

Chapter 2:
The Harpy





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FWAP
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IT SURE IS!!

THE ARACHNE "NEA."

A HAPPY ?!





IT'S A HARPY!!
THERE'S A REAL HARPY
IN MY ARMS
RIGHT NOW!!!

OF COURSE
WE
WON'T!!

WOW!
YOU'RE SO
SMALL!
SO LIGHT!!
BUT THEN...
YOU'RE
BIGGER THAN
AN ANDEAN
CONDOR, AND
DON'T EVEN
SEEM TO BE
ALL THAT
STREAMLINED!
JUST UNDER
TWENTY KILOS,
I GUESS?!
WHAT'S YOUR
NAME?!!

ROUGHLY 360CM
WINGSPAN.

YOU'RE
SAVING
ME?!
I'M NOT
GONNA
GET
GOBBLED
UP?!



I SEE!!
MY NAME'S
DAISLIKE
KURIMUSUBI!!
I'M GOING
TO BE THE
CREATURE
GIRL
HAREM
KING!!

I DON'T
UNDER-
STAND
WHAT
YOU JUST
SAID,
BUT MY
NAME'S
RUP!!

DARN
RIGHT
I
AM!!!

ARE
YOU
GOING
TO SAY
THAT
EVERY
TIME?



LET ME EXAMINE YOU THEN, RUPU!! FROM HEAD TO TOE!!!

LIGHTNING QUICK TO THE PUNCH, I SEE!!!

A HAREM!! CAN I JOIN?! I'LL GIVE YOU LOTS OF BABIES!!

NYAH?!



HE'S GOING TO DO THIS TO EVERYONE, ISN'T HE...?

...



MM-HMM...

PUFF OUT YOUR CHEST FOR ME.

POKE

TWEAK

POKE



THIS IS ABOUT EQUAL TO WHAT A HUMAN COULD ACHIEVE WITH INTENSIVE TRAINING. THERE'S NO WAY SHE COULD STAY ALOFT WITH MUSCLES LIKE THESE.

HER BREASTS ARE HARD AS ROCK.

COMPARED TO THE OTHER MUSCLES, THE CHEST DOES SEEM TO BE A LITTLE STRONGER, BUT...

