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Special thanks as always to Jordon ([pseudosuicide@tumblr](mailto:pseudosuicide@tumblr)) for her editing job!

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KAMIGAMI NO ASOBI – Sports Festival Chapter (Balder)

BACKGROUND: CLASSROOM

THOTH: Everyone, find your seats. Homeroom is starting.

Every morning always began with Thoth's arrogant attitude.

...A few days had passed since the field trip. Though I felt uneasy, classes passed by without any problems. We learned things about anatomy, philosophy, history, sociology... all kinds of subjects.

However, only the people who always came to class were there. It felt like there was a deep trench between us and the students who were rejecting school.

This can't go on. But even as I thought that, I let time pass without doing anything.

BACKGROUND: STUDENT COUNCIL ROOM

APOLLON: This won't do, this won't do at all!

After school... When I entered the student council room, Apollon was yelling, his fists clenched tightly.

APOLLON: We're not qualified to be the student council. And the reason is, the reason is...!

BALDER: We haven't improved anything yet. ...Right?

APOLLON: Yeah, that! That! Wait, don't take my lines. I'm the president...

BALDER: We should think of some countermeasures. At times like these, perhaps we should plan some events.

APOLLON: Mhm, mhm. That's good. That's exactly it! Wait, I said don't take my lines!

I didn't know if Balder was doing it on purpose or not, but it was funny watching their exchange.

APOLLON: Alright already, Baru-Baru... After thinking it over, I agree. Let's get everyone involved this time.

APOLLON: If we deepen our bonds with them like we did with each other, they should naturally want to come to class.

TSUKITO: We are dealing with gods who are obstinate about staying away from school. I cannot imagine it would be an easy thing to do.

Tsukito gave us his opinion, not even looking up from scratching copious notes into his notebook. Balder was the secretary, but Tsukito was the one always taking notes.

YUI: I agree.

YUI: We need to think of something that can catch their interest.

I wanted to get to know the other gods too. Lately, I've become so attached to this school that I just end up thinking about them, though when I first came here, I was surprised at every little thing. Humans can adapt so easily to things.

BALDER: For now, let's start thinking. Time is limited. The worst crime is doing nothing.

Balder, our secretary, stood in front of the blackboard.

BALDER: So, are there any suitable events we can do?

TSUKITO: At this time, there are few choices. Only an orientation or the like.

Having already researched human school life to a certain extent, Tsukito answered even more quickly than me.

APOLLON: Hmm, the name doesn't sound very exciting. Like, it doesn't leave an impression. We need something even better than the field trip. We definitely need that.

Is this student council president really deciding events based on the sound of the name...? I felt a little uneasy.

YUI: Even better than the field trip...

Various kinds of large events came to my mind. And, I arrived at something.

YUI: A sports festival!

APOLLON: Spore festival...? What's that?

YUI: A sports festival. It's a big event where people compete in sports.

YUI: There are all kinds of physical competitions, and you split up into teams and fight each other.

APOLLON: Compete, fight, compete, fight...! Is it like the Olympics?!

With Apollon's interpretation, it suddenly became a gigantic event.

YUI: The nuance is a little different, but it's the same in that both have sports.

APOLLON: Bodies and hearts colliding with each other... And beyond that, each team's firm bonds of trust under the name of victory. Fostering friendships through sports!

Apollon gave us a passionate speech with exaggerated gestures.

APOLLON: That's it, that is it! I like the idea of this sports festival. Okay, let's write a letter of challenge!

YUI: W-Why a letter of challenge?

APOLLON: It's a way to capture their interest. We'll bet on the right to go to school, and fight with all our might!

BALDER: Wait a moment. What happens if we lose?

APOLLON: Our opponents gain the right to be absent from school forever.

YUI: A-Are you serious?!

BALDER: That's... a very serious bet.

BALDER: That sounds like an Agana Belea idea, though. "Right to be absent"... that's... uwah!

