

Half-Breed Mamodo

By GothicDancer

Submitted: May 29, 2005
Updated: September 1, 2005

There's a new girl in town who might not be a girl at all. A human when with Kiyō, a mamodo when with Zatch. She's Mamodo #101, and Sherry and Brago want her.

Provided by Fanart Central.

<http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/GothicDancer/15213/Half-Breed-Mamodo>

Chapter 1 - A Dreary Morning	2
Chapter 2 - Mamodaku and Humanaku	8
Chapter 3 - Three-Way Battle	12
Chapter 4 - Yakune's End	17

1 - A Dreary Morning

Rain pounded against the glass windows of Kiyō Takamine's room. A bolt of lightning flashed against the dark clouds and shortly lit up the gray sky. Only two seconds later, the thunder followed with a loud rumble that woke the sleeping fourteen-year-old. He yawned for a second and peered out the window at the storm.

"The weather is miserable," he mumbled. "I'm not going to school today." He snuggled underneath the covers of his bed and rested his head in his soft pillow. His body was nice and warm in bed, and he did not intend to ruin the sweet moment.

Adorable little Zatch Bell was sleeping in his tiny bed next to Kiyō's. He awoke when the pounding rain grew louder, his bright orange eyes glancing at his surroundings. He immediately pushed himself up and rubbed his tired eyes.

"Kiyō..." he whined. "It's time to get up and go to school." He yawned and rubbed his head. "Come on, Kiyō," he continued as he walked over to his friend's bed. "Let's go downstairs to eat breakfast. I'm really, really, REALLY hungry. I didn't have any dessert last night."

"Be quiet, Zatch," Kiyō muttered, throwing the covers over his head. "You're annoying me. I'm not hungry, so go eat breakfast yourself." He exhaled a long huff and brought the covers back down on his neck.

Zatch suddenly became his usual hyper self, and he started rubbing Kiyō's back in an attempt to wake him up. When he saw that it was not working, he climbed onto Kiyō's bed and started jumping on the mattress.

"Wake up, Sleepy Head!" he cheered. "It's time for another great day at school!" His jumping had now moved so he was hopping on Kiyō's rear end.

"Get off me, Zatch!" Kiyō shouted. "Leave me alone, okay? Have you seen the weather?" He sat up straight and pointed out the window. "I'm NOT going to school today. End of story. I don't care what anyone says. Today is just one of those days."

"Then you must have those kinds of days a lot!" Zatch finished his jumping and sat on the mattress. He looked out the window at the pelting rain and watched as the lightning flashed again. "Oh boy!" he cheered. "There must be someone just like me out there! I wanna go play with that person up in the sky!"

"There's no one in the sky," Kiyō snapped, finally throwing the covers off himself. "That's the effect of thunder and lightning, although I don't expect you to understand that." He stood up and stretched his arms. "Well, you've gone and ruined my morning already, so I might as well add insult to injury and go to school." He headed for the door and grabbed a hold of the knob. Zatch smiled and followed, his frilly

dress flapping behind.

On their way to the bathroom, the two of them met up with Mrs. Takamine. "Good morning, Boys!" she greeted happily. "Zatch, were you doing your job and getting Kiyō's lazy bum out of bed this morning?"

"Yes, Ma'am!" Zatch replied, saluting her. "Kiyō said he didn't want to go to school because it was raining outside, but I told him he had to because it's his job to go to school!"

"You said no such thing," Kiyō spat, walking into the bathroom. Mrs. Takamine just laughed and picked up the little mamodo in her arms.

"You good little boy!" she rewarded. "I'll make you a nice, big bowl of fried rice and grilled yellow tailed tuna for breakfast, okay? It's what you deserve for being so good every morning." She patted his little blond head and began walking to the kitchen. There, she set Zatch down in his chair and began working the rice cooker at the counter.

Zatch soon grew bored and got up from his small chair to join Mrs. Takamine at the counter. When he realized he was too small to reach the counter on his own, he grabbed his chair and dragged it over so he was right next to her. He then watched in awe as the rice cooker went to work. He went to poke it but was stopped short.

"I don't want you to burn yourself," Mrs. Takamine said gently. "The rice cooker is very hot. If you'd like to help, you can grab the slab of yellow tail from the refrigerator." Zatch nodded and hopped down from his chair. He dragged it back to its spot and walked back to the fridge, where he opened the door and quickly took out a small fish from the shelf. He brought it back to Mrs. Takamine and sat on the kitchen floor. He gazed up at the window.

"Can Kiyō and I have an umbrella when we walk to school today?" he asked. "I don't think Kiyō likes to get wet, and the clouds are really, really sad about something right now. Do you think maybe someone yelled at them last night?"

Mrs. Takamine laughed. "No, I think it's just a spot of bad weather. Oh look! Your rice is all done. Let me put some in a bowl for you." She grabbed a bowl from the cabinet and filled it past the top with hot rice for Zatch. As soon as she gave it to him, she went straight to work grilling the yellow tail.

Kiyō suddenly appeared in the kitchen and took his spot at the table. He yawned and rested his head down. Slowly, the aroma of fresh, hot rice filled his nose, and he was ready to eat. He had not admitted it, but he was actually quite hungry.

"Is there any left for me?" he asked his mom. She nodded and filled a second bowl for her son. Kiyō took the two chopsticks on his napkin and began shoveling white rice down his throat. "Where's my umbrella?" he asked after he swallowed a large mouthful.

"Over by the front door, where it always is!" Zatch observed as he looked towards the front hall. "Ha! That's funny. I was wondering where it was just a little while ago, and now it's there! I answered my own question." He finished the last of his rice and jumped down from his chair to bring his bowl back to Mrs. Takamine.