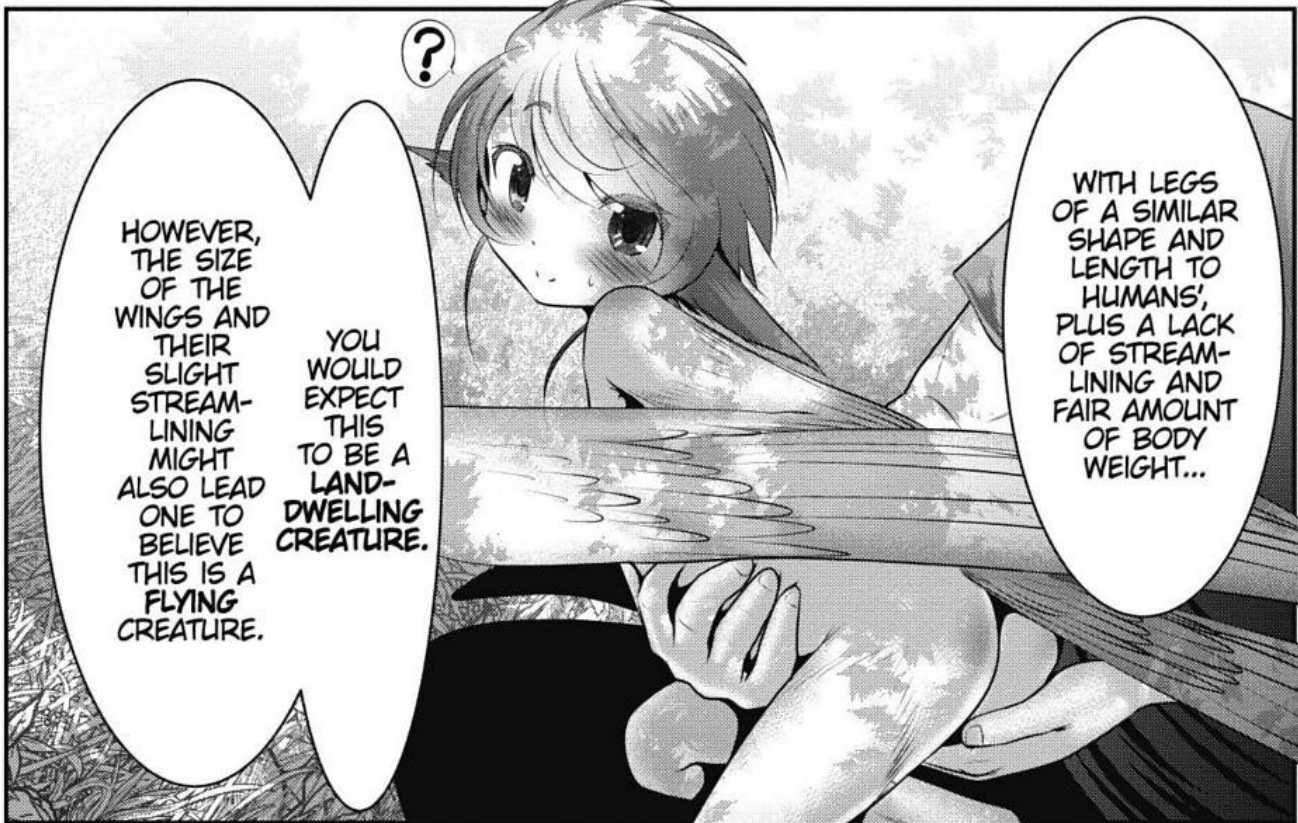


AHH... HE WAS LOOKING AT ME WITH THESE SAME EYES EARLIER, WASN'T HE.

THAT'S THE FACE OF A SCIENTIST.

WELL, DUH... BUT RIGHT NOW I'M MORE INTERESTED IN YOUR PECTORAL MUSCLES.

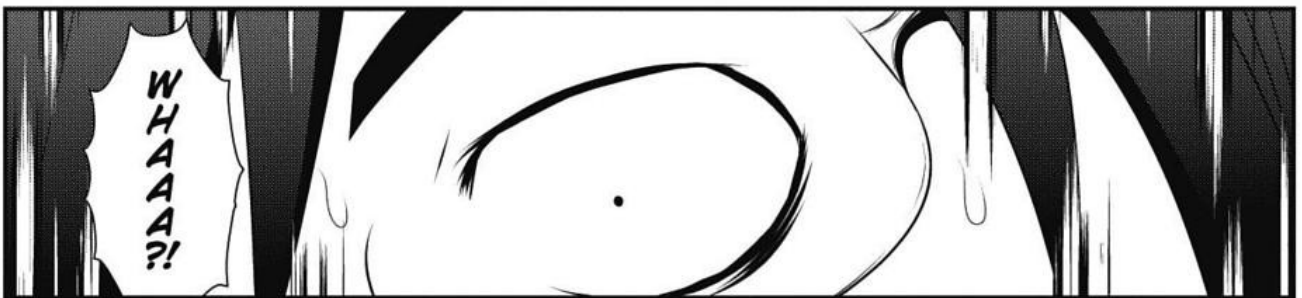
DO YOU LIKE BREASTS, DAISUKE?



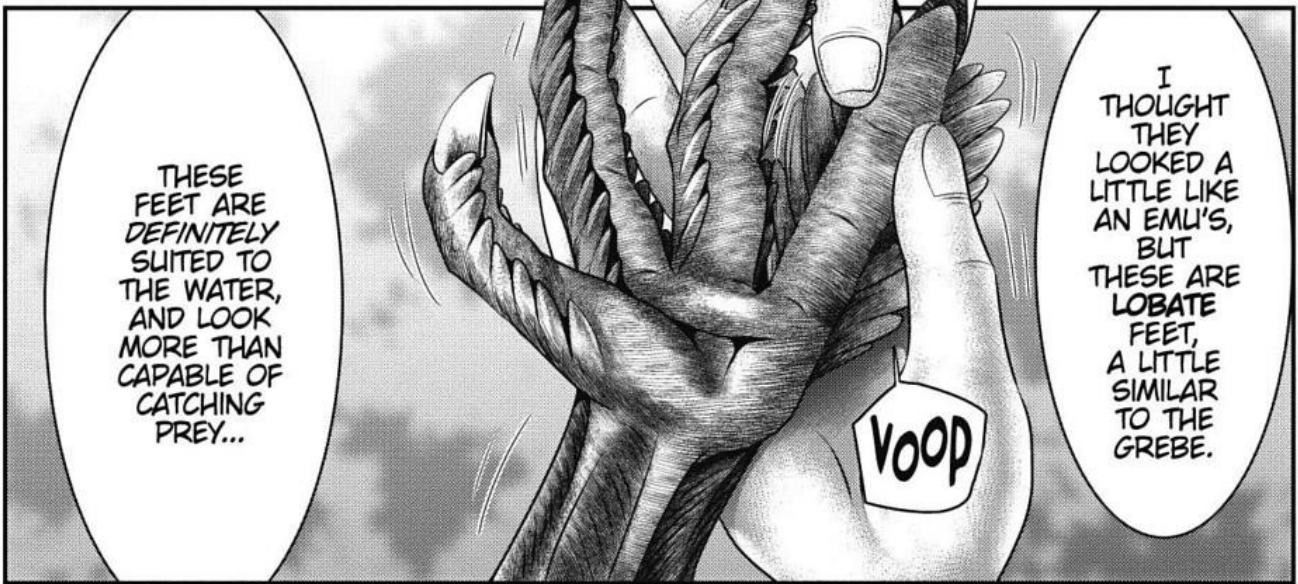
HOWEVER, THE SIZE OF THE WINGS AND THEIR SLIGHT STREAM-LINING MIGHT ALSO LEAD ONE TO BELIEVE THIS IS A FLYING CREATURE.