Balder started writing this suggestion on the board, but the chalk snapped and he lost his balance and collapsed. To be able to fall without even moving took a special kind of skill...

YUI: A-Are you okay?

I held out a hand to him, but he stood up easily as if he was used to it and smiled gently, telling me not to worry.

YUI: ...Anyway, we can't do that. Please give up on it. Even if I'm wrong about that, it wouldn't work.

YUI: For one, Zeus-san wouldn't give us permission.

APOLLON: Just explain, I'll explain it to him.

APOLLON: Tsuki-Tsuki. Could you help me prepare a letter of challenge?

TSUKITO: If the president wishes.

I could sense Apollon's seriousness through his swift actions. He might break out into a run any moment.

APOLLON: Don't be so anxious, it's fine. We just have to win. Right?

APOLLON: It's fine, we'll definitely win. I swear on my own name, Apollon!

YUI: Yes, but...

My chest was filled with anxious feelings. However, it seemed like no matter how much I resisted, the results would be the same. They... no, Apollon's opinion wasn't going to budge. So I gave up and changed my view on it.

YUI: ...Right, let's definitely win this. I'll put forth all my efforts as well.

The letter of challenge was finished up quickly, and we sent copies to each room.

We decided to hold the sports festival two weeks from now. With that as our goal, the student council began preparations on the field.

Each of the gods in the student council had been assigned the task of convincing the gods they lived with in the dorm. It seemed that Apollon bowed his head and pleaded with Hades and Dionysus several times. After a while, it didn't seem like there was a point in the letter of challenge, since we managed to get them to promise to come.

Tsukito went to convince his little brother Takeru. It seemed Takeru responded positively right away, since Tsukito barely spoke to him first. Balder went to convince Loki and Thor, but it appeared Thor was

already friendly with humans, so he easily agreed. Loki was apparently interested because Balder told him he could use tricks to fight in the competitions. In any case, having everyone agree to participate was really something to celebrate.

Of course, everyone in the student council gathered after school to practice. We ran laps and did muscle training, building up physical strength together. They seemed to have trouble handling themselves well, since they weren't used to the strain that exercise could put on their human bodies. Instead of regular club activities, all of us made a ruckus late into the night as we continued our special training. I never put it into words, but it felt like a real human school.

BACKGROUND: CLOUDS

THOTH: Ah. Ah...

THOTH: Test, Test... Mic test...

THOTH: No problems. We have no choice but to start.

BACKGROUND: SPORTS FIELD

The field was dressed up in flamboyant decorations. Thoth held a script in his left hand and a microphone in his right, and was standing in front of the student body.

THOTH: We will now begin the First Athletic Festival of this school. ...First? We're not doing this again.

THOTH: Well, whatever. Anyway, it's beginning.

THOTH: Okay, you fools. Rise up to your hearts' content.

Every student gathered on the field gave their applause at his halfhearted announcement.

THOTH: This competition is modeled after human festivals, but there are a few points of difference.

THOTH: You have some nerve making me say all of this, Kusanagi. It's annoying, so we'll cut it here. You fools can observe those differences yourselves.

YUI: Seriously, he is so...

The main point of difference was the number of people. Every student in the school was gathered on this field, but only the gods were participating, since they were the ones needing education. The rest of the students did preparations and cheered them on. A fraction of the gods were there to observe.

There were six people competing in the festival. On the red team were the student council members Apollon, Tsukito, and Balder. The opposing white team was Hades, Takeru, and Loki. The remaining three people, including me, stood watch on the sidelines.

The Greek god Dionysus and the Norse god Thor... To be honest, today was the first time I'd seen them. They had been in places completely unrelated to school.

THOTH: There will be three bouts. The type of competition will be decided by lottery. The first team to two wins will be the victors.

THOTH: ...The explanation ends here. Once preparations are complete, begin the competition.

THOTH: I leave the rest to you. I'm going back to the library.

