

The S-Files

A Scientific Treatment on Structure and Workings of Athena's Saints (Well, sort of...)

Von abgemeldet

Kapitel 14: Interlude III - Himiko on the Rocks! On the Use of a First-Class Performance Hair-dryer

Interlude III

Himiko on the Rocks! On the Use of a First-Class Performance Hair-dryer

Scorpio Gold Saint Milo and M.D. Terada Makoto sat in Scorpio Temple and drank some more in silence. The red-haired doctor looked for stray scorpions while Milo fed Hyoga-II-chan some morsels of food.

Suddenly Milo sat straight.

"Oh. Camus just told me telepathically that there is a certain ice cube standing in front of his temple, waiting to be removed."

Makoto looked at him in confusion. "What ice cube is he talking about?"

"I guess it'll be about 3 meters high, 1.5 meters wide and just as deep."

"So what?"

"I'm pretty sure it's the Freezing Coffin in which your colleague will spend the rest of her existence."

"You sure? I'd say we have to put this to the test." Makoto hiccupped. She shouldn't have drunken so much of the wine, she thought dizzily.

"Not even the power of all Gold Saints combined can break a Freezing Coffin created by Camus."

"Hm," Makoto frowned. "And what about a first-class performance hair-dryer?"

"I don't know. I don't own a hair-dryer."

"But I do."

"Well, you can try."

"Hm-hm... Just where can I get an extension lead for it?"

"I'd say you should first think of *any* means to get energy for it."

Makoto sighed. "I always forget that you live far beyond the civilized world."

"It's very civilized in its own way," Milo protested. His gaze fell to the ground. "Ah, *there* you are, Pope-chan!"

Makoto squealed in horror. "Where? Where?"

"Next to your left foot. Careful! Don't step onto him!"

"Graaaaaa!" Makoto lifted her feet and looked panicky down onto the ground. Pope-chan swiftly crawled towards Milo and the Scorpio Gold Saint grinned happily.

"Now only Camus-chan is missing..."

Makoto sighed. She didn't trust these 'pets' at all. "I only hope I'll get Himiko out of this ice cube."

"Fat chance. Camus' Freezing Coffin is pretty final."

"I only believe that when I have tried it and failed."

"Well, *if* you succeed, there are still fourteen Freezing Coffins in which he imprisoned my poor little pets."

Makoto tried to get up from the seat, but immediately sat down again. This Samos wine had been stronger than expected.

"Are you unwell?"

"No, not at all. I'm feeling fine, really - I just can't stand on my own, it seems."

"Well, don't expect me to help you." Milo didn't want to admit he had had slightly too much of the wine, too.

"Did I ask for your help?" Makoto retorted aggressively.

"Fortunately not," Milo grinned and let Pope-chan crawl up his arm to join Hyoga-II-chan, who sat on his shoulder.

Makoto grumbled something unintelligible and stared angrily at Milo and his

scorpions. "I'm going to examine this Freezing Coffin now."

"I won't hold you back."

"I hope so." Slightly unsteadily, Makoto stumbled up the stairs to Aquarius Temple.

Milo shrugged and returned his pets to the terrarium in his bedroom.

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Makoto climbed the stairs until she stood in front of the Himiko ice cube.

"Hm." She began to examine the Freezing Coffin. It seemed to be impossible to scratch the ice, not even with hammer and chisel, thus she decided to return to Scorpio Temple and fetch the remainder of her supplies.

"Makoto?" Milo asked. He kneeled on the floor and looked for his last missing pet, but when the scientist returned, he stood up. "So it was futile after all?"

"I haven't even started yet!" She rummaged through her toolbox.

"And what are you going to do now?"

"I'm going to melt the ice."

"Good luck..."

"I *am* going to do it!" Makoto packed all of the needed things into a backpack and returned to the 11th temple.

Milo waited for a moment until he followed her. He really wanted to know if she succeeded. In that case the deep-frozen scorpions in his backyard might still be thawed.

When Makoto reached the Freezing Coffin in front of Aquarius Temple, she put down her backpack, tugged free a little generator and put it onto the ground before she plugged in the hot-air dryer and positioned it on a tripod in front of the ice block.

Camus stood in front of his temple, his cape blowing in the wind, as he watched the strange, red-haired woman working on his Freezing Coffin. He wondered if anyone had ever told her that it was futile to try and break such an ice sarcophagus created by him.

Now she put up a folding chair and sat down next to Freezing Coffin and hot-air dryer and began to eat some cookies while she waited.

Camus watched her silently, a slightly increasing frown appearing on his forehead when he discovered that small rivulets of water flowed down the ice block. This was outrageous!