YOU WOULD EXPECT THIS TO BE A LAND-DWELLING CREATURE.

WITH LEGS OF A SIMILAR SHAPE AND LENGTH TO HUMANS', PLUS A LACK OF STREAM-LINING AND FAIR AMOUNT OF BODY WEIGHT...







THESE FEET ARE DEFINITELY SUITED TO THE WATER, AND LOOK MORE THAN CAPABLE OF CATCHING PREY...

I THOUGHT THEY LOOKED A LITTLE LIKE AN EMLU'S, BUT THESE ARE LOBATE FEET, A LITTLE SIMILAR TO THE GREBE.

※Lobate – Referring to a kind of lobed feet common in aquatic birds.



I CHASE DOWN PREY, THEN IF I GET TIRED, I CAN GRAB STONES AND THROW THEM AT THEIR HEADS TO KNOCK THEM OUT!

THEY'RE KINDA HALFWAY BETWEEN CLAWS AND HOOVES.

WOWZERS.

UH... YEAH...



CONSIDERING YOU AREN'T EXERTING YOURSELF IN FLIGHT, I'D WAGER THERE AREN'T MANY CREATURES THAT CAN OUTFRIN THE HARPY WITH STAMINA ALONE...

SO, THE HUNTING TACTICS OF PREHISTORIC MAN.

HAAH!

HAAH!

BA-DMP

BA-DMP



FNYAAH?!

AND ...
HMM ...

A DEMI-HUMAN SPECIES, THEN... I'D ENTERTAINED THE POSSIBILITY THAT YOU WERE A BIRD SPECIES THAT LOOKED ALMOST INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM A MAMMAL, BUT...

BUT UNLIKE THE BIRD'S CLOACA, THEY HAVE A HUMANLIKE REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS AND AN ANUS...

SHOOP

THE TAIL FEATHERS, OF COURSE, EXTEND FROM THE TAIL BONE...
JUST LIKE A BIRD'S, THEN. THE TAIL'S EXTREMELY SHORT.



HAAH! ♡

HAAH! ♡



YEAH, THEY'RE CLOSER TO PEOPLE.

BWUH?

EH? HARPIES AREN'T BIRDS?!

WE SHOULD STOP EATING THEM...



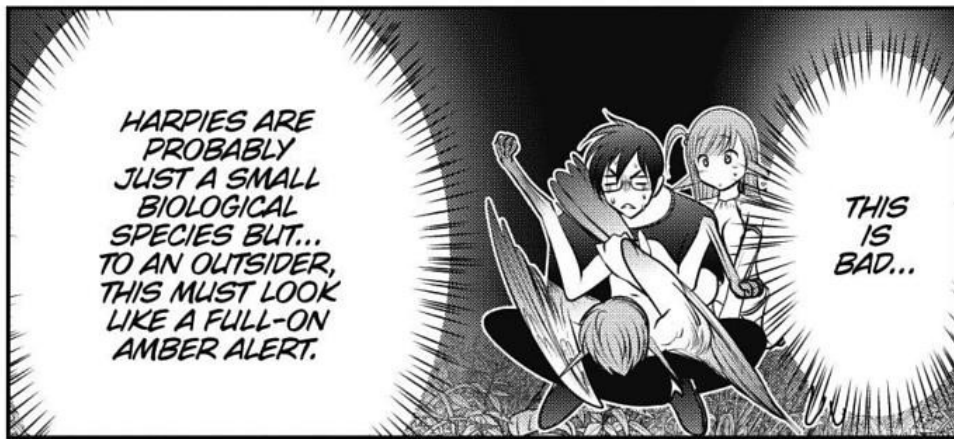
TOUCH ME S'MORE, OKAY...?

HAAH!

R... RIGHT THERE FEELS GOOD...

HAAH!

STROKE



HARPIES ARE PROBABLY JUST A SMALL BIOLOGICAL SPECIES BUT... TO AN OUTSIDER, THIS MUST LOOK LIKE A FULL-ON AMBER ALERT.

THIS IS BAD...



UH-OH!