APOLLON: I'm up first, it's my turn. I'm going to win and get everyone fired up.

With great enthusiasm, Apollon went over to the start line.

YUI: Remember your training! If you calm down and breathe, it'll be okay! Do your best!!

In response to my encouragement, he raised a hand lightly and smiled. Next to him was...

...Apollon's uncle, Hades.

APOLLON: Okay Uncle, I'm taking this seriously. I'm definitely going to win, definitely.

Besides the desire to show the results of their training, there seemed to be some other kind of aggressiveness between them.

HADES: ...I will do the same. I don't plan on losing.

Perhaps because he had an adult's composure, Hades spoke only a few words. However, I felt that his intentions were directed beyond Apollon. One of the students in charge pulled a lottery ticket and announced its contents.

GREEK STUDENT: The first competition is... an obstacle course!

The obstacle course was a long race that stretched beyond the school grounds. Various kinds of things related to Greek myth had been set up as obstacles.

GREEK STUDENT: Are you ready? Alright!

GREEK STUDENT: On one... Gooo!

The sound of feet kicking off the ground. The incessant cheering. The competition reached a climax.

GREEK STUDENT: Gooooooooaaaaaall! The goal has been reached!

GREEK STUDENT: The winner is the white team's Hades-san! Hades Aidoneus-san!

APOLLON: I lost, I seriously lost... I... I'm just...! Ah!

Exhausted, Apollon sat down on the ground. Tears of regret welled up in his eyes.

YUI: You fought hard, Apollon-san. It's still only the first match.

My efforts to comfort him didn't reach his ears. Shoulders slumped in dejection, Apollon went back to his seat.

BALDER: This is bad. If I lose, it's over.

YUI: Please do your best.

BALDER: I plan on it. I want to see you smile.

LOKI: Are you ready? Let's get started!

BALDER: Yes, let's go.

Their competition was a scavenger hunt.

NORDIC STUDENT: ...Ready?

With the sound of a pistol, the match between Loki and Balder began. It was the decisive second match. If Balder lost this round, then the student council will be defeated. The students were cheering even more wildly than they did during the first match.

YUI: I need to cheer for him too...

Inspired, I thought of a way to cheer Balder on.

CHOICE

>Call out his name

>Just yell for now

>Watch quietly

**CHOOSE: Call out his name**

YUI: Balder-san, do your best! Balder-san!

I turned toward the lanes and continually called out his name.

**CHOOSE: Just yell for now**

YUI: Do your best!

YUI: Don't lose! You can win this!!

My yelling mixed in with the voices around me. It sounded as if one loud voice was resounding throughout the field.

**CHOOSE: Watch quietly**

I swallowed my excitement and watched the match. I didn't want to distract him with unnecessary words. I held back several different emotions.

...Please do your best. Balder-san will definitely win.

As I watched, I mentally cheered him on. For a moment, I caught Balder's eye. It might have been a coincidence. But, believing that my feelings had reached him, I silently encouraged him.

**(choices converge here)**

The two of them ran along the lane and eventually arrived at a place with several papers laid on the ground. They stared at the backs of the upside-down paper for several seconds, then each picked out one piece and read the words on the other side.

BALDER: What...? A leaf from Yggdrasil?! That's a tree from my world... is it here in the Garden?

LOKI: Ahaha, what a shame! Looks like my victory is decided already, yeah?

LOKI: Then I'll go with this one...

LOKI: ...What the?! The "Hare of Inaba"?<sup>1</sup>

BALDER: That's the Japanese... Ah, that might be too much of a hint. I need to do something about my own item.

BALDER: Does anyone have a leaf from Yggdrasil? I only need one, so if you have one, please share!

Balder raised his voice toward the cheering students.

LOKI: I need a bunny here! The Hare of Inaba! Come here bunny, I'll give you a carrot!

YUI: A leaf from Yggdrasil and the Hare of Inaba... isn't that too difficult?