Suddenly Milo stood next to him, a broad grin on his face. "Worrying about your reputation, Camus?"

Camus return the gaze levelly, and the temperature around seemed to drop several degrees. "Me? - By the way, I think this belongs to you." He gave Milo a small ice cube with a scorpion enclosed.

"Camus! How could you! This was your namesake Camus-chan!"

"He sat in my salad bowl."

"That still doesn't give you the right..."

"We had an agreement - I won't ice your horrible pets while I visit you in Scorpio Temple, but when they creep into my territory, they're fair game."

"But still..." Milo sulked. "Poor Camus-chan... You're cruel, Camus! That's supposed to be my domain. I'm sure the poor little thing was only hungry."

"If you neglect your duty to feed him, you can't hold me responsible." Camus shrugged and watched Makoto's progress. "Maybe I should enclose her in a Freezing Coffin, too. She's an intruder and should be neutralized."

"No! You can't do that!" Milo said hurriedly. He didn't want his embarrassing photos to be published, as would be the case if Makoto and Himiko died.

"Why not? Do you have some ...interest in her?"

"No! - Er, I mean.. Ah, gods... It's none of your business." Milo looked at the scientist. Makoto seemed to have fallen asleep while her hot-air dryer continued to slowly melt the Freezing Coffin.

"But Milo, you can tell *me* - aren't we best friends?" Camus allowed himself one of his rare grins.

"Ahm, Camus, you see, there are some things that are *really* private..."

"Such as the fact that you wish to imitate Aiolia and keep two girl-friends in your temple? As a matter of fact, not even Aiolia went so far as to allow Marin and Shaina to move in with him."

Milo's face turned a vivid crimson. "It is not how it seems to be..."

"It isn't? So how *is* it?"

"I can explain everything! - You see, they are two scientists from Japan who want to examine the Saints of Athena."

"I see. And obviously you volunteered to be the first to be ...examined really thoroughly."

"Certainly *not*!"

Camus grinned again when Milo stormed downstairs back to his temple. (He should be more careful, he thought, he might ruin his reputation if someone else saw him like this.)

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When Makoto woke up, it was already early in the morning and the Freezing Coffin had almost completely dissolved. There was still a thin layer of ice covering Himiko. Carefully, Makoto removed the slush from her colleague and put her down onto the ground. She was still ice cold, and Makoto slapped her in the face.

"Wake up!" Himiko didn't move and Makoto sighed. She threw the petite engineer over her shoulder and carried her down to Scorpio Temple.

Milo sat at the table (or rather slept there with his head cradled on his arms), and the tiny Freezing Coffin with Camus-chan in it stood next to him.

Makoto emptied the table and put Himiko down on it.

"I hate it," she groaned.

When the wine bottle and cup shattered on the stone floor, Milo woke up. "What? Where? Who? - Oh dear, my head..." He made a face and massaged his temples.

"So it's impossible?" Makoto said triumphantly.

"What?" Milo yawned.

"To break Camus' Freezing Coffin."

"Huh?" Milo grabbed Camus-chan in his icy grave. "But he's still in there," he sniffed.

"I talk about Himiko and not about this stingy beast!"

"Oh, yes. Her. - Indeed, you did it! How? - And can you free my beloved little pet, too?"

"Whether I'm able to do so or whether I *will* do it is a different matter."

"But you ruined my reputation! You *have* to do me a little favour."

"I have to? When you are always so nice and helpful," she said acidly. "I don't think so."

"Then you can very well find another temple to put your things into and ruin that guardian's reputation."

"Thaw your pet yourself!"

"I even saved your life yesterday night," Milo grumbled. "Maybe it wasn't such a good idea after all."

"Of course it was a totally altruistic deed," Makoto said ironically and rubbed Himiko dry with a large towel. "I won't thaw any scorpions. I don't even know if it would work, after all, they aren't so big."

"Ahm, but..." Milo fought with himself until he managed to utter: "Please..."

"I will consider it."

"I hope so."

Milo still watched Himiko in amazement. She was really free of the ice!

"Come on, wake up," Makoto urged. She should carry Himiko into her bed. There it was warmer than on the table. The blonde engineer was still comatose.

Suddenly Camus stood in the hall. When he had checked on his Freezing Coffin in the morning, he had discovered it gone. And now his victim was freed from the ice?

"Incredible!" he said instead of a greeting.

"Hello Camus," Milo grumbled. "If you dare to freeze any of my pets *here* in my home, I will forget that you are my best friend and you will make the acquaintance of my Scarlet Needle attack."