Kiyo finished his rice and left his bowl on the table. "Well," he began, "I might as well get going." He walked to the front hall and pulled his shoes on before taking his umbrella and shoving his briefcase under his arm. He opened the front door and opened up his umbrella.

"Hey, Kiyo!" Zatch called from the kitchen. "Wait for me! Come on! Don't leave me at home!"

"You don't need to come with me today, Zatch."

"But we have to continue Operation: Hero of Justice, even in the rain!"

"Ah, would you just shut up about that stupid plan??"

Kiyo slammed the front door and began walking to school. Along the way, he met up with the last person he wanted to see (besides Zatch): Suzie.

"Good morning, Kiyo!" she greeted, energetically waving her arms. "Well, I don't know if the morning is that good or not, but you know what I mean!" She giggled wildly and pulled out an apple from her briefcase. "Did you eat breakfast this morning?" she continued. "If not, I'm sure you'd like this big, red apple I've got here! It's all nice and juicy and sweet!"

"I ate breakfast, Suzie," Kiyo muttered. "There's no need to share your fruit with me."

"Oh!" Suzie replied. "That's no big deal! Would you maybe like a pear instead?"

Kiyo was angry now. There were so many people in his life making him do things he had no interest in and discouraging him with petty remarks. Still, he was letting himself get very, maybe too, annoyed by Suzie's friendly offerings. After all, the girl just wanted to be near him. He was just too blind to notice that.

"Get out of my way, Suzie!" he shouted suddenly. "I didn't even want to go to school this morning, but Zatch woke me up. It's a miserable morning, and I'm in no mood to listen to your stupid ramblings about fruit! I've got better things to do."

Kiyo pushed his way past Suzie and purposefully nudged her in the arm so she would drop her apple. It fell into a nearby puddle and made a huge splash, completely drenching Suzie and her uniform. The wind picked up, and it blew the umbrella out of Suzie's hand and behind a fence, so now there was nothing protecting her from becoming ever more wet. Slowly, she bent down to pick up her apple and stared at it. Her lips quivered for a minute before she finally began a slow, dreary walk to school.

Meanwhile, Kiyo was feeling no regrets. He walked into the school courtyard and watched as the other students talked among themselves, sheltering themselves with their own umbrellas. He sighed and walked right past them and attempted to get inside the school.

Suddenly, Kiyo heard a girl scream. He darted his head in the direction of the noise and saw two upperclassmen picking on a younger girl. He gritted his teeth for a moment and slightly begged that he had Zatch and his book. Some students gathered around the girl and the two guys, hoping to see a fight.

They were disappointed when all they did was take her lunch money.

When all the students cleared, Kiyō ran over to the poor girl, who was leaned up against the school wall, hugging herself. He placed his umbrella over her head and squatted down next to her.

“Are you okay?” he asked. “How much money did those guys take?”

“I only had about two hundred yen or so,” she replied, brushing her wet bangs away from her face. “That’s hardly enough to buy myself a complete lunch anyway, so it’s not a big deal. I don’t even go to this school. I was just hoping to hang around and buy some lunch with the other students.”

“Well, you look a little suspicious with your outfit,” Kiyō pointed out. “If you wanted to blend in, you should have borrowed a girl’s uniform from one of your friends.” The girl was wearing a short, frilly, pink dress with a kimono-style, purple wrap around her waist. She had long, dark brown hair and light brown eyes. Her skin was slightly tanned, and her body seemed to be in perfect proportion. Kiyō just barely blushed.

“If you want,” he began, “I’ll buy lunch this afternoon, and I’ll give a little bit to you. You know, if you stick around.”

“You’ll really buy something for me?”

“Yeah. Just meet me on the roof at noon, okay? I’ll bring you some food.”

“Thank you so much!”

The girl jumped up and bowed many times for Kiyō. He could only smile and bow back. “My name’s Kiyō, by the way. What’s yours?”

The girl paused for a second and rubbed the back of her neck. “Yakune,” she murmured. “My name is Yakune. I’m not from around here, so I really don’t know a lot about this city. I’m so sorry if I wasted your time this morning.” She bowed a few more times before she and the rest of the students heard the bell for first period ring. Kiyō perked up and began running towards the main hall.

“I’ll see you on the roof at noon then, Yakune!” he called. “Please don’t be late!”

Later that morning, Zatch was running around like crazy in his little gym bag costume. He snickered inside the bag and turned a sharp corner down the street. He began running around in a circle until he finally slammed into a lamppost. He slid down the cold steel and popped his head out of the bag. He shook his head and looked at the street he was on.

“Which way is Kiyō’s school again?” he asked no one. “Oh! That’s right! I remember now! It’s just down the other way. All I have to do is retrace my steps until I find my way to that one street the school courtyard lies on. That shouldn’t be too hard!”

Zatch brought his head back inside the bag and began running in the opposite direction. He ran his little legs off until he bumped into something else. This thing was much smaller and softer than the lamppost though, and he poked his head out again to see a little girl sitting on the sidewalk, rubbing her forehead.

"I'm sorry!" Zatch told her. "I'm sorry I bumped into you. Are you okay?" He held out his hand for the little girl. "I didn't mean to bump into you, really!"

The girl looked up at him and stopped rubbing her head for a moment. She shook her head and took his little hand. He helped her to her feet, and she brushed off her dress of excess water and mud.

"The rain stopped falling an hour ago!" Zatch observed. "How come your dress is so dirty? Did you fall in a puddle before?" He brushed some of her wet bangs away from her face.

