAL COMMITMENT SCHOLARSHIP."

IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THE SCOUTS FROM ALEKANT CAME.

...HAVING A KID WHO'S A GENESTELLA IS LIKE FINDING A GOLDEN GOOSE.

IN A POOR COUNTRY...

WHICH MEANS A STUDENT WITH NO RIGHT TO PROTEST NO MATTER WHAT'S DONE TO THEM. A SPECIMEN.

ABOUT THREE DAYS AFTER WE RAN AWAY, WE WERE HOLED UP IN AN ABANDONED HOUSE...

THAT NIGHT...

...I LEFT AND I TOOK HER WITH ME.

HEY.

YOU IRENE URZAIZ?

I DIDN'T QUITE BELIEVE WE COULD ESCAPE. I HAD NO IDEA WHERE TO GO.

AND THEN, IT HAPPENED LIKE THIS...

YOU WANTED THIS.
The second I understood.

This was power.

The power I needed to protect my sister.

Just sought your sister back.

Dmicom... cheap...

...but you can work it off.

I just bought your sister back.
AND NOW I FOLLOW HIS ORDERS TO REPAY HIM BIT BY BIT.

SO BASICALLY, A WHILE BACK, I BORROWED A HUGE LOAD OF MONEY FROM DIRK EBBERWEIN.

YEAH, IT'S A PRETTY BORING STORY.

ACCORDING TO THE DEAL...

THE TYRANT, IS IT...?

...I CAN'T USE THE REWARD TO PAY OFF MY DEBT TO HIM.

...I CAN ONLY RIDE IN THE FESTA WITH HIS PERMISSION...

...AND EVEN IF I WIN...

BINGO.

HEH...

THE ORDER DIRK GAVE ME THIS TIME WAS...

SO, I TAKE IT...

...YOU HAVE SOME OTHER OBJECTIVE BEIDES WINNING?
GO
(TENSE)

I'M NOT
GONNA
ATTACK
ANYONE
HERE.

SO
SIT AND
LISTEN ...

... GLÜHEN
ROSE.

I OWE YOU
FOR SAVING
PRISCILLA.

WHY ARE YOU
TELLING
THIS TO
US?

SIGH...

WHY IS
EBERWEIN
AFTER
AYATO?

...HE WANTS
TO CRUSH
AMAGIRI
NOW BECAUSE
THAT ORGA
LUX
OF HIS COULD
BE TROUBLE.
But there's something I picked up on from the way he was talking.

I don't know what Dirk's planning.

It is a powerful Orga Lux, but why go that far?

The Serveresta?

I think somewhere along the line he's seen...

...another user of that Orga Lux before.

Rokkun (Roudou)

Ah?

Good! Then we're even.

Herman

...I'm guessing that means something to you.

...from the look on your face...

Guill (struggle)

Thanks.

Yeah... maybe.
THANKS FOR WAITING!

IT'S SEAFOOD AND MUSHROOM PAELLA.

OH, THIS LOOKS DELICIOUS TOO.

YAY!

YEAH!

COME ON, SIS. HURRY UP AND SERVE OUR GUESTS.

MM-HMM!

PRISCILLA'S PAELLA IS A REAL MASTERPIECE. YOU BETTER ENJOY IT.

HM... I'M SORRY ABOUT MY SISTER.
YOU DON'T REALLY LIKE FIGHTING, DO YOU, PRISCILLA?

YES... I KNOW.

IT WOULD BE WRONG TO RUN AWAY FROM THAT.

...MY SISTER IS FIGHTING FOR ME.

I'M HAPPY THAT I CAN HELP HER.

THAT'S NOTHING.

EVEN IF SHE DRINKS YOUR BLOOD?

WHEN MY SISTER USES THE GRAVITY SHEATH...

IT'S JUST...
ABOUT
THE
GRAVI-
SHIELD?

WHAT
DO YOU
THINK,
JULIS?

LIKE
SHE'S A
DIFFERENT
PERSON.

I'M SO
SORRY! I'M
TALKING
NON-
SENSE...

...WE HAVE
OUR OWN
FIGHT.

WE
HAVE TO
FOCUS
ON THAT.