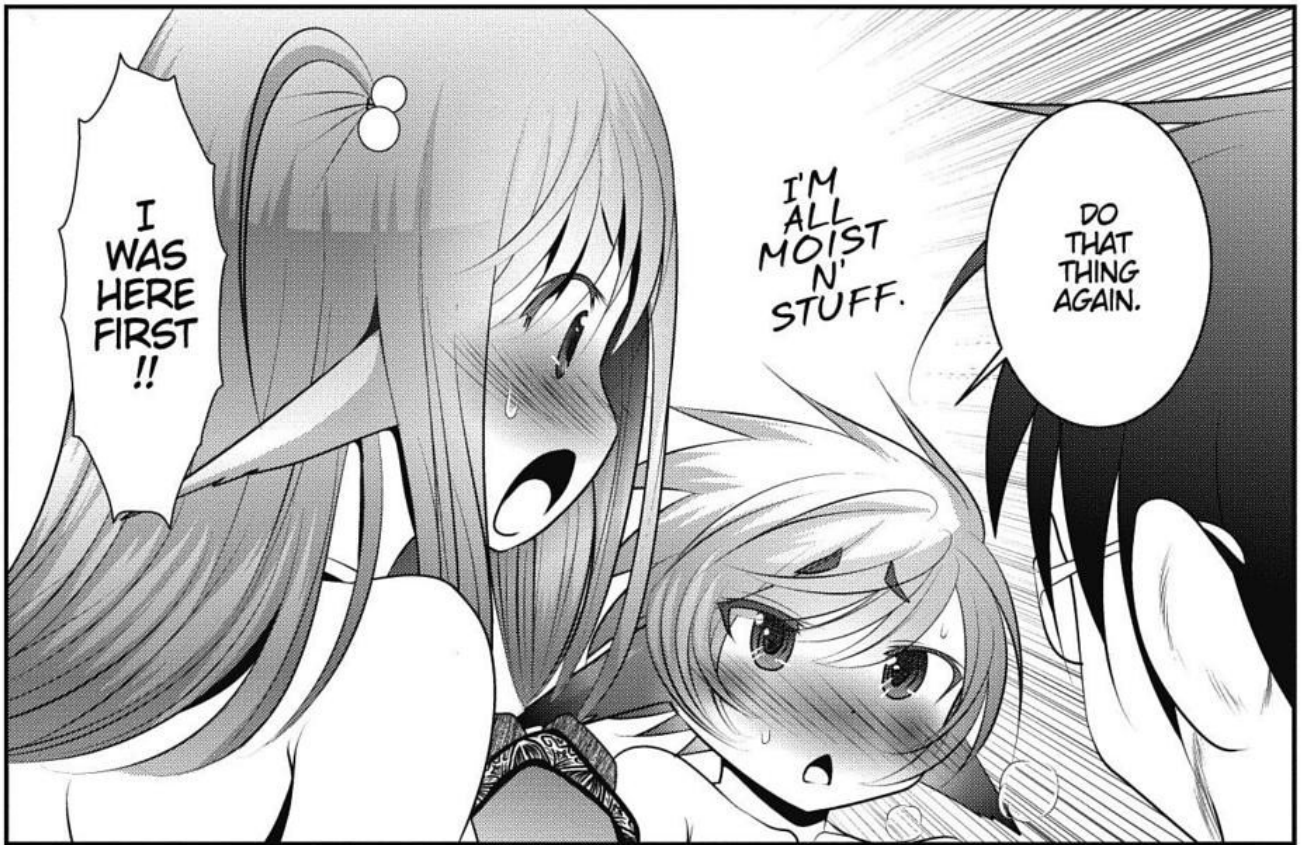


RUPI, ARE YOU AN ADULT? HOW OLD ARE YOU?

HUP

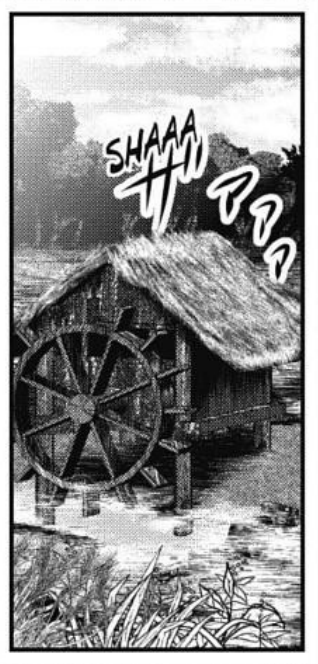
UH... AHM...







W H O A . . .



SHAAA
PPO



I SEE... YOU USE THE MULCH TO MASK THE ODOR AND ENCOURAGE AEROBIC FERMENTATION. THAT EXPLAINS THE LACK OF ODOR.

YES.