A normal sports festival would have objectives like an umbrella, or a person wearing glasses, or something else simple like that. Both of the things Balder and Loki were supposed to find might not even be in the Garden. Were they actually easy to get here? While thinking about this issue, I watched them curiously.

NORDIC STUDENT: ...Competitors, I have some good news...

NORDIC STUDENT: I have received information that... both items can be found outside the school...

The two of them turned simultaneously and ran for the school gates.

LOKI: I'm already a master when it comes to speed! Opening up distance between us is an advantage!

BALDER: W-Wait, Loki! ...Wahh!!

Balder fell over nothing, and Loki widened the gap between them in an instant.

LOKI: What are you doing flailing around like a turtle?! I'll be taking the victory this time!

Kicking up dust, Loki ran far, far away and eventually disappeared. When Loki was no longer visible, Balder finally stood up.

BALDER: This is bad... I wonder if I can find a leaf before Loki.

BALDER: This is no time to be timid. I need to win this, no matter what.

Balder ran carefully, trying not to fall. It was then.

YUI: I hear something...

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<sup>1</sup> Dictionary entry: HARE OF INABA (in mythological tradition) A story that appears in the Kojiki ("Records of Ancient Matters") and the Inaba no Kuni Fudoki ("Cultural Records of the Country of Inaba"), both Nara period texts. It is told widely as an important piece of folklore. Long ago, a hare fooled some sharks, and, as punishment, the sharks tore off some of its fur. Okuninushi's brothers were passing by and noticed the injured hare and told it to wash itself in salt water and dry itself in the wind. This turned out to be very painful. Then, Okuninushi himself passed by and taught the hare to wash itself in fresh water and roll in the pollen of cattails. The grateful hare led Okuninushi to his future wife, and the hare came to be known as a god of marriage.

A loud sound like rumbling was coming from far away. In the next instant...

LOKI: I'm baaack!! Sorry, but it's my win this time!

Loki was already back, having just left the school a few moments ago. He was grasping a pure white rabbit in his left hand.

YUI: L-Loki-san?!

Loki ran with incredible energy and broke through the goal tape.

BALDER: Th-That's... You're too fast, Loki. I haven't even started looking yet.

LOKKI: Yaaay! ☆ This is how it is when you have my kind of talent! So, here's one for the white team...

NORDIC STUDENT: ...Please wait. We must inspect the hare. Please lend it to us for a moment.

The student in charge of this match snatched the rabbit from Loki and scrutinized it through a magnifying glass.

LOKI: What? W-Wait! That's definitely the Hare of Inaba! Right, Mr. Bunny?

LOKI: Yup, that's me-pyon! I am the Hare of Inaba!

BALDER: Loki... That one's a fake, isn't it? It's a doll you made just now.

The rabbit was moving as if alive, but it was clear Loki was controlling it.

NORDIC STUDENT: ...That seems to be the case.

LOKI: Hehe,ahaha... Did I get caught? Couldn't we overlook it this one time?

He was purposefully acting silly. There was no way they would overlook it even if he asked...

NORDIC STUDENT: This... is an honest competition. Please take it seriously...

Astonished, the students gave him a warning.

LOKI: There's nothing I can do, huh? Well, Balder hasn't left this place yet, so it's kind of like I won already, right?

Then, I heard a cry coming from somewhere.

YUI: Was that a... dog?

When I looked at the school gates, some wild dogs had intruded into the grounds. There were so many of them...

TSUKITO: It is not just dogs. Look at the sky.

YUI: Sky...?

At Tsukito's direction, I looked up.

YUI: ...!



Sparrows, doves, swans, ibises... all sorts of birds had gathered above us. There were a lot of them, almost enough to cover up the sky.

YUI: Wh-What's going on?

The animals all headed straight for Balder.

BALDER: What's wrong, everyone? ...Hm? You're giving something to me?