Makoto glared at the Aquarius Saint while she enveloped Himiko in several blankets. Her clothes were wet after having to carry Himiko around all the time. She really should change into something dry. She took Himiko and went to her room.

Camus ignored Makoto completely.

"If your pets don't attack me I won't have to defend myself, Milo," he shrugged. "By the way, the woman seems to be very familiar around here, wouldn't you say?"

"But that doesn't mean any of them is my girl-friend," Milo grumbled.

"Who claims something stupid like this?" Makoto asked when she returned, freshly changed.

"No one needs to tell me anything. It's quite obvious," Camus replied amusedly.

"Indeed?"

"Sure. The Temples are sacred. Only persons very close to the guardians are allowed

in."

"Who says this?"

"It's tradition."

"Tradition doesn't count," Makoto waved it away.

"It counts at Sanctuary. Not even Aiolia's girl-friends are allowed to live in his temple."

"I don't mind," Makoto said. "I always do what I want."

"I only wonder why Milo hasn't killed you if you intend to stay here while you aren't his girl-friend." Camus lifted one of his exotic eyebrows. "I mean, he even *protected* you."

"He doesn't have a choice."

"He doesn't?" Camus examined Milo thoughtfully and the Scorpio Gold Saint obviously wished to be able to sink into the ground.

"It's obvious, isn't it?" Makoto grinned smugly.

"Indeed." Camus managed successfully to fight a broad grin, even though his voice sounded highly amused.

"Phew!" Milo made a face.

"Does she blackmail you?" Camus looked quizzically at his only friend among the Gold Saints. Milo's face reddened visibly.

"Sure, what did you think?" Makoto chimed.

"Interesting. So *how* does she blackmail you?"

"That's none of your concern."

"Don't tell me she has pics of you, say, in a frilled dress and with make-up on?" Now Camus couldn't suppress a grin. This idea was utterly ridiculous.

Makoto grinned, too. "I won't tell anything..."

"A wise decision. If you'd tell him, I'd kill you slowly and surely, no matter the consequences."

"I'm just glad that there's no way to blackmail me," Camus said smugly.

"That means only that no one hasn't found one *yet*," Makoto pointed out.

"Well, I wouldn't know anything either," Milo sulked. It was so mean that Athena's

Saints weren't paid properly, or he wouldn't have to work in that agency. He wondered how Camus managed. It couldn't just be his uncanny luck in their poker games. Maybe there *was* something to be found out as well...

"Let's wait and see." Makoto watched Milo closely. He looked so cute when he sulked. Camus, on the other hand, looked as if he had just acquired a freshly polished halo. "I will find out, one way or the other. After all, I have my sources."

"Sources? Who'd tell about *me*? And who might that be?" Camus was sure he had frozen every trespasser who tried to sneak into his temple uninvited.

"Of course my sources are secret and protected."

"Ah. Good. 'Secret sources' certainly means 'no sources at all'."

"Don't be so sure about yourself," Makoto warned. She *had* to find something, only to annoy this oh-so self-confident Aquarius Saint.

"Well, well." Camus shrugged. "You may ask around, but prepare to be disappointed."

"Actually I don't think I'll ask anyone. You're simply not interesting enough," Makoto told him slightly annoyed.

"Good!" both Camus and Milo said in unison.

Makoto looked from one of the Saints to the other. "You sound a wee bit too relieved for my taste..."

"My privacy is my utmost concern" Camus stated.

"Well, and I was just concerned what might happen to you if you continue to harass Camus," Milo claimed.

"That's how you call it? Don't panic, I won't disturb his privacy."

"Then you might still stay alive," Camus said matter-of-factly.

"Thanks for your kind permission," Makoto snapped ironically. "I will give your Aquarius Temple a wide berth - there are lots of Saints who are more interesting than you."

"That's a relief to hear." Camus appeared indeed highly relieved.

"And who will be your next vic-, I mean, experimental subject?" Milo inquired.

"I don't know. I'd have to check my list."

"I suggest you leave out the remaining Gold Saints. They aren't fond of intruders either," Milo told her. "That is, unless you find something to blackmail *them*, too."

"Well, there are enough Silver and Bronze Saints left. There were quite some cute guys among them. Furthermore, they should be more easily to catch."

"That should be really safer. Although you shouldn't underestimate them either. I mean, they are no match for *me*, but you are only an ordinary human," Milo pointed out.

"Until now I had almost no problems with them."

"Try me," Camus said and looked at her with his level, ultramarine blue gaze. The air temperature dropped several degrees.

"Camus! How often have I told you that my pets don't like the cold?"

