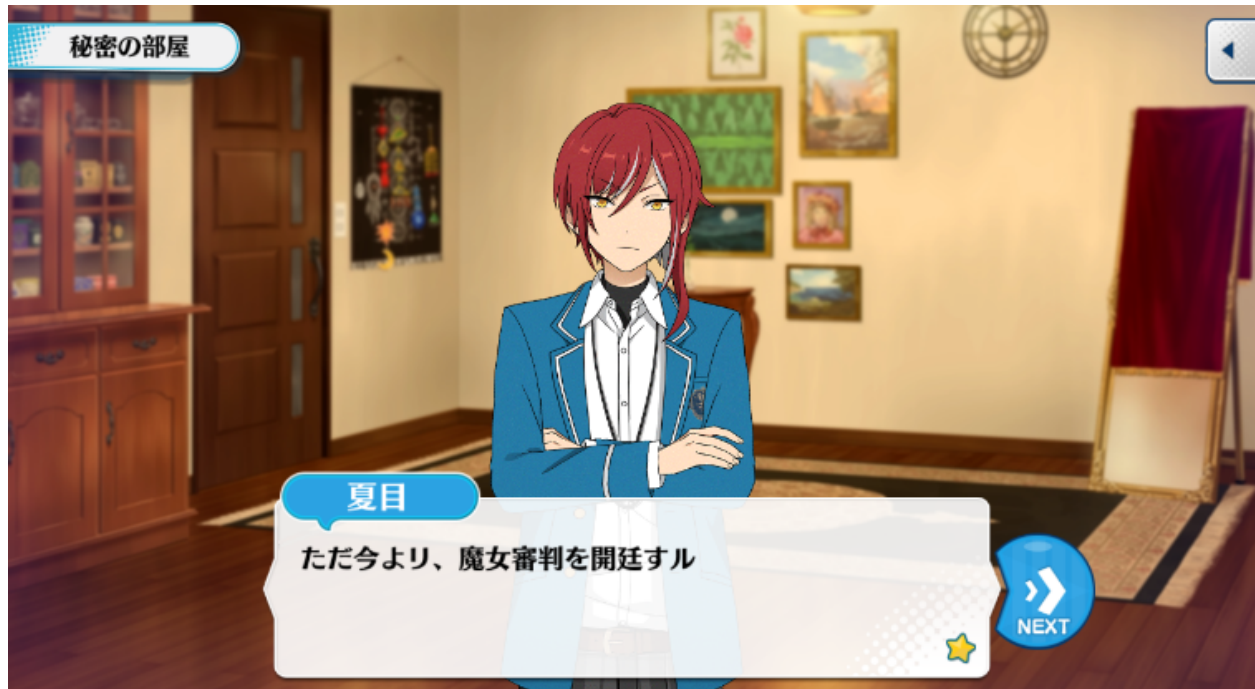


# Cunning◆Wonder Game

## Prologue

Translation: Nanairo  
([chapter list](#))

Location: Secret Room



**Natsume:** The witch trial is now in session.

**Tsumugi:** .....



**Sora:** Excuse me! Master~, Sora has some questions!

First, why is Senpai all wrapped around in rope? Next, who is the “Witch”?

There’s no other girl here besides Anzu, so~?

