

Work was done here. At least for today Senko thought. Now all there was left to do was to sit at home, in the warmth of her loneliness and relax. Being cursed was tough work after all. Her shoes left footprints in the mountain range as the weather began to clear. Senko was sure she'd make it home before the snow disappeared. But today wouldn't be that simple, as a green glow emanated behind her.

Senko's foot was grasped in the clutch of some kind of creature, but when she went to slash it, it did not break. She tried wriggling herself free on the ground as a figure slowly walked towards her.

"Shall we make this quick? We both understand the importance of what you have."

"I-I do not understand. What do you want?"

"The artifact. Your curse, I need it."

"You must b-be joking."

"Perhaps this shall not be as quick as I thought"

The weather began to clear as foretold. She could now see her assailant clearly. A figure with a dangerous aura. However, Senko knew the interaction would be quick. Like any other monster, she simply had to wait for him to blink.

"Do not attempt the trick."

"Warrior of the snow, you do not understand."

The rising moon so barely visible glinted on hundreds of medallions on the figures chest.

"You are being watched."

Senko began to sweat. The figure jumped backwards, now out of view. In his place three more green figures crawled out of the snow. Senko thumbed and tried to grab Kaku. Of course, it was only an attempt. For Kaku was held within the lifeless hands of another jade statue. She slid out of the hand grabbing her ankle and leapt toward Kaku.

She grunted as another statue grabbed at her leg as she jump, causing her to fall flat on the delicate snow. Tears began to form as the weather once again became worse.

The Graveward's hubris grew.

As Senko lay in the snow one of the statues released Kaku, instead pinning her on the ground.

"Surrender, and face a noble death, or struggle and die as a failure" the glowing statue spoke.

Four statues now, all facing towards Senko, that was Graveward's plan all along. Immobilize her with fear. He leapt down from his vantage point to claim his reward. As the fog grew ever thicker.

"Now! Watch as I return my master to his mortal flesh!"

Graveward sprang towards Senko's back, ready to rip out the horrid contraption keeping her alive.

"It's.. very cold.." Senko managed to say

The Graveward realised he was no longer able to see Senko due to the weather. He rapidly began cycling through his husks, attempting to locate her through each and every one. But none could see her ; their eyes had been frozen shut.

He breathed inwards. He gulped. He blinked.

One by one the statues shattered, exploding in a spectacular fashion. Senko had managed to defeat his flawless plan. Leaving him in the ruins of his attempt. Slowly, the snow cleared. A valiant warrior, and a meticulous craftsman.

"You're a monster. You're no better than the things you kill. You do know that right? You're alive because of something not of this world. You're walking dead."

"As are you" Senko spoke, trying to hide the tears forming.

"I couldn't hurt you. My words have hurt you enough."

And with that, The Graveward gave his ultimate ability form. He ran away.

More traumatised than wounded, Senko returned home after the ordeal. On her way, a small fox followed her, stroking her leg and begging her for food, having nothing on her, she brought the poor animal home. When she turned back at the front door to look at it, it was frozen. Not with coldness, but it was stiff. Now that she thought about it..

Foxes weren't supposed to be green now were they?

The statue exploded, cutting deep shards within Senko's skin and releasing a handful of insects. The Graveward had found her. From nowhere a statue froze to block the entrance to her house. Two others attacked her, managing to once again separate her from Kaku in their frozen hands.

"I learnt from the last hour."

More insects began to ambush her, exploding over and over, slowly scarring her. She could hear other sounds, the buzzing of... wasps. Small jade insects entered Senko's skin, cutting deep and tearing her wounds larger. Unable to fight without Kaku, she had no idea what to do. Kaku began to shake and managed to burst the hands of the statue holding him. Now

brandishing her sword, she began slicing at the statues, slowly lowering their numbers. But she could feel light headed. When she looked at her hands, she saw locusts of jade with wings like razors cutting her deeper, draining her of blood. Senko let out a scream, dropping Kaku once again. She could see the world around her fade as blood squirt into the air. She wouldn't die like this. From these pests. She saw the same figure as she lay. He knelt down towards her. A sinister look on his face. He had premeditated it all. The bees, the locusts, the carefully placed statues. Where had he learnt this information? Who was he? How could he have this power? Or rather, was this the only thing he had. This power. Nothing else. And that's when Kaku began shaking. Managing to unseathe itself, it pierced the Graveward, staining the snow a crimson red as he clutched the wound. He pulled the blade out, gravely wounded. He coughed rose blood on top of an almost unconscious Senko.

"We are not so different are we, Senko"

"You are.. Respectable warrior of snow. Allow yourself time to grow. I have a sense that greater peril will come for you."

He finally said her name. Senko was weak and drifted into a long sleep. When she woke. The figure was nowhere. The blood trailed far into the distance. But nothing was taken of her. How fruitless of a mission the Graveward had gone on.