"Ahm, sorry, Milo..." Camus made a face. In *his* territory, he could do what he wanted to do, but as long as he visited Milo's temple he had to submit to Milo's wishes.

"But you are a Gold Saint - and Milo said I'd have to be careful around them."

"Well, we are Athena's elite guard."

"I don't mind. I only want to know how Saints function, no matter if they are Bronze, Silver or Gold."

"That's easy. We concentrate and then use our Cosmo to perform virtual miracles."

"And where do you get the Cosmo from?" Makoto was surprised that Camus actually answered a question of hers.

"Our Cosmo comes from both within us and from the universe outside. It's a tremendous power, just like a piece of the big bang."

"I want to know how it works. Every tiny detail!"

"Like this." Camus looked for something. It was quite a mess here - on the ground he could see the splinters of a bottle of cheap wine (the still intact label read 'Imiglykos', some horribly sweet Greek stuff that cried for major headaches) and at least two glasses had met the end of their existence, too. But there was the frozen scorpion on the table. Camus pointed at the iced beast. "Look!" Golden light seemed to shimmer around the Aquarius Saint, and the layer of ice around the scorpion thickened visibly.

"Hm." Makoto circled around Camus. He hadn't even touched it! "I really would like to examine this a bit more closely."

"I'm not some specimen to be examined," she was told.

"That's a pity. The faster I find out how everything works, the faster we can return to Tokyo."

"I don't care how long you stay here as long as you don't bother me."

"But I do care!" Makoto complained. "I hate to be here."

"That's none of my concern." Camus shrugged. "If you would excuse me now. I have important matters to attend to. - Milo, don't forget the poker match tomorrow! Aiolia insisted - he wants to win back some of the stuff he lost last time."

"Sure, I'll be there - at Aiolia's Temple this time?"

"Yes. Until then." Camus walked out of Scorpio Temple, his cape flowing nicely after him.

Makoto sniffed angrily. Camus was really an utterly icy guy. She couldn't understand why Himiko found him so interesting.

"Well, Camus *is* a very private person," Milo observed.

"I can't stand him!"

"If you would know him a bit better, you would come to realize that he is in fact a very nice guy. Well, at least sometimes..." Milo said.

"Who would want to know him better? I'm pretty sure no one wants to get near his ice temple..."

"Gold Saints are different from ordinary humans anyway," Milo explained. "Camus is very serious and very devoted to his job, and much of his time he's in Siberia anyway. He's one of the few Gold Saints who are good in teaching other Saints."

"I pity his pupils."

"Well, as far as he told me he's very proud of his current disciple Hyoga."

"Hyoga? Isn't that the blondie with the 'Rubberduck Cloth'?"

Milo laughed out loud. "That's a good one! But don't let either Camus or Hyoga hear that... Hyoga just won the *Cygnus* Bronze Cloth."

"Hm. Himiko told me she wants to add Hyoga to her collection, too."

"She likes the cool types, eh?"

"She can have them. I take the others."

"Don't you think that's quite a lot of Saints?" Milo grinned.

"Well, I put together a certain selection of course."

"I see. And I'm on your list, too?"

"Sure."

"Hm. I don't like to be a number on some list."

"You should rather be happy that I elected you as being worthy," Makoto responded.

"Who else is on it?"

"Why do you want to know?"

"I want to see if I'm in good company."

"Of course! I chose only the cutest ones," Makoto smiled cheerfully at him.

"Do I have to remind you that I'm not cute?! Handsome, yes. Imposing, of course - but *not cute!*"

"Whatever you say... Let's see... I added Shaka to the list and Shun... Perfectly cute and cuddly."

"Humph. Shun - isn't that this girlish Andromeda Saint?" Milo frowned. He knew only a few of the Bronze Saints, because he outranked them by far and they were of only little interest. But he remembered that Cepheus Albiore, who was probably one of the strongest Silver Saints next to Lacerta Misty, talked about his disciples a while ago. Albiore complained a lot that he only got weaklings and less than proposing material to turn into Saints, but obviously he had been successful anyway, and two of his disciples actually won a Bronze Cloth, one of them Shun.

"Right." Makoto nodded.

"Humph." Milo wasn't sure it was complimentary to be included on a list with Shun and Shaka.

Makoto grinned broadly. "You're not pleased?"

"Not at all. I mean, if you would have mentioned Camus or Aiolia or even Albiore, that would have been more proper."

"Why?"

"Both Shaka and Shun look so ...effeminate. You don't want to imply that I belong to this category, do you?"

"Don't panic, I don't think you're effeminate. After all, you're mean and everything, aren't you?"

"Exactly!" Milo straightened. "I certainly don't want to be some Mister Nice Guy."