"Uh-huh," the little girl replied. "I slipped on the sidewalk." She rung out the bottom of her dress and stared at Zatch with her big, pink eyes. Zatch instantly looked at her cheeks with two lines traveling down them to her neck. It took him a little while, but he finally understood what they meant.

"A mamodo," he whispered. He thought for a second, and then his voice grew a little bit louder. "Where's your family and friends?" he asked. "Did you get separated from them or something?"

"I can't find my friend," the girl muttered. "She left me."

"Where did she go?"

"Off in the direction of the junior high,"

"I'm on my way there now! Let's go together!"

Zatch pulled the girl into his gym bag and started running off towards the school again. He laughed like crazy as he passed all the people on the street, some of them looking down to confirm the running gym bag.

"Oh! I almost forgot!" Zatch realized. "My name is Zatch Bell! What's yours?"

The girl looked shyly at him for a second before finally replying, "Yakune." She looked off to the side of the gym bag and kept thinking about the small child she had just "met." "I've heard of Zatch Bell," she whispered. "He must have been one of the one hundred sent for this battle."

"Yakune, huh?" Zatch repeated, catching her off-guard. "I've never heard of or seen you before. Are you new around here? Maybe your family moved her recently?"

Yakune was silent for the rest of the trip. Zatch became suspicious at one point, but that disappeared when he finally made it to the junior high courtyard. He smiled big in front of the gate and popped his head from the gym bag. He looked at Yakune.

"Here's the place!" he cheered. "Time to get off the Zatch Bell Express!" He pulled his hand up and down and made a "toot-toot" sound, symbolizing a train. Yakune did not smile. She simply hopped out

of the bag and began running for the school.

“Thanks for the ride,” she said, not looking back to confront him. She eventually made it to the front door of the school. She hopped up and grabbed at it. Once she got a good hold, the door pushed open, and she hopped down to the floor.

Zatch watched her this whole time, and he felt a little bit of warmth rise to his face. He rubbed his cheeks for a second and started walking on to the school grounds himself. “Is this a new spell Kiyō can launch from a distance?” he asked himself. “But then how did Kiyō know I met a mamodo today? Ah, I’ll let him know once I get in there!” He began charging now, and he accidentally smacked into the glass of the front door, thinking it was open. He poked his head out of the bag and looked up to the second level of the school. A window was open.

Zatch pulled the gym bag off himself so he was in his blue, frilly dress. He carefully climbed up the tree next to the window and peek inside. He soon realized that Kiyō was not in this particular class, but someone else he knew was.

“Suzie!” Zatch quietly called. He waved his free hand a little to try to get her attention, but she, for some reason, seemed to be very deep in thought. “The lesson must be super-interesting.”

Suzie suddenly got out of her seat, said something, and began walking for the hallway. Zatch watched her until she left the room, and he scrambled his way to another branch, where he saw her walking down the hall to the girls' room. He eyed the door for a second before deciding he was bored and hopping down to the ground. He picked up his gym bag and began walking home, hoping to eat some more yellow-tailed tuna for lunch.

2 - Mamodaku and Humanaku

Kiyo had set aside about half of his lunch on the rooftop of the school. He tapped his chopsticks together a few times and began shoveling white rice into his mouth. He stopped for a minute to catch his breath and scanned the area. Yakune was nowhere in sight, and he was a little disappointed. Kiyo took another mouthful of rice and chewed it up slowly before swallowing hard. He rested his elbow on his knee and pressed his cheek against his palm. He brought it away not two seconds later.

“Wha...?” Kiyo’s cheek had been hot, and he was surprised to feel it so flushed. Something had made him burn with a red-hot intensity, and he had no idea what. At the same time, his chest began to ache. He dropped his lunch and spilled white rice everywhere, clutching his shirt. He panted heavily as a strong pain shot through his heart. He cringed. Something was hurting him, and he had no idea what. “What is...this disease?” he managed to murmur. He suddenly fell to his knees and almost lost consciousness. The horror of a sudden pain was almost too much for him to handle. It was not like he was Zatch and did not get sick, but he had no idea what he had suddenly contracted.

In an instant, the pain disappeared, and Kiyo was able to stand up straight as if nothing had happened. He rubbed his chest for a moment but felt nothing. He lifted his shirt a little, but there were no scars across his torso. He rubbed his head, and it felt normal. Even his cheek was no longer flushed, and his body temperature was normal.

“What was that?” he asked no one. He could only look at the surrounding area and shake his head.

“Bizarre...but I should stay more on my guard and head to the doctor after school.” He evened out his shirt and sat back down on the bench.

Suddenly, Kiyo heard a long stream of footsteps from behind the door to the upper floor of the school. He jerked his head towards it, hoping to see his guest. When she opened the door, Kiyo could not help but blush slightly. Yakune looked pretty when she ran.

“I’m sorry...I’m late...” she panted. “I was meeting someone for a little while. We ended up talking longer than I had expected.” She smoothed out her dress and walked properly over to Kiyo. Kiyo stood up and offered his seat to her.

“You look wasted,” he commented. “Sit down.” Yakune sat down reluctantly and looked at the box of food sitting next to her. Her eyes widened, and she was almost afraid to speak after seeing it.

“You saved that all...for me??” she asked, stunned. Kiyo nodded and started shoveling white rice down his throat. Yakune took the box with shaky hands and picked up the pair of chopsticks lying on top. She clicked them together once and slowly started tasting the food. It was delicious.

Without a warning, Yakune began to cry. Kiyo perked up from his meal to see a few tears stream down her face, and he immediately became concerned. “What’s the matter?” he asked. “It doesn’t taste good?”

“I haven’t eaten anything...” Yakune began, “...so delicious in a long time.”