The animals placed the items in their mouths at Balder's feet. Those were...

BALDER: Ah, leaves! Did you find these for me?

The animals all stopped and nodded. They were oddly humanlike.

BALDER: That makes me so happy. Thank you...! I appreciate your hard work!

When Balder smiled at them, the animals shook their bodies in happiness.

YUI: Wh-What does this mean? Why did the animals bring leaves from Yggdrasil...?

TSUKITO: It might be one of his abilities. I do not know the details.

YUI: Balder-san's... ability...

APOLLON: It's like having a charismatic personality, charisma! Everyone ends up wanting to help Baru-Baru out.

Even if it was just a result of charisma, my jaw hung open at the strange scene in front of me. Is this the power of a god? I couldn't help but be surprised at this situation, which was unimaginable for humans. The other gods didn't look as shaken as I was. Even with his powers kept in check by the limiter, Balder still had all kinds of abilities. Though I felt a little uncomfortable with that thought, I genuinely admired the gods' abilities.

YUI: To be able to do something like that... gods are amazing.

BALDER: Loki, I'm sorry, but I'm winning this one. I can't lose here.

LOKI: Haa... Seriously, I'm no match for you, Balder.

Balder cut the goal tape and handed over the huge pile of leaves to the student in charge.

NORDIC STUDENT: ...I have received them. And now...

NORDIC STUDENT: ...Winner, red team... Balder-san...

As the spectators applauded, Balder sent off the animals that had helped him and came back over to us.

BALDER: I won by the skin of my teeth. I'll entrust the rest to Totsuka-san... to Tsukito-san.

I wanted to say something about his splendid victory...

CHOICE

>I was surprised at your ability  
>Congratulate him  
>Express gratitude

**CHOOSE: I was surprised at your ability**

YUI: I was so surprised. I had no idea you had that kind of ability.

BALDER: I was also pretty surprised at how effective it was. I'm glad they love me, but it's kind of an overreaction.

He looked a little uncomfortable.

BALDER: But it's a relief that we won this one. Let's go ahead and win it all.

He folded his hands in front of his chest and spurred himself on.

**CHOOSE: Congratulate him**

YUI: Congratulations, Balder-san!

BALDER: With everyone's encouragement and cooperation, I somehow managed to win.

YUI: Only you could have won that way, Balder-san.

BALDER: Hehe, you're saying some nice things. Thanks for the praise.

**CHOOSE: Express gratitude**

YUI: Balder-san, thank you so much.

YUI: Thanks to you, we can still fight. We took one step closer to victory.

BALDER: I'm glad I could fulfill my role. Let's brace ourselves for the next fight.

YUI: Yes!

**(choices converge here)**

Balder went up to Tsukito, who was up next.

BALDER: I know you're brothers, but no holding back, okay?

TSUKITO: ...

As if the competition was already on his mind, Tsukito wordlessly moved over to the start line.

TAKERU: Bro! I'll do my best!

Instead of his usual scary expression, he was smiling.

TSUKITO: ...

In contrast, Tsukito was the same as ever.

JAPANESE STUDENT: Alright! I will now draw!

The student took a folded piece of paper from the box. Inside was written...

JAPANESE STUDENT: A bread race!

JAPANESE STUDENT: Are you ready?! Let's go!

JAPANESE STUDENT: Take your positions! Get set!

The showdown between the two brothers of Japanese myth began. And the victor was...

JAPANESE STUDENT: Winner...!

JAPANESE STUDENT: White team, Totsuka Takeru!

JAPANESE STUDENT: And the red team, Totsuka Tsukito!

YUI: A tie...?

The audience was roused at the unexpected results. The students in charge of the proceedings looked very confused.

APOLLON: No one won? That's surprising. What should we do now?

YUI: Let's discuss it with everyone.

The red and white teams discussed how the victors should be determined... And we all decided that there should be one more match.