I KNOW
WHAT YOU
WANT TO
SAY BUT...

......

......

YEAH.
I wonder if I can?
...will inevitably lose what they treasure.

Requirements: even greater power.

...will inevitably lose what they treasure.

Power is necessary to protect, and those without power...

Even more power is necessary to gain something.

And regaining what's been lost...

These are the principles that guide Irene Urzaiz.
IT DIDN'T REALLY FIX ANYTHING.

ALL THAT HAPPENED WAS A CHANGE IN DESTINATION, FROM ALLEKANT TO LE WOLFE.

THE TIME AND OPPORTUNITY TO GET PRISCILLA BACK.

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, HE GAVE HER THE POWER.

THAT'S ALL SHE NEEDS.
AHH...

But...

This is nothing.

Not at all...

Thanks... again.

IT'S time.

...I'm sorry, sis.

You dummy. What're you apologizing for?
Whaddaya say we take care of some business?

...brings her closer to Priscilla.

So right now, she has no choice but to fight.

Oh, right it is.

Well, it's almost time.
AYATO.

I HAVE TO WIN.

NO MATTER WHO MY OPPONENT IS, I HAVE NO INTENTION OF YIELDING IN MY WISH.

THAT'S THE REASON I'M HERE.

BUT...

I'M NOT PARTICULAR ABOUT HOW WE WIN.
We work together and fight side by side.

Isn't that the way it should be?

We're partners.

If we can win by fighting the way you want to...

...then let's do it.

Julis...

Thank you.

Well, I'm not sure if it'll work, but...

...there is something I want to try.

There's nothing to thank me for.

You dummy.
ALL RIGHT. TRY IT.

I know it won't be easy. Still...

BUT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE GRAV-SHEATH.

BUT YOU'LL PROBABLY HAVE ONLY ONE SHOT.

RIGHT.

GOOD—LET'S GO!
THE CONTESTANTS FOR TODAY'S FINALE HERE AT THE SIRIUS DOME...

...WILL BE TEAM AMAGAI-RISESEEDO DE SEIJOukan ACADEMY...

...AND THE URZAAZ SISTERS OF LE WOLFE BLACK INSTITUTE!

...TO THE TOP SIXTEEN!!!
DOES THAT GIVE SEIDOU-kan's TEAM THE EDGE IN A PROLONGED FIGHT?

BUT IRENE LANAIIZ'S GRAND-SMART CONSUMES A LOT OF ENERGY...

HMM...

WELL, WITH PRISCILLA, IRENE HAS A REFUELING STATION, SO TO SPEAK.

...I THINK WE'RE ABOUT TO SEE A WATER-SHED MOMENT.

BOTH OF THESE TWO TEAMS MADE IT THROUGH THE PRELIMINARIES WITHOUT GIVING THEIR OPPONENTS A CHANCE, SO...

SO I WOULDN'T SAY IT'S TOTALLY CUT AND DRIED.

AYATO, DON'T PUSH YOURSELF TOO HARD.

HAA...

LET'S NOT WASTE ANY TIME, THEN.

I HAVE TO AGREE.

THEY ALWAYS OVERSIMPLIFY THINGS.

...NOT THAT YOU'LL LISTEN.

THEY'RE NOT OPPONENTS WE CAN BEAT IF I DON'T.
AND UNCHAIN MY POWER!

ALL FIRED UP, ULW! AMAGIRI!

KIDS (SOUND)

KNOWN AND LOVED BY NOW!

THERE IS E1! AMAGIRI'S SIGNATURE ENTRANCE

WELL, THEN...

...I BETTER CATCH UP!
BEGIN!

YEEAAH!

PHOENIX, ROUND FOUR, MATCH ELEVEN—

BURST INTO BLOOM

GO!

PAL (RUNNER)

LIVINGSTON DAISY!
HA! ISN'T THAT CUTE!
HUP!
THE
ASTERISK WAR

QUITE A SHOW, NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU SEE IT.

THAT OPENING FROM AMAGIRI.
WON'T /

I CAN'T

YOU IN A

SWOOP-FIGHT!

DIDN'T

I'D FACE

THIS MUCH

PRESSURE...