“What about meals at home?”

“I don’t get any.”

“What?”

Kiyo stood up in front of Yakune and put on an angry face. “Your folks don’t give you the proper food you need? What kind of family is that!?”

“No, you don’t understand.” Yakune shuffled in her spot for a moment before finally explaining her story to Kiyo. “I just mean...I’m a foreign exchange girl. I’m here...but I come from a place where people don’t exactly trust me or treat me all that well. So...I’m really not used to someone’s kindness. I mean,

sure, there's the host family I'm living with, but we all haven't sat down to eat a meal yet. The parents are nowhere to be found, and my temporary sister is rarely home. Just once...I'd like to sit down and eat dinner with them like a normal family. You know, everyone gets together and talks about how days went and laughs and share stories."

Kiyo rolled his eyes. He had no idea what Yakune was talking about. His father was gone off in England or God-knows-where. His mother was still around, but that was not too often. Whenever she was around, she was usually harping on him to get to school and do things right. And then there was Zatch. Oh, how he sometimes hated Zatch. The little demon was just an annoyance to him. Obviously, the family never got a good time together to sit down and eat with each other, but he pretended to go along with what Yakune was saying to make her feel better.

Kiyo sighed and continued shoveling food into his mouth. His rice was finished, and he was moving on to the chicken teriyaki. Yakune took her sweet time with her rice though. She was still working on it when the bell for the next class rang. Kiyo picked up his suitcase and started walking for the door.

"You'll be okay by yourself?" he asked. Yakune nodded, not looking up from her bowl of rice. Kiyo cocked his head and opened up the door back down to the lower levels of the school. "If you want to eat together again, come up here tomorrow."

A little while after Kiyo left, Yakune was working on a pile of steamed vegetables. She did not even hear the clack of the latch to the door. Her heart skipped a beat when she saw who was standing in the doorway.

"Yakune," Suzie mumbled, "what was Kiyo doing up here on the roof with you?"

"He gave me half his lunch," Yakune snapped back. "Is that a problem for you? I mean, you never give me any of your lunch."

"We just met this morning."

"So what? I was hungry."

Suzie stared at Yakune with a tense, angry face. She pouted for a minute and turned away from her. "I think you've had your fun as a human," she finally stated. Yakune's eyes grew wide.

"Oh no!" she cried. "Please, Suzie, please don't make me go back the other way! I beg of you! I'm loving my life as a human! Don't make me turn back into a mam--"

"MAMODAKU!!!"

Brago's eyes instantly popped open. He sat up straight and scanned the area. Nothing. Yet, he could have sworn he had picked up some sort of mamodo nearby. He scowled at the nothingness of the forest and leaned back against a tree.

"So suddenly," he muttered, "I felt it..."

"What's the matter with you, Brago?" Sherry asked, sitting off to the side. She smoothed out her dress and stood up. "You've been acting awfully strange lately."

"I could have sworn I felt the presence of the enemy just now."

"And?"

"But it just appeared so suddenly. Usually, it grows until it's nearby. This just came by out of nowhere, and that's not normal. It's almost as if a mamodo just appeared."

Sherry narrowed her eyebrows and began walking out of the forest. "Impossible," she stated simply.

"One hundred mamodos are sent to earth for the battle, no more, no less. There's no way one could just appear." She listened as Brago got up from his spot and charged after her.

"Don't tell me what I already know!" he growled. "I am superior to you, you weak human." He walked ahead of Sherry without another word until they reached the outside of the forest. Albert was waiting there with the limo, and he opened the door for the two of them to enter. Once inside and in their seats, Brago could not hold back his thoughts any longer.

“Sherry,” he said, “tell your butler to drive us towards that city that holds the child with the red book.” Sherry gazed at Brago in horror. “Why would you want to do that?” she asked. “We have no more use for Zatch and his human. Not now anyway.”

“I think we do.”

“Why?”

“The presence of the mamodo I sensed came from the same city.”

Zatch was meanwhile on his way home. His feet made little tapping sounds as he ran down the street in his gym bag disguise. Every now and then, his little head popped out to make sure he was going the right way.

“Two more turns...” he began to himself, “and it’s yellowtail for lunch!!” He made a sharp turn and began running past the playground. His eyes peered over the edge of the bag to see all the small children (about his size) playing in different areas of the setting. A pair of girls was on the swings. A few babies babbled gibberish and threw sand in each other’s faces. Some older children (probably pre-school to kindergarteners) hung on the monkey bars. Zatch decided he could fit in a quick game before lunch. He ran out into the grass and threw his bag off.

Suddenly, Zatch heard a familiar sound coming from the nearby bushes. He turned and stared at the plants until a friendly face jumped out of the green shrubs.

“My horsey friend!!” he cheered. “What would you like to play today? We could play tag or stare at the clouds or pick some flowers or whatever!”

Schneider made his usual sounds and then began running in circles around the blonde mamodo. Zatch giggled in delight and began chasing him, deciding tag was a fun game to play. He eventually jumped and grabbed Schneider’s tail, forcing the strange creature to the ground. Schneider laughed in his strange horse-like creature way.

“You’re it now!” Zatch cried. “I bet you can’t catch me!” He started running towards the other end of the playground. Schneider followed close behind but was still no match for the speedy little mamodo. Zatch soon bumped into something though, causing him to fall backwards. His dress flew up for a moment, and he landed with it over his head. He laughed hysterically.

“It must be later than I thought!” he chuckled. “I wonder if Kiyo is home from school by now.” He took the dress off his head. “Oh! There we go! So I guess it’s still lunch time then.” He smoothed it out and looked at whom he had hit. “Yakune!” he exclaimed. “I didn’t think I’d see you again so soon!”