We only had a little bit of time. Balder was stretching carefully, preparing himself for the final fight. Then, the student in charge slowly came to the front. In his hands was the box he would be drawing from.

YUI: It's time.

BALDER: Alright, I'll be back. You wait here, and trust us to be victorious.

YUI: Of course.

YUI: Please do your best.

Answering my words with a smile, Balder walked over to the battlefield.

GREEK STUDENT: It is now time to draw for the next match. This time, only competitions that include everyone have been put inside this box.

The representative student put his hand in the box and pulled out a slip of paper.

GREEK STUDENT: This will be the final match!

GREEK STUDENT: A cavalry battle!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> T/N: This is a popular sports festival game in Japan where teams try to grab each other's flags, and this is what it looks like: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gxlpw4EqHE>

JAPANESE STUDENT: A cavalry battle requires four players! One of our students will be added to each team!

NORDIC STUDENT: ...I'll be the referee.

APOLLON: Alright, alriiight!

Completely different from before, Apollon was even more excited than usual.

APOLLON: This time, for sure. We'll have true victory in our hands. I may have failed, but I can feel us winning. We're winning!

TSUKITO: ...I admire that baseless confidence.

BALDER: It's the president's role to lead everyone's emotions. I like this Agana Belea too.

BALDER: In answer to your feelings, we'll produce good results.

TSUKITO: Understood.

TSUKITO: I still have reservations about my physical strength, but if the president wishes for victory, I am willing to make an effort.

APOLLON: Everyone... for me. Thank you. Thank you. My friends!

TSUKITO: Let us be victorious. I will raise our chances.

YUI: I...

YUI: I can't do anything for you physically. So I'll cheer until my last breath if I have to.

YUI: Until my throat goes hoarse. Until my arms are torn to shreds.

APOLLON: Let's aim for an excellent school and see it to completion! We'll show them the willpower of the student council.

It was only for a little while, but we'd practiced while aiming for this sports festival. Those numerous memories floated up and disappeared inside my mind. Our school life together with the other gods hung in the balance, and I was getting fired up. The red team walked out to the stage of the cavalry battle. They met with their fourth team member and began to arrange themselves into a horse. The white team was doing their preparations at the same time. The red team's rider was Apollon. The extra student was in front, and Balder and Tsukito were on the left and right. The white team's rider was Hades. In front was the short Takeru, to the right was Loki. And on their left, they had placed the extra student.

NORDIC STUDENT: ...The game will continue until one team falls. In the case that both collapse at the same time, there will be a redo.

NORDIC STUDENT: ...This will truly be the final fight. Use all your power so you have no regrets.

NORDIC STUDENT: ...Are you ready?

NORDIC STUDENT: ...Okay!

The start signal echoed across the field. The two teams kicked off and rushed at each other. They headed straight for each other with no hesitation. Neither team had as much energy as in the first set of games, but the look in their eyes was different as they fought for victory. Sharp eyes, like those of starving, carnivorous beasts. The only thing in their minds was taking down the enemy in front of them. There was no room for words or strategy. They rushed forward wildly, like a real horse. The two riders on top grabbed each other's hands and tried to push each other over with all their might.

APOLLON: Fall doooooown!!!

As if threatening his opponent, Apollon yelled from the depths of his belly.

APOLLON: Gooooooooo!!!

HADES: ...!

Hades clenched his teeth and withstood the attack. He wasn't being pushed back; he was patiently waiting for his chance. Apollon seemed to notice this and continued to push forward without hesitation. But Apollon's face looked grim. This kind of tactic was a little too difficult for him.

LOKI: Hey, general!

HADES: Right!

It was a meaningful exchange. I had a bad feeling. Hearing Hades's voice, the white team members breathed in unison and pushed their opponent. Using that momentum, Hades almost pushed Apollon off.

APOLLON: Oh no no no no...!

Apollon lost his balance, and his body leaned backward. If he fell to the ground, he would lose. The two people at his sides desperately retreated to try to remedy the situation... but they got separated from the student in front. As he understood his situation, the student turned pale.