I

PRSSURe

GUESS

CAN'T

BET

OF ACB

FMEEUSS

J

BSAT

FIGHT!

AH!

DIEZ

FANEGA!

—

NOT BAD FOR FIGHTING TOGETHER...

Humph...

...ALL OF ONE OR TWO MONTHS.

HUP!
AYATO, JUMP!

HA-HA! I'M NOT ALONE. WE'VE GOT TWO ON OUR TEAM TOO!

THIS STRENGTH...

AYATO, JUMP!

...IS MINE AND PRIS CLILIA S!

JULIS!

ON IT!

BURST INTO BLOOM! LONG FLORUM!
...but so was the Elder Uraiz's defensive skill!

BACK TO SQUARE ONE...HUUH?
Hey, sorry for the wait.

If you want to take your shot, now's the time.

Ready for another round?

Do you really believe that what you're doing is right?

You're hurting the one you want to protect...

Then why—?

Your little lectures are the last thing I need right now.

Shut up, Ama-giri.
I SAIQ SHUT UP!

BURST INTO BLOOM—PRIMROSE!

CIEN GUES TIA!

UGH, ENOUGH ALREADY!

TWIN SERPENTS!

AMAGIRI SHINEHAI STYLE FIRST TECHNIQUE
DIDN'T THINK YOU'D COME AFTER THE GRAVE SHEATH....

OH, I GET IT NOW.
WELL, NOW IT'S MY TURN...

-Piez Mil Fanega!

BUT THERE'S NO WAY TO MISS WITH THESE...

I KNOW MY FLAWS...

MY CONTROL ISN'T GREAT.

I'M GONNA CRUSH YOU!

YES—I KNOW!
DO NOHON!

YATA-GARASI!

DAWN IT!

YOU GOT IT!

NOW!

MA! YOU'RE TOO OBIVIOUS!

BLOSSOM—GLORIOSA!
WHAT...? 

THAT WAS THE DECOR!

BLOSSOM—RAFFLESIA!

DOgin! DOgin!

THAT'S THE HOTTEST OF ALL MY TRAPS.

DID IT WORK...?!

WHAT A FEROCIOUS ATTACK! IS THAT THE MATCH!? 
IT CAN'T BE...!
NO...

WHAT?

SHE SHOULDN'T HAVE HAD THAT MUCH ENERGY LEFT...

IT'S THE GRAVITY SHEATH ITSELF....

DIDN'T I TELL YOU THAT I HATE BEING TESTED...!?
Ah!
You have to take hold of what's important with both hands!

Which hand holds what you desire?!

Don't confuse power with the thing you treasure!

Wake up, Irene!

Pfft... Scilla...
Furu (tremble)
WE LOST.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE MATCH?

Huh? Why am I...?

That damn Amagiri smashed the gravisheath to bits.

Oh... so he saved us again.

I don't want to just be protected. I want to stand beside you.

I'm going to be stronger than you!

And someday... you know, sis...

If you're going to fight, I want to fight with you.

We'll have to keep up with those two, huh?

Ha-ha! All right...
OH DEAR...

OF COURSE HE DOESN'T AFTER BEING THAT RECKLESS.

...HE DOESN'T LOOK ALL RIGHT.

AYATO, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
Hi again. Ningen here.
Thanks to all your support, the manga adaptation of The Asterisk War has crossed the Volume 5 mark.

The well-received second season of the anime finished airing as well. Along with the original novels, of course, all of the adaptations make that universe so much more exciting. But the manga will stop here for the time being. It's a little like the pause between seasons of an anime.

Thinking back on it, I've spent almost three and a half years dabbling in the world of Asterisk so intricately imagined by Mr. Yuu Miyazaki and the illustrator okiura.

I've been constantly feeling out how much wiggle room I'd have adapting and reshaping Mr. Miyazaki's solidly structured work. I think I may have been able to touch on some things that the anime didn't get to, while the storytelling is more informal than the novels.

To me, there is no greater pleasure than knowing that fans of the novels, the anime, the game, and many others have enjoyed my work.
Last but not least, thank you so much to Mr. Miyazaki and okiura, to the Media Factory editorial department, and to Shimada and Jou Yukino and Karateka for all their help!

Until we meet again!

Ningen