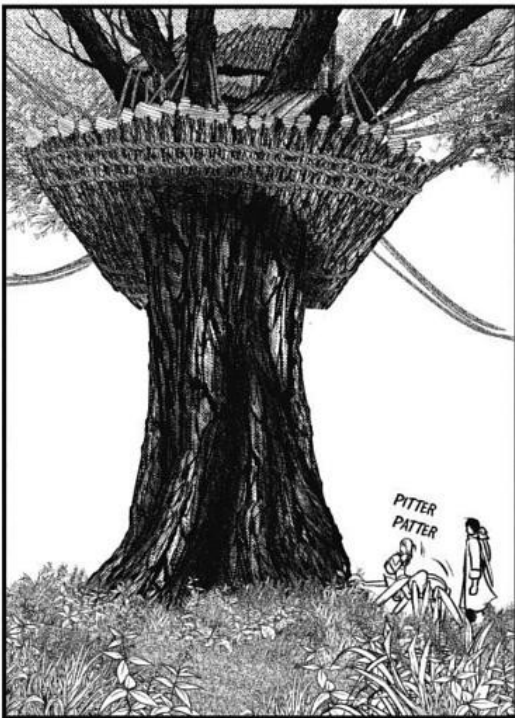
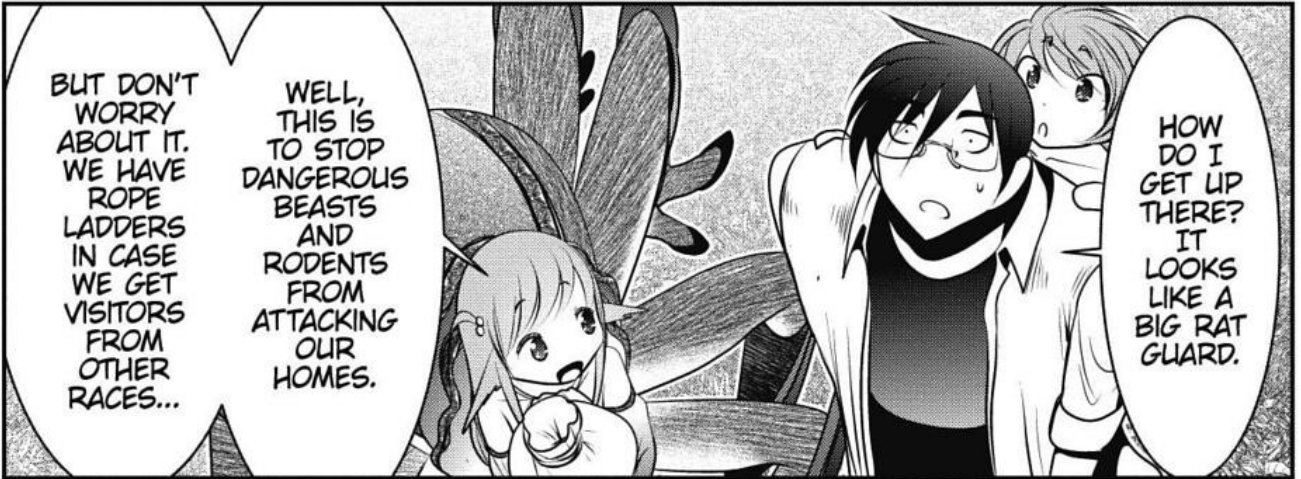
THAT SMALL CABIN WITH THE MULCHY EXTERIOR-- IS THAT A BATH-ROOM?

I DON'T DETECT THE STENCH OF A VILLAGE HERE... JUST THE SMELL OF THE EARTH, PLANTS AND FOREST.

I WOULD HAVE EXPECTED THERE TO BE FILTH AND DIRT ALL OVER THE PLACE...

I'M SUR-PRISED.







?!
I'M CHIEF OF THIS VILLAGE, NEKI. WE DON'T HAVE MUCH, BUT PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME.

R... RIGHT.

HUH?

?!
NICE TO MEET YOU.

I'M DAISUKE KURIMUSUBI, AND I'M GOING TO BE THE CREATURE GIRL HAREM KING.



AH... I SEE...

SHE'S NOT FOOD!! SHE'S AN IMPORTANT HAREM MEMBER!!

HAPPY GOURMETS.

INCIDENTALLY, THAT HAPPY YOU'RE HOLDING ...



ALSO ...

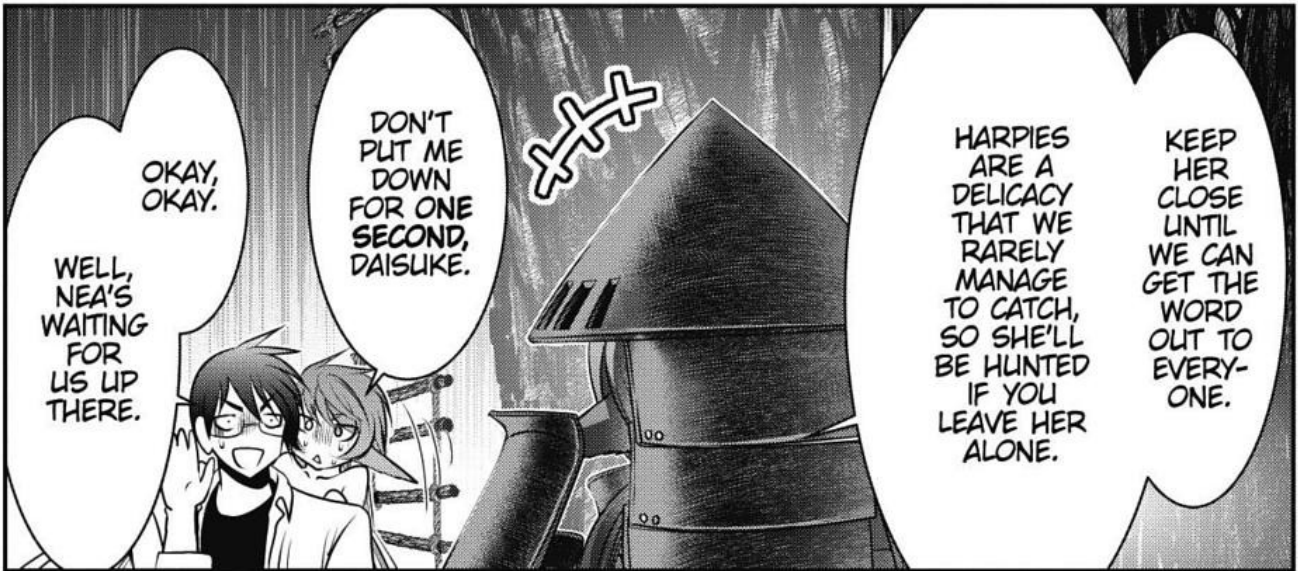
YOU SHOULD ATTACH A HEADBAND TO HER, OR ONE OF NEA'S HAND-ME-DOWNS, SO THAT PEOPLE KNOW NOT TO COOK HER.