Yakune did not look happy. She wore a sad frown and brushed some of her hair back. Zatch gave her a worried look and put some of the long bangs behind her ears. “Thanks,” Yakune mumbled. She stared off into the sky and sat down in the soft grass. Zatch joined her.

“So what are you doing here?” the blonde mamodo asked. “I thought you were off to the junior high. Or did you finish what you had to do there?”

“I just needed to see my big sister...” Yakune murmured. “That’s all.” Her gaze did not move from the sky. Zatch watched as Schneider sat next to him. Yakune was not interested in the horse-like creature.

“This is my horsey friend!” Zatch cheered. “Horsey Friend, this is my new friend Yakune!” He pointed to the small girl. Schneider made his usual noises. Yakune’s gaze still did not budge an inch.

Zatch and Schneider looked at Yakune and tried to make out her expression. However, her eyes were cold and did not seem to hold any life. Her body was still and stiff. “It seems as though it could go on forever...” she finally whispered.

“What?” Zatch scratched his head.

“The sky. Just look at it. It’s awful big. I wonder how big it is exactly.”

“That’s a good question!” Zatch and Schneider joined her in staring into the big, blue abyss. A few clouds passed over head.

“What do you think that one looks like? Yakune pointed to a specific cloud that began blocking out the sun.

“It’s a yellowtail tuna!” Zatch smiled. “That reminds me! It’s time for lunch at my house, and I’m having yellowtail tuna!” He jumped up from his position. “Would you like to join me? I’m sure Kiyō’s mom would let you stay! She’s a really nice person.”

Yakune gently shook her head. “That’s all right,” she replied. “I all ready ate lunch. I hope yours is good though. Enjoy your yellowtail.” Her eyes seemed to be frozen.

Zatch looked at Schneider quizzically, and the two of them began walking out of the park and on the way home. But before they reached the exit, Naomi drove by in her car and smacked Schneider into the sky. And she would have done the same to Zatch if he did not throw on his gym bag and run away like his life depended on it.

“We’re close to her now...” Brago stated as the limo drove into the city. “I can feel her nearby.”

“But are you sure it’s her?” Sherry asked, gripping her spell book. “What if it’s not? What if it’s just another regular mamodo? After all, this one is only supposed to be a legend, right?”

“She’s real,” Brago replied firmly. “I’ve met her before. I remember her back in Mamodo World.

Always getting herself into trouble and being the center of cruel jokes. I know her scent anywhere. ‘The mamodo who smells of a human’.”

Sherry stared out her window. “No more...” she muttered. “I won’t let anymore mamodos enter this fight. She’s not welcome here on this earth, and I will not let her stay here. She’s going right back to where she came from.” She turned and smirked at Brago. “After all, half mamodo means half power, right?”

Brago stopped himself before he said anything. He thought about his partner’s statement for a minute and then nodded. “Yes, that’s right,” he confirmed. “She should be the weakest out of anyone we’ve faced so far. The Half-Breed Mamodo...”

Later that night, Yakune stood in a dark room with only the cracks around the door giving off a somewhat light. She stared at the being before her and took a step back, positively in shock of what she was seeing.

“First...” she began, “you turn me into a mamodo right in the middle of lunch. You were mad because I was talking to Kiyō. What’s your problem this time??” She made fists.

“This time...” the person replied, “you talked to Zatch. I told you not to speak with either of them. Oh, I wish you had a third transformation. I’d prefer it if it were one so hideous, neither of them would come near you.”

Suddenly, a bright flash filled the room as the sound of turning pages became audible. Yakune fell backward and began crab walking her way towards the wall. She soon realized she was cornered with nowhere to go.

“Please don’t do it!!” she shouted. “I’m begging you! You know how much pain it is to transform! Why don’t you just cast another spell like you did to Kiyō?? Will that make you feel any better? It’s supposed to be a great stress-reliever, right??”

But it was too late to convince anything.

“HUMANAKU!!!”

3 - Three-Way Battle

Zatch flopped down on the floor of Kiyō's room next to the Vulcan 300. He sighed and stared up at the ceiling, thinking about his newest friend. Yakune was a sweet little mamodo. But what did that mean? His mind kept flashing back to Kolulu and Golfore.

"She could be one of those mamodos that has a second soul," he said to no one. "That means that if her human counterpart reads a spell, she could turn into a monster." He considered the thought and then sat up. "What do you think, Vulcan 300?" Silence. "Yeah, that's exactly what I was thinking." He slammed back down on the floor, his blonde hair splaying across the wood.

"Hey, Zatch!" Kiyō called from downstairs. "You might want to see this!" There was a hint of panic in his voice. Zatch cocked his head, grabbed the Vulcan 300, and ran downstairs. Once there, he found Kiyō in front of the TV.

"What's the matter, Kiyō?" he asked. "Oh! Don't tell me my soaps have changed their time slots!!" He was panicking by this point. Kiyō shot him a grim look.

"No," he huffed, "your precious soaps are fine." He narrowed his eyes when Zatch gave a relieved sigh. He pointed to the TV. "It's what's on the news," he explained. "See this? Looks familiar, doesn't it?"

Zatch looked at the screen and agreed that the scene resembled that of when Kolulu attacked. He let his jaw drop and his eyes tear. "GAH!!!" he shouted. "W-what kind of thing could have done this?? A thief? A murderer?? A bounty hunter??"

"Try a mamodo," Kiyō replied flatly, still pointing at the scene. The people were slouched over and appeared to be in great pain. Kiyō observed the area until he caught something out of the corner of his eye. He gasped.

