

The S-Files

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

Von abgemeldet

Kapitel 25: File GS06-Can-T001 - Deadly DeathMask! The Horrors of the Fourth Temple

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Deadly DeathMask! The Horrors of the Fourth Temple

At Aquarius Temple, it was deceptively silent. When Camus didn't react at all for an whole hour, Himiko sniffed and decided to go to Makoto to tell her about the cruelties of life and love.

With hanging head, she trod down the stairs to Capricorn Temple. Shura was likewise slightly depressed and admitted that Makoto was back at Scorpio Temple now. So Himiko went there and found Makoto in their old room.

"Hello Himiko. Is he still steadfast?"

"He is. And currently he doesn't even react anymore when I try to lure him out of his room..."

"Well, this is very much the effect of him going on a tour through the bars with Aiolia and Milo..."

"No, Camus would *never* do something like this!"

"He *does*. He seems to be pretty desperate if you ask me."

"Oh dear! I really should try to save him from the bad influence of Milo and Aiolia. Especially Aiolia with his tons of women!"

"I don't think they'll let you rescue him. We'd better get on with our work and inspect another Saint."

"Sniff. But then, you're right. There are still several of them missing in our collection. I

vote for the cute Cancer Saint."

"Cute? He's looks scary, and what I overheard from the other Saints did not sound very favourable either."

"But what else should we do?"

"Okay, you have a point. Let's visit the crab."

They put together their instruments, cameras and other important things before they went to face the Cancer Gold Saint.

Cancer Temple was built like a cross when observed from the upside. Superficially it didn't look very threatening. The scientists entered the temple. It was scarcely lit, and Makoto shuddered.

"I don't like the feel of this thing," She stated.

"I agree." Himiko kept close to her colleague, but took care that she was always mostly hidden behind her.

Makoto dug out a torch and lighted it. The the beam fell onto an agonized face of stone, and both women couldn't suppress a cry of shock and disgust.

"Yikes! His decorator must have had a very bad day!" Himiko shuddered.

"Let's get out of here," Makoto urged and turned to the exit.

"No so fast!" The voice of the Cancer Saint froze them in their tracks. When they looked in the direction of the voice, they discovered a man with a blue violet storm hair-do and a really spiky armour. "I'm Cancer Gold Saint DeathMask. I see you have just admired my little collection..."

"'Admire' is not exactly the word," Makoto replied dryly.

"So you are the two scientist women who like to get on the nerves of us Saints?"

"It's our job - it's nothing personal," Himiko defended herself.

"I heard Camus thinks differently..." DeathMask grinned. "I have to congratulate you for annoying Mr.Icicle that thoroughly. I would never have dared that myself..."

"But, I don't want to annoy him," Himiko sniffed. She still hid partly behind Makoto.

"Whatever... And why would you want to visit me?" DeathMask put on a winning smile. He didn't get many visitors, and today he had two, and they were rather pretty to boot. He wondered whether he should let them stay alive or if he should add some new deathmasks to his hall to admire.

"Well, we wanted to examine your fitness and your Cloth..." Makoto listed and studied the extravagant Cancer Cloth that couldn't hide the fact that DeathMask was very nicely built, just like about all of the other Saints.

"By the way, I'm Himiko, and that's Makoto," the blonde chimed. She wondered how DeathMask styled his hair every morning. Or was this hair-do natural? She couldn't believe it.

"And why would you want to examine my fitness? Don't you see that I'm perfectly trained?"

"Sure... But still, just for our study," Makoto said. "Please?"

DeathMask put on a winning smile. It was nice to be admired for a change and not only feared, he thought. Okay, his enemies still should shake in terror whenever he appeared, but actually he wouldn't mind to induce something different in the members of the other sex.

"I will consider it. What do you offer me in exchange for my cooperation?"

"Hm... If I knew what you want I could offer you something," Makoto told him.

"What do I want? I want to become the most powerful man in Sanctuary of course. I'd like to be the High Priest of Athena so that my word becomes law and my deeds deal out justice..."

"Hm... That's difficult. Don't you have any other wishes?"

"Well... I don't think you could fulfill any of them," he sighed.

"But you could let us do our studies anyway, could you? I would love to take some photos of you," Himiko told him. "You have an absolutely cute nose."

"Huh?" DeathMask looked at her in amazement. That was definitely news for him. "A cute nose?"

Himiko nodded vigorously. "Yes. And beautiful eyes."

"And why don't I have a girl-friend then?" DeathMask grumbled. Somehow power and justice was nice, yes, but it would be even nicer if he had someone to impress with his power.

