



# EMERALD LEGACY



Sorry

Glen Goerwell

Soshi Kanemitsu, had never expected great things from himself. While he was not so humble as to deny his talent when it came to steel. The truth was that the Scorpion loved other arts so much more than that of smithing. Be it acting, weaving, carving, ikebana, or music they were esteemed, while the smithy was not.

They were never disrespected. The need for good steel precluded that. But there was no tradition of greatness within the clan. None compared the works of the Ugawa to the Ashidaka or Kaiu, nor should they. The premier smithing lineage in the Scorpion was simply...less. Less support, less prestige, and lesser steel itself. Their blades were fine things, but not up to the standards of the Kakita Master Smiths.

It was something that had irked Kanemitsu when he was younger. But now in his middle age that particular fire had died. He had been blessed by the great fortune Kaishi to be content. Though he still wasn't used to the new name yet.

That contentment had been lost when he and his family had been summoned to go to a land never known and make a new life.

As they had desperately tried to take the isles for themselves. Kanemitsu had found himself frantically at work. Forging and reforging weapons and armor to deal with the stone guardians. Through the turmoil he had found himself the first of equals within the small community of smiths in the expedition fleet. Which he supposed, led him to where he was now, deep within the fortress that had become their capital. The arching stone and quiet dignity of a gallery, no that was not the right word. This place was no mere showcase for the various weapons. No, it was an armory for the founding kami. Their purpose spoken to him as he inspected each weapon in turn. They were great works of art, yet lacked somehow.

"So what do you make of it Soshi-san?" Asked Yogo Norio.

The man's elaborate butterfly mask easily outshone Kaemitsu's own simple cloth wrap. But it was only natural. Yogo Norio was the chief of the Yogo with his husband, surely he should be great.

Kanemitsu lifted up the kodachi that was to be gifted to O-Bayushi. The balance was exceptional, but it was the steel that found him at a loss. All smithing in the Empire could trace its lineage either to Dōji Yasuragi-shiryō, Lord Kaiu, or Lady Agasha, yet this steel did not carry the tell-tale temper of the Crane techniques.

"That, I do not know who *forged* these weapons." Kanemitsu said.

Norio blinked. "What do you mean, surely it was Lady Dōji?"

Kanemitsu shook his head. "No disrespect to her, but she was never a smith. More importantly, this is not *Crane* steel. Surely Lady Doji would use her own clan techniques, no?"

There was a soft hum of contemplation. "What else would she use? The Kaiu were protective of their technique in the time of the Shining Prince, and the Empire had not realized the quality of Agasha's Technique."

"That I do not know, Yogo-sama," Kanemitsu said. "Truth be told, it does not hold in common with either the Kaiu or Agasha lineages either. It's something entirely unique. It's beautiful, if not for the heresy in it, I would love to melt it down to study."

"...Please don't. I decided against the advice of my co-archivist to show you because I wanted insight," Norio said.

Kanemitsu put the kodachi down. "Of course not, as I said, to destroy any of these weapons would be heresy."

Norio went over to the last two weapons, each of them raised just as high, and just as protected as the other eight. Important as the founders, yet their names were not there. A great spear and kusari-fudo chain simply waited for...someone.

"We still do not know who these represent." Norio admitted.

Ten weapons, eight of which with purpose clear.

For Hida, a great otsutchi had been left. The ironwood mallet clad in steel. Heavy as the earth itself.

For Dōji, herself, a graceful jian vibrant blue metal like the ocean, dancing amongst waves.

For Togashi, a frighteningly brutal looking black iron gloves. A void that would explode in power.

For Akodo, a nodachi, exactly one foot shorter than the odachi of Hantei. Both cast with brilliant white steel. Akodo's blade was guarded and simple compared to the regal emerald and jade ornamentation of the Hantei blade.

For Shiba, a Jumonoji-style spear, wholly different from the unknown one. Made of thick cedar and red steel that burned with purpose. The three-pronged blades sharp enough to cut hair.