"What is it??" Zatch shouted, jumping up and down in his spot. "Oh, no! The time slot for my soaps really WAS changed, wasn't it??"

"WOULD YOU SHUT UP ABOUT THOSE SOAPS???!!!!"

"Be honest, Kiyō! Were they changed or not?!"

"OF COURSE NOT!!!"

Zatch heaved another great sigh of relief and grinned. "Well, nothing could be as bad as that, right? I mean, what's the worst that could possibly happen? What could a mamodo do?"

"Oh, I don't know. It could be Reycom or Sugino or Kolulu all over again! Didn't that ever cross your mind?"

Zatch thought about this for a moment and then finally realized something. "One of my soaps IS on!!" Kiyō twitched.

"If you're joining us just now, then you'll see that the city is suffering from a serious disease right now that could become an epidemic if left untreated. The only things known about this disease are there are three different symptoms for three different forms of the disease. Victims suffer from extreme chest pain, extreme head pain, or extreme overall body pain. Right now, the most deadly of the three forms is the overall body pain. The least deadly is the chest pain. Women and children are urged to stay indoors and away from any doors, windows, or other ways out of homes. In fact, I have just received notice that the safest place for people to stay is in their basements. Please take whatever precautions to protect yourself from this mysterious disease."

"There are no precautions. No one is safe. MINDAKU!!!"

The news reporter fell over from the impact and began cringing in pain. He held his head and doubled over, not being able to stand so much suffering all at once. The camera crew for the news channel exchanged worried looks and then ran off in all different directions to avoid the impacts.

“Useless. BODAKU!!!”

The camera crew fell from the shock. They were all suffering from the worst case of the disease. Their entire bodies shook from the blast, and some began rolling around in hopes of stopping any of the pain. Within the trees of the nearby park, two people stood. One of them held a book. The other was a tiny being. The little one, although she was the one inflicting the damage, seemed to be in the most pain of all.

“I don’t want to anymore,” she mumbled. “Let’s stop and go home.”

Another small child passed by the forest at the same time she had spoken those words. The book holder smirked and gave the book the emotion it desired--hatred. “HEARTAKU!!!” The child fell over and grabbed at his chest. The smaller of the two people was moaning with hurt.

“Stop it!” she cried. “Please! No more hurting these innocent people!”

“ZAKER!!!”

A giant bolt of lightning shot between the woods and zapped the smaller person. She flew off to the middle of the playground and into the hot sand. The taller one gritted her teeth and ran off to help the smaller one.

“Oh, no you don’t! JIKERDOR!!!”

The taller one flew up into the air and slammed against the metal chains of the swings. She struggled against the magnetic force and still gripped her book with much power. She shut her eyes in an attempt to avoid the yelling that was bound to come next.

“Heh, I knew it!” Kiyo announced. “This was the work of a mamodo! Now let’s see what we’re dealing with!” He and Zatch jumped from the forest and stared down at their opponents. They gasped at what they saw.

“I-it’s Yakune!” Zatch cried. “And...Suzie??!!” He and Kiyo exchanged shocked looks towards each other and back to the battlefield. Kiyo was trembling.

“There’s no way Suzie could have found a mamodo,” he whispered. “All this time?? Then why didn’t she attack us before? All one hundred mamodos...or at least the ones left on earth, should have found a human counterpart all ready...”

“You’re confused, aren’t you, Kiyo?” Suzie asked. The book began to glow. Allow me to explain.

HUMANAKU!!!”

Yakune screamed as a bright yellow light wrapped around her. Compared to the spells she had been casting before, this pain was much worse. She was groaning when she was not crying out for help. And finally, her body began to change. She grew much, much taller and finally stopped when she reached about five and a half feet. The glow stopped, and Yakune stood as a normal human girl.

Kiyo and Zatch were at a loss for words. Just a moment ago, Yakune had been a mamodo with spells and all. But now she was a normal human. What did that mean?

“GAH!!!” Zatch screamed. “Where did Yakune go?? She was here just a second ago!!!”

“You idiot!” Kiyo scolded. “Yakune is both a human AND a mamodo! But how is that possible?! Is this a new spell??”

“Something like that,” Suzie explained. “See, I came across Yakune for the first time a few days ago right before school started. I decided to turn her into a mamodo after you met her, Kiyo, so she could meet Zatch. And when she did I transformed her back. See, Yakune does have two forms. When in her human state, I can only cast one spell, and that’s the one to transform her into a mamodo. But when she’s a mamodo, I can cast many other spells as well as transform her back into a human.” She stopped short and stared at Kiyo. “Now could you get me away from this sticky chain?!”

“Stop!” Yakune cried. She turned to Kiyo and Zatch. “You must not release her! If you do, she’ll just keep casting spells! I don’t want anyone else getting hurt...”

Suzie narrowed her eyes and snickered. “You think so? MAMODAKU!!!”

The yellow light appeared again, and Yakune once again broke the sound barrier with her screams of pain. Kiyo watched in horror the whole time as his friend suffered the consequences of defying her counterpart. She was shrinking this time. And as soon as she was Zatch’s height, the light disappeared. She sat there as a mamodo.

Kiyo began shaking and losing his grip on the red book. It was too much too fast. All this time, that sweet girl he had met was a mamodo. But the real issue was whether or not she had planned this all along. Or was it Suzie’s doing?

“Suzie!” he cried. “Why are you doing this?? You’re one of the nicest, sweetest girls I know. You wouldn’t harm a fly! So why are you using a mamodo to inflict pain upon innocent people?! It’s not right!!” He let the tears run down his cheeks in big droplets. Suzie was silent.

“GRAVIREI!!!”