TAKERU: Let's get him!

LOKI: Go, go, forward!

The white team members yelled in unison. They pushed over the student and charged toward their unstable opponents. They rushed madly ahead, confident of their victory. The red team...

APOLLON: Gh, we're not down yet!!

...was persevering.

APOLLON: We can... still fight! We can fight! We'll grasp victory in our hands! Do you... Do you think we'll fall over that easily?!

Even in this extremely disadvantageous situation, the red team showed some immense strength. With insane looks on their faces, they grabbed their opponents.

HADES: Cease your useless struggling...! Don't pay so much attention to his useless game.

APOLLON: I made a promise I'd gain victory! And! No matter what! I want to keep iiiiiiit!!

His yell was like an angry roar. Hades widened his eyes and flinched for a moment.

BALDER: Agana Belea! Now. Push him off!

TSUKITO: Please win, president...!

APOLLON: Leave it to meeeee!!!

HADES: Kh...!

The white team's horse leaned backward. Unable to fully absorb the red team's desperate attack, their form broke in several places.

LOKI: Agh, this is really bad! We'll be crushed underneath like this?!

TAKERU: Idiot, don't give... Ah! Guahh!!

The white team fell in a cloud of dust. Immediately afterward, the red team lost their breath and collapsed on top of the white team. No one was left standing on the field.

NORDIC STUDENT: ...I-it's been decided! The match is over!

NORDIC STUDENT: The winners are the red team! And overall victory has been confirmed!!

Various voices filled the air, praising the new victors.

YUI: We won...

It didn't feel real. Shocked, I whispered to myself.

YUI: The red team is... victorious...

APOLLON: Fairy-san! Fairy-san, we woaaaaon!!

Apollon jumped up energetically from the pile of fallen bodies.

BALDER: I'm completely spent... I can barely get up.

The usually elegant Balder was covered in dirt, but his smile was shining brighter than usual.

TSUKITO: ...I am on the verge of total exhaustion.

Like toys that ran out of battery power, they lay face-up on the ground, but their expressions seemed satisfied.

YUI: Everyone...

The joy of victory slowly seeped into my chest.

YUI: Thank you so much...!

YUI: I'm happy you could win. ...Truly.

A smile naturally came to my face. At first I wanted everyone to come to school so I could go home... I was very concerned about that, but now was different. The solid unity born among the student council team... I was genuinely glad for that human-like feeling. The magnificence of making an effort together with comrades and sharing that success was an irreplaceable treasure.

As if that thought was contagious, everyone smiled. Even Hades and the others from the opposing team had warm expressions on their faces.

THOR: ...Everyone, stand up. ...It's time to receive your award.

When Thor urged them on, they all moved to the podium, burning with energy. Apollon, the representative, took the trophy as proof of their victory.

APOLLON: Behold, the student council's victory! We are the champions!

Apollon triumphantly brandished the trophy above his head.

APOLLON: By the authority of the winners, the white team will participate in classes from tomorrow onwards!

APOLLON: You'll definitely, definitely be coming! It's a promise with me!

HADES: I won't go back on my word.

TAKERU: You don't have to tell us to come, idiot.

LOKI: Geez, I guess there's no choice. I hope they're not boring classes.

Though they looked dissatisfied, no one in the white team objected.

BACKGROUND: CLOUDS

A sports festival to fill up the holes in our classroom. A huge event full of worries and anxiety. It ended without a problem, and classes were scheduled to begin tomorrow.

It had been almost one month since school started. Since I came here, I'd finally been able to stand at the starting line. Everything was thanks to everyone's efforts – the efforts of the classmates I met here. Imagining how lively the classroom would be, I was immersed in a joyful mood for a while.

...The real school life was about to begin.

NEW CHAPTER: BALDER CHAPTER 1 – "The Beloved God of Immortality"