For Shinjo, a yumi made of interlocked metal and wood, perfect to shoot from a horse. Yet strangely peaceful for a weapon of war.

The kodachi was made of black steel, a subtle thing of shadow, eager to find the gap of places.

But then there were the two other weapons:

The jeweled spear was wholly different from Shiba's. Closer in form to a naginata, but lacking the cutting edge. Its shaft made of green steel, with a single piece of jade embedded at the bottom of the spear.

And the kusari-fundo, made of a lighter iron than Togashi's weapon, it still carried a weight, as if it was waiting for you to rest, to stop fighting. It was inevitable, it frightened Kanemitsu on some level.

Despite the chain weapon being made to subdue and restrain, the overwhelming embrace of death radiated from it.

As Kanemitsu gripped his chin in thought, he could think of one answer, though it seemed madness. But then, this entire venture had been madness.

"Perhaps they are for the other Kami," he mused.

Norio's head snapped to look at him with ill concealed alarm. "Lady Dōji would *never* help the Fallen one."

"She might hold hope at his redemption." Kanemitsu contends. "The jade then is to keep him safe from relapse."

"Then what of the last? There were nine children of the Sun and Moon, not ten."

Kanemitsu shrugs. "I do not know, my lord. It is only a guess. A more learned scholar might know. For these two at least, I would give them to the court."

"Not yet," Norio said instantly. "I must give them answers, not more questions."

"I apologize, but I cannot find them for you." Kanemitsu said.

Norio sighed. "No, but you did show me what to ask, somewhere there must be a record, Lady Dōji would not be so foolish as to trust everything to word of mouth."

Kanemitsu decided to stay quiet. It was not his place to speak as the priest paced and thought out loud to himself.

He quietly bowed and departed. Perhaps he would help out Norio by suggesting to Soshi-dono that they should begin looking for archives?

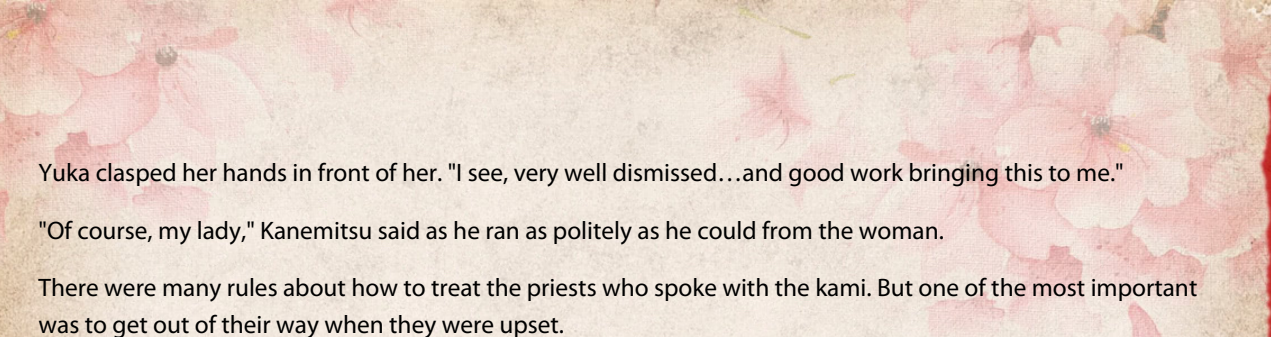
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"There is *what* underneath my castle?" Soshi Yuka asked.

A small private office off of the throne room was decorated with little, but seemed wholesome enough as Soshi Yuka's green eyes flashed with violent promise.

Kanemitsu swallowed. Oh dear, he had assumed that Norio had *told* his Lady. Why wouldn't you?

"Um, weapons for the clans, my Lady." He said timidly.



Yuka clasped her hands in front of her. "I see, very well dismissed...and good work bringing this to me."

"Of course, my lady," Kanemitsu said as he ran as politely as he could from the woman.

There were many rules about how to treat the priests who spoke with the kami. But one of the most important was to get out of their way when they were upset.

Kanemitsu looked up at the silver moon of the sky.

"Sorry, Yogo-san,"