In an instant, everyone and everything in the park was smacked down to the ground by a dense force. Of course, this undid Zatch’s spell on Suzie, which kept her pinned to the swings. But now everyone had a new problem. They were all pinned to the ground with no way to get up. And that meant no defenses.

“Did you really think the Half-Breed Mamodo would be good for anything other than destruction?” Brago asked as he and Sherry walked out to the battlefield. He crossed his arms. “She’s worthless. A nothing. I don’t know how she was chosen for the battle to become king.”

“I wasn’t!” Yakune screamed under the force. “I came to earth by my own free will!!”

Now it was Sherry and Brago’s turn to be shocked. They stared at her, at each other, and then back at her. Sherry’s face was turning ruby red with anger. She did not want any other mamodos other than the one hundred sent included in the battle.

“How were you able to do that?!” she called. “The mamodos must be sent to earth by the current king! I don’t understand how you could have possibly made it here by yourself. And you have a book! Explain that to me!”

“It’s more obvious than you think,” Brago explained. “Yakune is the Half-Breed Mamodo. That means she has a spell in her book to change back and forth between her human and mamodo form. When still in the Mamodo World, she can change on her own. She must have come to earth as a human. That is the only logical explanation.”

Brago stopped the spell and allowed the opponents to stand. Zatch jumped up to his feet and cleaned his dress of the sand and dirt of the playground. Kiyo held on to his book, which was not glowing with the need to fight the others. In fact, it was not glowing at all. That was a big deal considering a three-way fight was soon beginning.

“I just can’t believe...” he began, whispering, “...that Yakune, that sweet girl, is a mamodo. And the Half-Breed Mamodo at that. I wonder what the spells in her book truly are.” He thought about his life for a second and tried to remember if anything that had occurred in the last week would give him a hint. The first time he met Yakune was when she was being bullied for her money. And then he shared his lunch with her. But before that, he had been aching in his chest. As soon as the aching had stopped, Yakune appeared on the roof.

“I’ll show you how special our spells are!” Suzie shouted. “HEARTAKU!!!”

Yakune thrust her hands out, but no force seemed to be coming from them. The other two teams exchanged confused looks. That is, until Zatch fell over, rolling in agony.

“Zatch!” Kiyo cried. “It’s Yakune’s spell! What the matter?!”

“It’s my chest!”

“Your chest?”

“It feels like it’s going to explode!!”

Kiyo looked up in horror and saw Sherry and Brago both falling to the power. Even Brago, one of the most powerful and feared of the mamodos, was succumbing to the force. It was not long before Kiyo grabbed himself around his chest.

“Yakune is able to affect us all!” he realized, doing his best to stand up straight. “This power...this is unlike anything we’ve faced before. It’s invisible, and it can affect both the mamodo and the human!”

“Why was I so blind?” Brago asked himself. “In exchange for all the taunts and torture she received because of her mixed blood, Yakune received powers beyond any the regular mamodos have.” He looked at Kiyo and directed his voice towards him. “Yakune’s powers all have to do with the darker side of love. The heart, mind, and body are all things humans take into consideration when they search for love, right? Well, because Yakune’s spells have that suffix on the end, they are immediately transferred to evil spells. I’m sure you understand why.”

“Because ‘aku’ is Japanese for ‘evil’...” It suddenly made sense. The spell that was affecting the four of them was torturing their hearts, and that was why those hit with this spell felt a pain in their chests. The others must have been hit in their minds, and some people’s entire bodies were undergoing the torture. Kiyo had no more reason to be confused or stunned.

“Zatch, try to stand up,” he grunted, struggling himself. “Listen. I don’t want to fight Suzie, but she’s obviously mad about something. We have to defeat her, even if it means sending Yakune back to the Mamodo World.”

Kiyo stopped short right there, and he remembered Brago’s words. What exactly did he mean by “taunts and torture”? Was Yakune made fun of because of the fact that she was a Half-Breed Mamodo? That would make sense. But he found himself in a stalemate. Letting her stay on Earth would mean Suzie go on hurting people, but sending her back to the Mamodo World would only send her back to the teasing.

“I have no choice...ZAKER!!!” A lightning bolt shot from Zatch’s mouth and hit Yakune. Her spell stopped, and the pain suddenly disappeared. Sherry and Brago stood and regained their strength. Brago was angrier than ever, and Sherry was not a step behind.

“REIS!!!” she cried. Brago stretched out his hand and shot a black ball of energy towards Yakune. But those plans were suddenly stopped short.

“RASHIELD!!!” The bright yellow shield popped from the ground and interrupted the energy ball’s path, sending it back from whence it came. Sherry and Brago jumped out of the way at the last minute, letting the blast destroy the trees behind them.

“THAT WAS A STUPID THING TO DO!!!” Sherry screamed at the top of her lungs. “We’re trying to DEFEAT the Half-Breed, not rescue her!” Her eyes were two angry black slits, and her rage even made Brago take a step or two back.

When the lights faded, Kiyo and Zatch could only look at the dark team with serious eyes. “We don’t want to fight these two” Kiyo announced. “We just want to talk.” HE and Zatch turned towards Suzie and Yakune. “Why are you doing this, Suzie? Why are you making so many people suffer? It isn’t right!”

“Don’t you tell me what’s right!” Suzie shot back. “MINDAKU!!!” This time, only Kiyo and Zatch fell to the agony of their minds throbbing in pain. “Despite what you think, there are people in this world who only want you to be happy. That’s all I want! I know it may not seem like it, but I can’t stand it when you ignore me, and it makes me angry to see you push people away!” She paused. “But most of all...YOU DON’T EVEN CARE IF OTHER PEOPLE GET HURT!!!” She was crying by now. Angry tears.