"Could be your taste in interior decoration," Makoto commented. "I wouldn't want to live in a house like this with all the gruesome faces staring at me."

"But they are the symbols of my power," DeathMask explained. "I'm Sanctuary's best assassin -- no matter what Milo says! -- and every single one of these faces is the sign of another of my victories!"

"Even those of the children?"

"Ah well, shit happens once in a while." DeathMask grinned sheepishly. "But even if you don't count them, I was pretty successful, wouldn't you say?"

"Couldn't you find a sign that is aesthetically more pleasing to the eye?" Makoto wondered.

"Well, to be truthful... These faces just ...happened. I mean, when I took care of the first targets the Pope asked me to eliminate, they just popped up at the walls. I mean, I don't like them too much either -- look at the insolent look of *this* face!" Annoyed, DeathMask pointed at one face that stuck the tongue out at him, before he smashed his fist into the relief. "I still don't understand why Milo's temple isn't decorated with such things as well. I mean, he's the secondary assassin of Sanctuary and gets the jobs that are too base to be given to me."

"Milo's Temple is a mess already - no need to worsen it by adding such silly deathmasks," Makoto stated.

"They aren't silly! They help to intimidate my adversaries!"

"Not only your adversaries. *Everybody* who enters your temple is intimidated. Especially women!"

"And what if I would paint them in some agreeable colours?"

"Forget it. Get rid of these faces first. *Then* you could consider painting the interior in more friendly colours. And adding some flowers would be a nice touch too," Makoto enumerated.

"But I'm the terrible Cancer Gold Saint - Aphrodite is the guy with the flowers!"

"Sure, but you might try to lighten the oppressive atmosphere a bit..."

"I'm sure the others wouldn't take me serious anymore," DeathMask sighed.

"You don't look like someone who needs the approval of other people," Makoto said.

"Well, that's true, but still..."

"Please, let me take these photos," Himiko begged. Maybe she could try to make Camus jealous when she managed to get some nu-- err, *newly* taken pics of DeathMask.

"Why not? So take your pics," DeathMask shrugged, before he decided to put on his best winning smile.

"Kawaii!" Himiko was glad that she had taken an ample amount of films with her, because DeathMask proved to be a very agreeable model as she discovered with

surprise. Probably he got scarcely any favourable attention otherwise, and how much he claimed he liked to be feared, there seemed still to be a part that liked to be simply admired.

"He's really cute when he smiles," even Makoto had to admit.

"*Cute?! I'm supposed to be mean and dangerous,*" DeathMask contradicted her with a slight frown.

"No way, Milo claims the same thing and it's just not true."

"Milo is a bigmouth anyway," DeathMask said derisively. Why the Pope gave Milo most of the interesting assassination jobs all of the time was simply beyond him. He, DeathMask, was definitely more efficient as a killer - Milo always tended to leave quite a mess behind.

"May I take some pics of you without the Cloth, too?" Himiko asked with a shy smile.

"Without the Cloth?"

"Well, not without all clothes, but without the Cloth would be nice," Himiko told him, although she wouldn't have minded the first either.

"Especially without this unbecoming thing," Makoto pointed at the spiky mask.

"Well, if you insist..." The girls were no danger anyway, so he didn't need his Cloth. After all, he was a Gold Saint and his power did not lay in the Cloth alone but in his mastery over his Seventh Sense.

DeathMask willed the Cancer Cloth into its presentational form, and Himiko stared openmouthed at the armour. She really wanted to know how the parts knew where they belonged!

"This armour looks funny," Makoto commented. "A giant crab!"

"The armour, okay, but look at *him!*" Himiko admired the well-trained body of the Cancer Saint and was immediately sad that Camus hadn't shown himself without the Aquarius Cloth yet.

"Not bad at all," Makoto admitted. "It seems all of the Saints are in perfect condition."

"Of course. We always train a lot," DeathMask said smugly. He crashed his fist into a face in the wall that stared at him defiantly.

"Yeah, I noticed. Shura never seemed to tire in his training," Makoto nodded.

"Neither do I." DeathMask performed some stretching exercises and Himiko took photos in rapid succession. She really needed such pics of her gorgeous Camus-sama!

"Why can't I get Camus to let me take such photos?" she sighed.

DeathMask laughed. "Camus? You'll never see him move too much because he's in truth a living icicle. It's said he doesn't have blood in his veins, but red antifreeze." The Cancer Saint grinned insolently. "You see, he was lazy from the beginning of our training, and I'm pretty sure he won't have changed much."