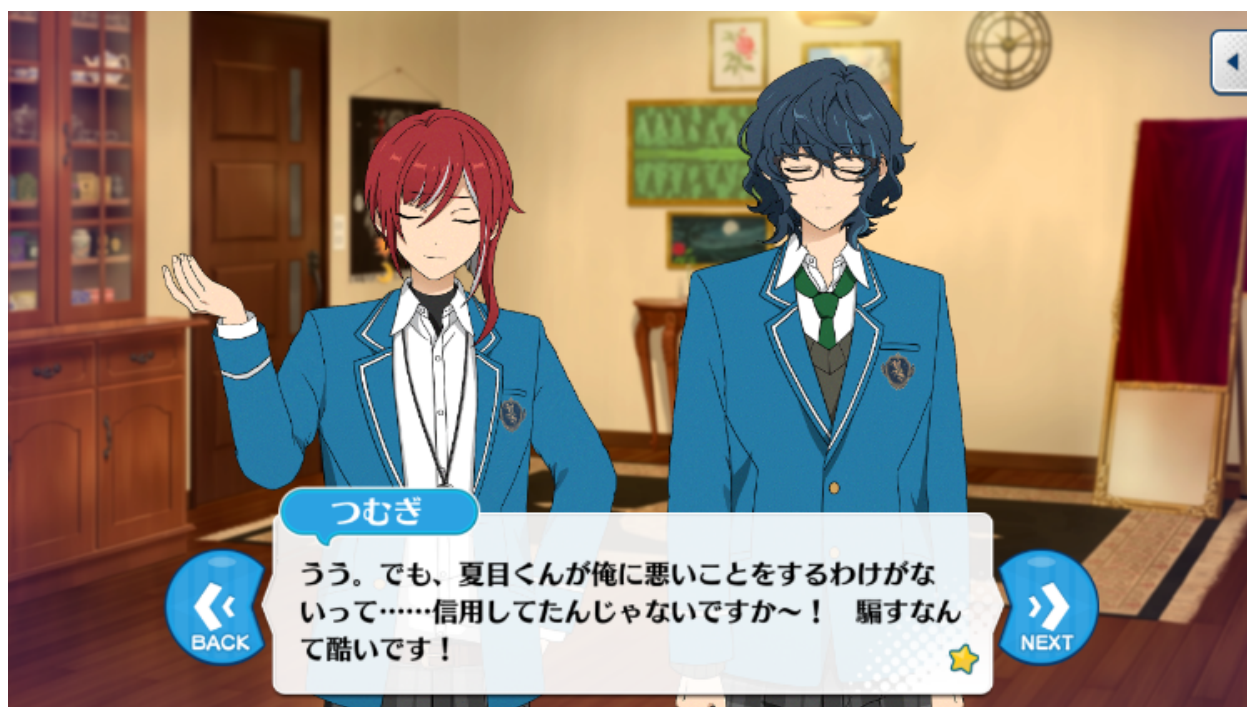
**(confidently)** Anzu hasn’t done anything to be suspected of crimes. She doesn’t have that Color! HaHa~♪

**Natsume:** HM. We would have trouble moving on with the proceedings if I allow just anyone to ask questions as they please. However, I shall make a special exception only for this time.

**(sighing)** First off, the reason why that foolish human mop is tied up is because he is the defendant in the witch trial currently in session.

It would be a pain if he managed to escape, so I lied to him randomly like “You have lint on your clothes,” and managed to tie him up easily.

It’s easier than twisting a baby’s arm.[1] You should be more cautious, Senpai.



**Tsumugi:** Wah... But I thought you wouldn't do anything bad to me, Natsume-kun... I believed in you, you know! You're horrible to deceive me like that!

I wouldn't even run away or anything! Actually, if you had told me, I'd have tied myself up so you wouldn't need to go through the trouble!

**Natsume:** HAH. Talk about getting tied up by your own ropES[2] ... Whatever. A defendant shouldn't be talking. For the duration of this witch triAL, you are stripped of your human riGHTS, SenPAI.

**Tsumugi:** Wah... You're pinning something on me, is that right? I didn't think you would, even now that I'm tied up... But I didnt do anything to be accused like this!

**Natsume:** (*ignores*) To answer the other quesTION, even men have actually been tried as "witchES".

An amusing little error born from translatiON.

**Sora:** HiHi~♪ Sora sees now, Sora accepts this! Please continue now, Master~!

**Natsume:** **(smiling)** For this trial, you are not to refer to me as “Master~”, but rather, as “Your Honor.” ♪

**Tsumugi:** Aah, please wait! You can’t just believe and accept whatever Natsume-kun says so easily, Sora-kun!

That boy is much more of a liar than you think! All he says are just random things!

**Natsume:** **(sighing)** That’s tRUE. But I do not lie to SoRA. He sees right through deception and manipulatIOn. Sora may be pure and sinceRE, but he is not thick-headED.

**(smiling)** Back to the subjECT. Do you understand where we all stand nOW? I am the judGE, and four-eyes over there is the defendANT.

Sora and Little Kitten are the defense counsel and the witnessES. Please testify as I have requestED.

In this court of IAW, swear that your testimony will be the whole trUTH, and nothing but the trUTH, while placing your hand on the *Grand Grimoire*. [3]

**Tsumugi:** **(confused)** Huh, we’re not using the Bible for that?!

**Natsume:** Depending on the persON, this *is* the bibLE. Or rather, each and every person has their *own* biBLE.

**Tsumugi:** I suppose that’s true, but wouldn’t switching the bible with a book of sorcery kind of flip around the meaning of witches and everything? Am I just being too nitpicky?!

**Natsume:** **(smiling)** MHM. We may be simulating a trial, but it’s only another name for your punishmENT, SenPAI. So details don’t mattER.

In the eND, you will be found guilty of your crimes and meet a terrible fATE. This is but a meaningless formality that leads to that conclusiON.

This is exactly what witch trials from the Dark Ages are liKE... OR, something like the Queen of Heart’s executiONS, from Alice in WonderlAND.