BELOINGINGS... THEY REALLY DO THINK SHE'S FOOD.

WHEW.

DON'T WORRY. THERE'S NOBODY IN OUR VILLAGE WHO WOULD THINK TO INTERFERE WITH A VISITOR'S BELONGINGS.



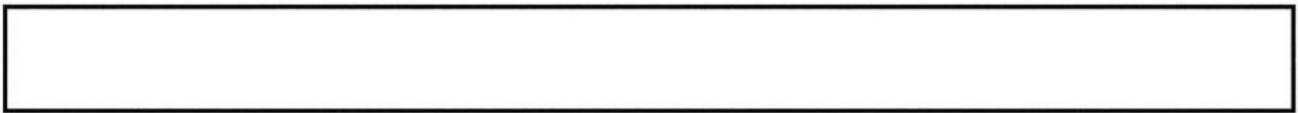
WELL, NEA'S WAITING FOR US UP THERE.

OKAY, OKAY.

DON'T PUT ME DOWN FOR ONE SECOND, DAISUKE.

HARPIES ARE A DELICACY THAT WE RARELY MANAGE TO CATCH, SO SHE'LL BE HUNTED IF YOU LEAVE HER ALONE.

KEEP HER CLOSE UNTIL WE CAN GET THE WORD OUT TO EVERYONE.



FLINCH

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING ?!!



PARDON THE INTRUSION...

OOPS SHE'S GETTING TOLD OFF.

SCOLD

SCOLD

SCOLD

SNIFF

SNIFF



KOFF!

KOFF!

OF ALL THE THICK-HEADED THINGS...

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'D DO THIS...

KOFF!



NEVER MIND THAT. MORE IMPORTANTLY, I'D HEARD YOU WERE SICK...

SHE DOESN'T MIND BEING NAKED IN FRONT OF ME?

HOW CAN I REPAY YOU...?

THANK YOU FOR SAVING MY DAUGHTER.

DAISUKE-SAN, WAS IT? MY NAME'S RANEA. I'M NEA'S MOTHER...



IF WE GET ENOUGH FOOD AND BRING DOWN THE FEVER, WE NORMALLY RECOVER IN 4 WEEKS, BUT...

YOU CALL IT A COLD? THAT'S FUNNY, WE CALL IT THE "CURSE OF FIRE."

COLD ...?

DO YOU HAVE COLD SYMPTOMS ?



FATHER DIDN'T MAKE IT...

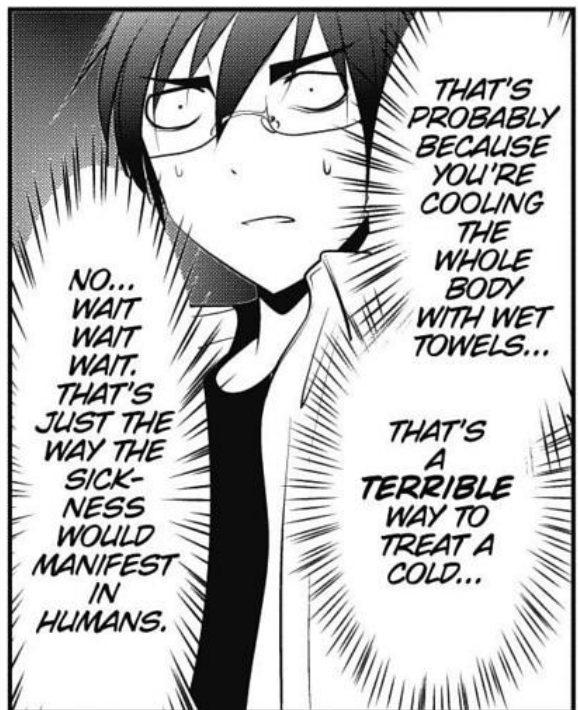
BUT... UNLESS MOM GETS ENOUGH TO EAT... SHE'S GOING TO DIE...

FOUR WEEKS ?!



I HAVE TO PROCEED CAREFULLY. THE SLIGHTEST MISSTEP AND I COULD WIND UP KILLING RANEA!

GIVEN THEIR DIFFERENT BODY STRUCTURES, THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THIS IS A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SICKNESS WITH COMMON COLD-LIKE SYMPTOMS.



NO... WAIT WAIT WAIT. THAT'S JUST THE WAY THE SICKNESS WOULD MANIFEST IN HUMANS.