DeathMask shook his head. He didn't like the Ice Saint from the 11th temple. But then, he couldn't stand most of the others either, in varying degrees. One Gold Saint he grudgingly respected was Mu, because the Aries Saint held far greater powers than one would think at first. The others, though... Aldebaran was a stupid bull(y), Aiolia a vain womanizer, Shaka... Shaka was *weird*. DeathMask preferred not to come too close to him at all, lest his weirdness was catching. Dohko was an insignificant dwarf who probably didn't even fit into his Cloth, Milo was a nuisance - it still rankled that the Pope mostly preferred the Scorpio Saint as assassin... Aiolos was mercifully dead - DeathMask almost got sick to the stomach when he thought of the oh-so-heroic Sagittarius Saint who tried to save that screaming worm Athena. This left Shura and Aphrodite. Well, he could cope with the Capricorn Saint, after all he carried out Pope's orders to kill off Athena and Aiolos nicely, and Aphrodite was sufficiently evil to be reckoned with, too, even though he was decidedly queer.

"I absolutely do agree!" Makoto nodded in emphasis. "I really don't understand what's so interesting in this Mr.Freeze."

"Pah," Himiko pouted sullenly. "I'm sure I will manage to make him melt..."

"Be careful or he'll only leave a puddle."

"Ah no, I would see to it that he keeps his proper form," Himiko sighed.

"Good luck..."

"He just needs to be given the proper attention."

"I'd like to see that," Makoto grinned.

"Me too," DeathMask laughed.

"I guess you could sell tickets."

"Oh no, I wouldn't want anyone else see such private things!"

"Don't panic, I'd say there are very few persons who voluntarily would want to get too near our Icicle Saint anyway." DeathMask was surprised - he actually had a good time at the moment. Sometimes it was nice to relax a bit, he thought.

"So I'll get my Camus-sama for me alone?!" Himiko chimed, hearts blinking in her eyes.

"Is this painful?" DeathMask asked curiously, not aware that he echoed Camus'

question from a while ago.

"No," Makoto told him. "It's completely normal for her." DeathMask could not help but shake his head. Women were a truly strange species, it seemed.

Makoto watched in fascination how his spiky hairdo bobbed around. She couldn't help herself and touched one of the strands to see whether it was elastic.

"Hey, what are you doing there?"

"I would love to examine your hair more thoroughly. Don't worry, I'm very careful," Makoto promised.

DeathMask eyed her suspiciously, but didn't fight her either when she put her attention to his deep blue-violet mane. If he was truthful, it was not too bad a feeling when she tousled his hair. Actually, it was pretty nice.

"Milo likes to be tousled, too," Makoto observed.

"Hm." DeathMask frowned. He hated to be compared with Milo. After all, he was a much better assassin than the Scorpio Saint, and it was about time that the Pope acknowledged this publicly.

Himiko continued to take photos when Makoto tried to straighten the funny spikes of DeathMask's hair.

"What the heck are you doing now?" the Cancer Saint asked and wished for a mirror.

"I let my play instinct run free."

"With my hair?" DeathMask tried to peer upwards, but to no avail.

"Do you have other suggestions?" Makoto asked frivolously. DeathMask was more fun than she had expected, especially in view of his ugly temple.

"Well... If you ask me like this..." He put on his winning smile again. Maybe he should rethink his strategy of merely frightening others into respecting him. If they did it out of their free will, it wasn't so bad either.

"Exactly that's what I do." Makoto returned his grin.

"Feel free to find other things to play with."

Himiko giggled. DeathMask was *really* cute. Then she sighed. She wanted to play with her Camus-sama, here and now! Where might he be?

"And you won't resist?" Makoto asked curiously.

"Resist? I might consider to conquer you." DeathMask studied the red-haired woman

thoughtfully.

It was a good thing that none of the others suspected that he was not only the terrifying Cancer Gold Saint - but that deep in his heart he longed for a family and everything, like it had been in his hometown Napoli in Italy where he had grown up with four brothers and two sisters until he was abducted by this Silver Saint who had promised him heaven and earth when he complied and followed him.

"Well, as long as you handle me carefully when conquering me? You Saints are all so incredibly strong!"

"Well, that's part of our job description. But of course I would try not to be too ...forceful with you," DeathMask promised.

"He's quite bold," Himiko observed. "Why did I have to choose the only guy who keeps totally to his privacy?"

"Well, you just let you heart speak," Makoto told her.

"So it seems." One large pink heart formed over Himiko's head and cracked.

"Oh-oh..." Makoto watched her worriedly.

"This is a bit distracting," DeathMask frowned. Flirting with Makoto was a lot of fun, and Himiko was definitely one person too many. Maybe he should kill her and add her to his collection and then concentrate on the red-head.