**Tsumugi:** So you're telling me you're just letting off steam and taking it out on me?!

**Natsume:** **(frowns)** What superficial thinkING. Alice in Wonderland makes light of the numerous structural intricacies of flourishing into an adult member of society.

It's a satirical tale that laughs at that, scoffing, "I don't get it, that's so stupid!"

...We've veered off topic agAIN. That always happens whenever I talk to yOU, SenPAI.

AnywAY, we may be alright with dawdling aroUND, but Little Kitten is probably buSY... Let's make this quick and briEF.

FIRST, I will detail the offenSE. The accuSED, Tsumugi Aoba, is to stand and listen quieTLY.

**Tsumugi:** Ugh... It looks like it's pointless to fight it... It's already difficult in itself to stand because I'm tied up, but I'll do as I'm told.

**Natsume:** Your submission is appreciaTED. ...The problem here lies in the fact that this mAN, a doormat who usually listens and agrees to whatever other people sAY—

Has seemed to make an exception this tIME, and has betrayed our groUP, Switch.

**Tsumugi:** W-What?! No, no, this has to be a misunderstanding! I would never betray you two, Natsume-kun!

**Natsume:** **(sideglance)** "You twO," hUH? HMPH... You're still detaching yourself from US.

**Tsumugi:** .....

**Sora:** Hm? Master~, Anzu seems like she wants to say something!

**Natsume:** **(impressed)** OK. I shall allow you to speAK. What ever could it bE, Little Kitten?

HM, HM. You're saying that if this is about Wonder GaME, you've requested Senpai for help and thus you are partially responsiBLE?

That Senpai simply trusted what you said, and that is why he agreed without an ounce of hesitatiON...?

WonderFUL. You have completely mastered your role as the defenSE. Although it isn't a good thing to be so self sacrificiAL...

It makes me want to pardon anything and everythiNG, in consideration for your feeliNGS.

But I cAN'T. UnfortunateLY, your statement just now is not grounds for a plea. The issue I am pressing is what happens after thAT...

The fact that Senpai, after accepting your request, has taken charge of it completely without even a word of counsel to US.

This is a serious breach of trUST.

Because you sEE, this means that Senpai does not trust uS... NO, it means he does not think of us as people he can share such vital matters WITH.

**Sora:** Master~! Sora will make a plea too! Maybe Senpai simply forgot to contact us?

Senpai pushes himself hard and tires himself out completely a lot, so he spaces out a lot too!

**Natsume:** Senpai is clumsy and airheadED, after ALL... But that, too, is not sufficient grounds for a plea. If he "spaced out" regarding this matter, then he must not think of it to be of importaNCE.

If he truly holds this with great importance in his heART, he should have never forgotten to tell US. NO, in faCT, he would have come and tell us about anythiNG, no matter what it may have been abOUT.

Senpai has neglected thiS. In other woRDS, you know what that mEANS.

**Tsumugi:** **(shocked)** Uu... I might get in your nerves for saying this, but in other words... Were you lonely, Natsume-kun?

Because you thought I didn't deem you important?

**(smiles)** Then there's no need to worry! Everyone in Switch is so dear to me, that even if you're placed inside my eye it wouldn't hurt one bit!

**Natsume:** **(scoffs)** ...Then try IT. Come ON, it's too late to say it's just a figure of speech nOW.

**Tsumugi:** Eeek?! You're scaring me, Natsume-kun! Don't bring your finger so close to my eyeball!

**Sora:** (Huh~? Sora doesn't get it. Master~ Isn't acting like himself, is he? Master~ is always cool and clever, and would never say irrational things.)

(Even when he hits Senpai, he makes sure he doesn't actually hurt him... There is no Color of ill intent. In fact, it's warm and kind, almost like he's embracing him.)

(But now, it's different. It's kind of scary~... Is Master~ seriously mad this time?)

(Why? What is Wonder Game? Is that what is making Master~ not act like himself?)

## NOTES:

**[1] Easier than twisting a baby's arm:** This is the literal translation for the idiom that basically means, "easier than stealing candy from a baby." BUT, the literal translation is very graphic and very Natsume-core, so I chose to stick to that LOL

**[2] Getting tied up by your own ropes:** Another idiom that doubles as a pun for Mugi volunteering to tie himself up! Its equivalent in English is to be hoisted by one's petard.

**[3] Grand Grimoire**『大奥義書 (グラン・グリモワール)』: The biggest, baddest book of black magic there is. It contains information such as how to summon and make pacts with demons (notably Lucifer), some simpler spells you can do after you have done the former, and in some versions it includes some necromancy hijinks. Amazing.  
([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand\\_Grimoire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Grimoire))

**THANK YOU:**

- Taya, Euni, and Valentine for all the help in this stupid cursed prologue. Luv u