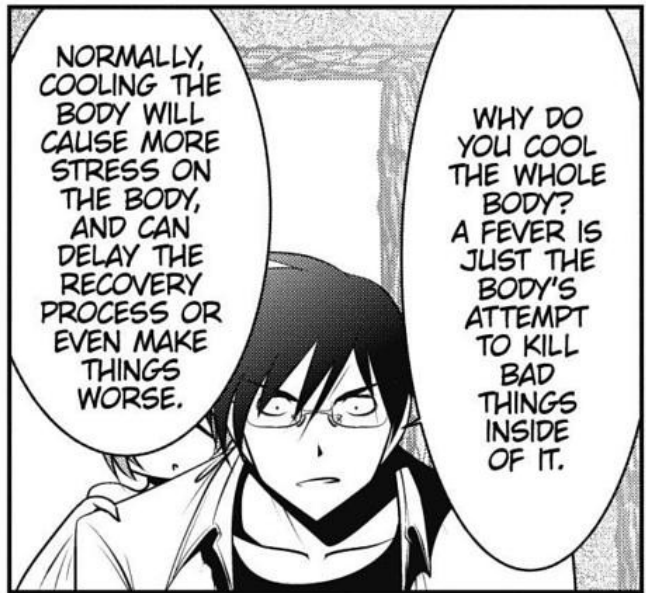
THAT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE YOU'RE COOLING THE WHOLE BODY WITH WET TOWELS...

THAT'S A TERRIBLE WAY TO TREAT A COLD...



THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT... NORMALLY, WHEN THE FEVER RISES, WE LOSE ALL MOVEMENT IN OUR LOWER BODIES AND DIE...

HUH ...?



NORMALLY, COOLING THE BODY WILL CAUSE MORE STRESS ON THE BODY, AND CAN DELAY THE RECOVERY PROCESS OR EVEN MAKE THINGS WORSE.

WHY DO YOU COOL THE WHOLE BODY? A FEVER IS JUST THE BODY'S ATTEMPT TO KILL BAD THINGS INSIDE OF IT.



YOU'RE RIGHT, GIVEN THAT ARACHNE ARE A BIOLOGICAL EVOLUTION OF THREE CONJOINED HUMANS, THE BRAINS LOCATED IN YOUR LOWER BODIES MUST HAVE DIFFICULTY REGULATING THEIR TEMPERATURE...

I SEE... SO THERE'S A DANGER OF THE FEVER SPREADING TO THE UPPER AREAS OF THE LOWER BODY...



ALSO ...

THAT'S LIKELY JUST A RESULT OF THEIR IMMUNE SYSTEM OVER-COMING OUTSIDE ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS.

AND, WELL, PEOPLE JUST GET BETTER BY COOLING THE FEVER, YOU KNOW?



ASIDE FROM THOSE AFFLICTED BY THIS "CURSE OF FIRE," HOW MANY OF YOUR CLAN HAVE DIED AFTER LOSING CONTROL OF THEIR LOWER BODIES, OR HAVE BEEN LEFT WITH PERMANENT DAMAGE TO THEIR LEGS?

A FEVER LIKE THIS SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO AFFECT THE BRAIN SO EASILY.

I SUSPECT THAT ONLY A PROLONGED AND VERY HIGH FEVER COULD CAUSE AN ARACHNE TO LOSE MOVEMENT IN THEIR LOWER BODY AND EVENTUALLY DIE.

AFTER WATCHING YOU SWEAT FROM RUNNING AT FULL SPEED EARLIER TODAY, NEA...