"But you're still cute."

How often do I have to tell you that *I'm* *not* *cute*? Cute is for little boys, but I'm a *man*."

"You sure?"

Milo nodded emphatically.

"Ooooh.... My head!" Finally, Himiko returned from the dead. "What happened? Why am I here?"

"Nothing of major importance. Camus deep-froze you, and I thawed you."

"Camus? My beautiful, gorgeous Camus? How could he do something mean like that?" Himiko sniffed.

"Because he's a totally mean guy. By the way, he was here while you were out. I can't stand him at all."

"He was *here*? And I was unconscious? I want to die!" Himiko looked like she would faint. "And why don't you like him? He's soooooo cute!"

"Okay, he's cute, but he's more than icy."

"I don't mind. I want him anyway!" Himiko sulked.

Milo just shook his head.

"But I won't help you to find a way to convince him. I'm not going near his temple again."

"Fine. That means he's *mine alone*!"

"But don't think I'll thaw you every day."

"I'm sure he won't freeze me a second time."

"No. He'll probably use his Diamond Dust attack on you and catapult you directly through the wall of his temple if you dare to disturb him once more," Milo told her.

"No. He's so cute, he won't do something mean like that," Himiko was sure.

"Famous last words," Milo commented.

"I'll manage to win his heart for sure!"

"I'm sure he doesn't have a heart. The only thing he has in that location is a large ice cube," Makoto surmised.

"No, I won't believe it," Himiko said.

"Remember, the cuter some things look, the more deadly they are."

"Like my scorpions," Milo interjected smugly.

"Well, I don't think scorpions are cute. They are too hard and have far too many legs."

"I think my scorpions look very cute," Milo defended the honour of his favourite pets.

"Well, in one case you're right. There are worse things," Makoto nodded.

"For example?" Milo inquired.

"Don't say 'Camus!'" Himiko threatened.

Makoto closed her mouth in surprise. "How did you know I wanted to mention him?"

"Pah. He's just perfect. I really can't see what's there not to like about him."

"That he's totally icy and freezes everything at the first opportunity? And of course it's only his fault that we have to spend even longer in this desolate place."

"Oh! What did he do?"

"He didn't let me examine closely how his freezing technique works."

"But he *showed* you? Why hasn't he showed *me*?"

"But he did. Only you were right in the middle of it..."

Himiko sighed. "I can't get over it that Camus was here and actually talked to you. *My* Camus!"

"Hm, it's too bad that we don't have any hidden cameras here."

"What? You mean that you haven't even taken any photos while he was here?" Himiko squeaked.

"I didn't have time for photos. I was occupied thawing a rather large ice cube."

"I'm going to die..."

"Don't you dare die so easily! You have to help me with this job!"

"But I still don't have any more pics of my Camus-sama..."

"Why does it always have to be Camus?" Milo grumbled. "Am I not enough?"

Makoto grinned at him. "Do you really wish for Himiko to run after *you* like this?"

"Well, actually, I think it might please my ego."

"I don't want Milo, I want Camus," Himiko sulked.

"I know, I know," Makoto sighed. "You have to think on something to convince him."

"I'm working on it."

"Forget it," Milo told her. "Camus is a faithful Saint of Athena without any vices, who only lives for serving the Goddess and training his disciples."

"And what about this poker stuff?" Makoto raised an eyebrow.

"Well, ask him, if you dare," Milo grinned.

"Ahm, rather not... I don't want to meet him anymore, remember?"

"Well, I might ask him," Himiko said.

"If you wish to turn up as another ice-cube..." Milo shook his head.

"She likes to be iced," Makoto surmised.

"Actually, I'd rather try to thaw him a bit..."

"Good luck," Milo said dryly.

"I suggest we examine somebody else first. Preferably somebody nice and easy."

"Hm, what about that cute rose guy?"

"You don't want to examine Aphro," Milo warned. "He's pretty mean."

"Hm, I'm sure he's more pretty than mean," Himiko said.

"Just stay away from his roses," Milo suggested.

"Who cares about roses?" Makoto asked. "We have to get on with our scientific studies."

"Okay, let's go. And on our way I might even see my Camus again. After all, we have to pass Aquarius Temple on our way to the goldfish."

"Good luck," Milo grinned. He really had to remember that 'goldfish' thing for his next

encounter with Aphrodite.

"I hope we'll be lucky this time," Makoto said. "Until now we don't have to many results."

"Indeed. Let's see - it's 10 a.m. now, maybe we'll manage to examine the Pisces Saint before lunch."

They packed their things and went upstairs to Pisces Temple.

- End of Interlude III -