"Don't panic, it'll pass."

"You sure? I wouldn't mind spending some time with you alone," DeathMask told her.

"Himiko, why don't you develop the films you have shot so far?" Makoto suggested.

"You want to get rid of me, huh? Okay, okay, I'm already gone..." With hanging head and a bag full of films, Himiko went upstairs to Scorpio Temple.

"So, now we're alone," DeathMask said gleefully. Finally he had a girl around that should become his alone!

Makoto studied him thoughtfully. Suddenly she wasn't so sure whether it had been a good idea to send Himiko away.

"Wanna drink something with me?" DeathMask wasn't 100% sure how to open any courting rituals. Killing his opponents was far easier.

"Sure. What do you have to offer?"

"Let's see... There's Grappa, Ouzo... and I think I have some Chianti, too."

"Don't you have anything *without* alcohol?"

"If you'd like some genuine espresso?"

"Ahm, not exactly..."

DeathMask frowned. Now it was getting complicated. "I hope there's some aranciata or lemonata left in the fridge..." He wasn't so fond of the orange or citrus lemonade, but sometimes he liked something sweet nonetheless.

"What about some plain and simple water?"

"Of course, water is always available." He usually didn't drink his Chianti unwatered.

"Fine."

DeathMask lead her into the living quarters of his temple. Interestingly they were the total contrast to the main hall. Okay, dark colours prevailed as well, but everything looked decidedly comfy, with a thick black plush carpet and a likewise well-cushioned dark blue sofa.

"This looks far more comfortable than I would have expected." Makoto was amazed. There were not even any horrid faces on the walls.

"Make yourself comfy," DeathMask invited her, and she sat down on the sofa. "You like it here?" The Cancer Saint smiled at her and sat down pretty close to her.

"Sure. It's nice - contrary to this ugly hall outside."

DeathMask watched her and pondered on the best strategy to conquer her. Maybe he should play around with her hair, too? Makoto seemed to have quite a hair fetish, and her long braid was tempting.

"Hey, didn't you offer me something to drink?" The Cancer Saint's close proximity was disconcerting.

"Oh." DeathMask stood up and brought a carafe of water, a bottle of Chianti and two glasses. He poured Makoto the water and himself the deep red wine, before he took place next to her again.

Makoto fished for one of the deep blue cushions and made herself comfortable. DeathMask smiled at her and tried to put an arm around her. She only looked questioningly at him.

"Hm? Didn't you want to play around with me?"

"Sure, as long as you tell me what *you* wish to play..."

"'Conquering the fair damsel'," DeathMask grinned.

"Well, then begin!" Makoto demanded.

"Huh?" DeathMask looked at her in confusion. "I thought *you* wanted to play *with me*!?"

"Well, I already do..."

"Hm." He frowned and wasn't sure he liked the tone of hers. Makoto found his facial expression majorly amusing.

"Totemo kawaii," she commented.

"Pah. You *are* going to be mine," DeathMask declared and pulled her closer.

"You sure?" Makoto tousled his cute hair-spikes. "To play with you is more fun than I thought."

"Why, thanks." DeathMask decided he would keep her in his temple. She was fun.

"And what's next?"

"Well, you are going to be my woman, of course."

"Err, don't you think that's a little fast?"

"If you insist we could prolong the courting ritual with some kissing or so..."

"What?!" Makoto looked at him with a mixture between shock and amazement.

"I thought it was settled that you'd become my mate?!"

"Ahm, I wanted to *play* - this is getting a bit too serious for my taste..."

"But I just chose you to found a family... You see, I would provide for you, kill all the people who'd try to hurt you..."

"Found a family?" Makoto squeaked. "Are you kidding?!"

"Of course not. Okay, I'm really mean where my enemies are concerned, but then, I really want a nice and comfy home..."

"Don't look at me!"

"Why not? You're cute."

"But I don't want a family! I'm a career woman!"

"No family? No children?" DeathMask hung his head.

"Especially no children!"

"But I would like at least half a dozen strong sons!"

"Ahm, I guess it's time for me to go now..."

"So soon?"

"Well, you are not satisfied to play with me, and such a serious thing like founding a family can't be decided in five minutes."

"Ah, I see. You need some more time until you finally agree to stay with me..."

"Exactly." Makoto nodded vigorously.

"Well, then take your time. But hurry!"

"Yes, Yes, I'll think it over carefully. But now I have to go!"

Makoto fled from the fourth temple while DeathMask looked after her, a single heart floating upwards from his head.

- File GS06-Can-T001 Closed -