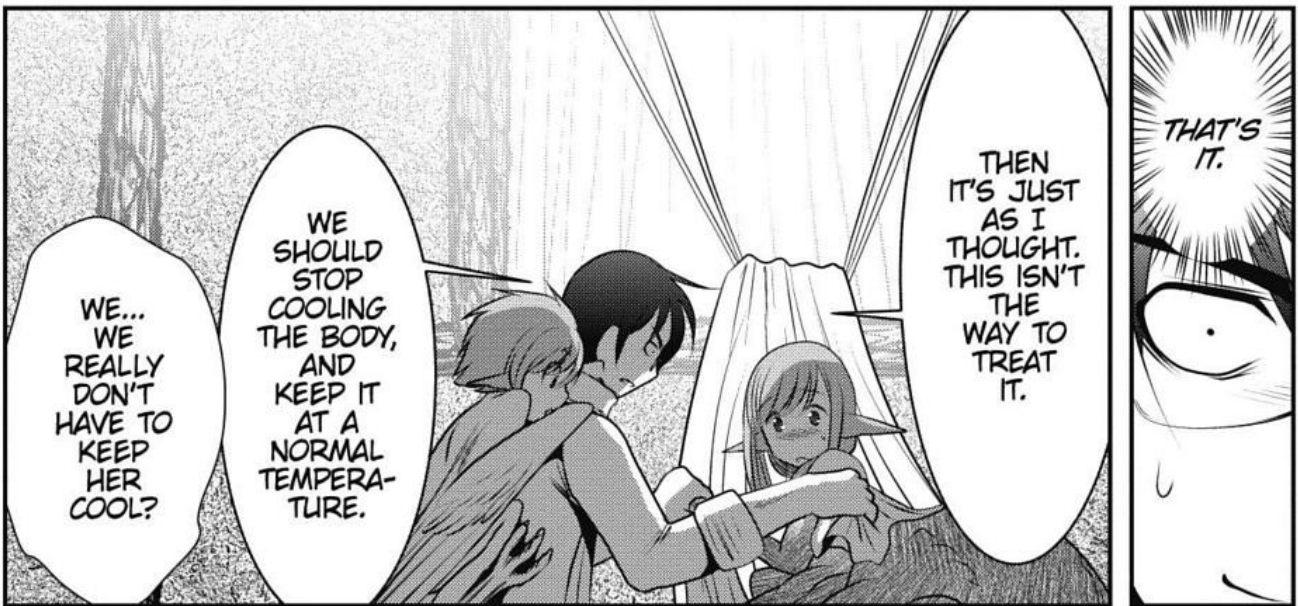


Y... YES...

THERE'S NOBODY HERE WHO CAN'T MOVE THEIR LOWER BODY, BUT THERE ARE QUITE A FEW WHO DIE AFTER EXHIBITING SYMPTOMS OF THE "CURSE OF FIRE," CORRECT?

THEY SAY IT'S ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THIS...

HUH... I'VE NEVER SEEN IT HAPPEN, BUT...



WE... WE REALLY DON'T HAVE TO KEEP HER COOL?

WE SHOULD STOP COOLING THE BODY, AND KEEP IT AT A NORMAL TEMPERATURE.

THEN IT'S JUST AS I THOUGHT. THIS ISN'T THE WAY TO TREAT IT.

THAT'S IT.

OHO...
MY
D-CLIP
RULIN-
NETH
OVER.

MAINTAINING
THAT MODERATE
TEMPERATURE'S
GOING TO LET
HER CONSERVE
HER STRENGTH,
SO SHE CAN
FIGHT OFF THE
BAD THINGS
INSIDE HER
BODY.

WE
SHOULDN'T
COOL THE
BODY.

FOR NOW
WHAT SHE
NEEDS IS A
MODERATE
TEMPERATURE...
NOT TOO HOT,
NOT TOO
COLD.

BLOOMP

O...
OKAY...

FOR NOW,
WE JUST
WIPE OFF
HER
SWEAT.

JIGGLE



YOU
THERE.
IS ALL
THIS
TRUE?

LET'S
FETCH
HER A
BLANKET...
YOU'RE
RIGHT, LET'S
JUST COOL
THE UPPER
PART OF
THE LOWER
BODY A
LITTLE,
JUST IN
CASE.



MISS
A...



!!!



YOU'RE
AN...

"OTHER-
WORLDER,"
AREN'T
YOU?"

Next Time: The Strongest Bow

How do harpies fly?

We can look at the biological features of birds that exist in the real world to determine how much muscle mass an imaginary creature would need to be able to lift its own weight. It's said that birds like the kori bustard, wandering albatross, and Andean condor—with weights of roughly 12 to 18 kg and wingspans of 260 to 360 cm—are the largest birds which are capable of physically flapping their wings. Moreover, due to the difficulty of moving their heavy wings, these birds essentially spend most of their time gliding. If a creature exceeded 40 kg, the ratio between its weight and the muscle strength which would be needed to keep that weight airborne would make continuous flight by flapping its wings impossible.

The act of gliding involves supporting the whole body's weight with extended arms or wings. The act of physical flight, however, involves continuously lifting one's whole body weight over and over to propel oneself forward. As a result, over 15 to 20% of a bird's weight is in its pectoral muscles (whereas for humans, this number is only 1%). In addition, birds' bones are hollow, their legs are typically short, and they're incredibly streamlined for flight. Effectively, a real harpy which could fly like a bird would be a human-faced Andean condor, of roughly the same size and shape. The harpy we see here cannot fly like a bird, and has much more in common with human biology, which, of course, necessitates a new method of flight.

With regards to the harpy's method of flight, if the reader chose to watch some videos on thermal soaring, ridge soaring, or hang gliders, they would clearly see that even without flapping their wings, riders with large surface area wings (or parachutes) at a combined weight of around 100 kg can traverse several hundreds of kilometres using only wind and thermals, and can remain in the air for days at a time. Large-scale dragons would also have been capable of flight by simply stretching and using their wings' surface area.

Flying fish can glide several hundred meters simply using the power of their tails to exit the water at high speeds. They can also re-accelerate by using their tails to bounce off the surface of the water. With tens of thousands more years of evolution, perhaps harpies could achieve this too.

Speaking of flying fish, I've gotta mention flying fish sticks. Flying fish sticks are the best.

CREATURE GIRL DISPATCH

I'll be using this column to explain a few different things I might've forgotten to mention in the main work, and other unrelated details. Feel free to read it if you have the time.