Kiyo gasped and tried to think back to what he did that could have gotten Suzie so upset. But what was it? Was it back before he met Zatch? No, she did not care since she hardly saw Kiyo anyway. But what

was it?

Suddenly, it hit him. A few days earlier, he had been in a bad mood due to the weather. He had not wanted to face anyone during that day, but Suzie happened to come along at the wrong time. He yelled at her, but was that really it? No, he had yelled at her before. After she dropped her umbrella, he completely ignored her.

“Wait a second...” Kiyō whispered, processing his thoughts. His voice was louder when he said, “Suzie! I’m sorry about whatever I did to you! I really am! Please stop hurting these innocent people!” He stopped for a second. “You’re hurting Yakune more than anyone!”

Suzie suddenly stopped, and her tears turned sad. “That was...the first time...Kiyō ever said he was sorry...” She dropped the spell book and fell to her knees. Her palms slapped up against her eyes, and the salty water fell from her eyes in large drops.

Out of the corner of his eye, Zatch saw Sherry and Brago’s book glowing. Now that the pain in his head had ceased, he was able to understand what was happening. “WAIT!!!” he screamed, running towards the two of them. “Please!! Don’t cast a spell on them!!”

“SUZIE!!!” Kiyō screamed. “RULE NUMBER ONE OF THIS BATTLE: NEVER LET GO OF THE BOOK!!!”

“REIS!!!”

Once again, a giant ball of energy appeared in Brago’s hand, and it flew towards Suzie and Yakune. The blast was so huge with a purple and black light show. No one was able to see through the thick, bright light, but they did not need to in order to understand what was happening.

Slowly, the light began to fade. Soon, the four of them were able to see the result of the blast. Suzie was lying off to the side near the crushed slide on the other side of the playground. Bruises and cuts covered her body, and the bottom of her skirt was ripped. Kiyō’s first instinct was to run over to her, but Zatch saw something different.

“Yakune!” he called. Yakune was lying similarly to Suzie, covered in scrapes and gashes. And her book was next to her. Burning. “Your book! You have to stop your book from burning up!!” His shrill voice awoke Yakune, but she did not make any movements to prevent the upcoming ashes. She simply closed her eyes and began to fade.

“Yakune!” Kiyō called from where he was. “What are you doing?! Please don’t leave us!”

“It’s okay,” Yakune whispered. “I don’t belong here anyway.”

With that, Yakune disappeared into a small line of tiny sparkles. Kiyō and Zatch stared at the now-empty spot and the small pile of ashes next to it. They felt dampness at the corner of their eyes, and before they knew it, they were crying.

“You!” Zatch cried, looking at Sherry and Brago. “You two! You made her disappear!!” He ran over to them and shouted into Brago’s face, “Bring her back!”

“And who would you be helping by bringing that poor, pathetic creature back into this world?” the dark mamodo hissed back, tossing Zatch off him. “You may not remember it that well, but Yakune was an outcast. Half human, half mamodo. You do the math.” He gave the small mamodo a dangerous look and turned. “Let’s go.” He and Sherry began walking back to their limo.

Kiyō held on to Suzie’s unconscious body. The tears fell faster, and all he could do was hold her close to him. “Suzie...” he breathed, “...I’m so sorry...”

4 - Yakune's End

Instead of bringing them right home, Sherry had Albert drive her and Brago to the park in the next town over. Sherry took a moment to look at the children playing there. Brago just crossed his arms and snorted.

“What are we doing here?” he asked. “I thought we were going to go home. If we’re not, the least we could do is search some more for the enemy.” He stopped for a moment and looked at Sherry, who was still observing the crowd. He decided that if he could not beat her, he might as well join her, and he scanned the playground.

Brago’s breath caught in his throat when he came across something slightly strange. There was a teenage girl sitting on one of the benches reading a book. He eyed her and looked at her a little harder. Tanned skin. Brown hair. Brown eyes. A pink dress. It could not be. It was just impossible. How could another human look so much like Yakune?

The thoughts processed in Brago’s mind for a minute. Sure, she LOOKED like Yakune, but it was just not possible that she could BE Yakune. After all, Yakune was sent back to the Mamodo World. They had even watched her book burn up. Heck, they were the ones who CAUSED it to burn in the first place! It had to be a coincidence. Yeah. A complete coincidence. That was it.

But was that the final answer? Yakune was the Half-Breed Mamodo. That means, that while in the Mamodo World, she can transform back and forth between her forms as she pleased. And then it suddenly made sense. Brago gasped and held a hand over his mouth. Sherry looked his way.

“What did you see?” she asked. Brago froze and let his gaze linger on the girl in the park for another second. Then he turned to Sherry and scowled.

“Nothing,” he stated definitely. “I’m allowed to hate your race, you know.”

“Yes, I’m aware.”

“...Children are disgusting.”

Sherry remained silent for another minute before turning to leave the park. Brago hesitated and kept his gaze on the girl there. Was she Yakune? That question was answered when the girl turned to meet his gaze. She was curious for a moment but then smiled and waved somewhat. She did not speak though, so the only thing Brago could do was lamely lift a hand and slightly wave back. Before he knew it, a group of children had gathered around him.

“That’s such a cool costume!”

“But it’s not Halloween yet.”

“Hey, Mister, why are you dressed like this?”

“Are you a cartoon character?”

“GAH!!!” Brago tried waving them off, but they kept coming closer and closer, wanting an answer. So he gave an awkward smile and ran in the opposite direction as fast as he could. The girl on the bench stood and tried calming the kids down.

“Now, now,” she began, “you shouldn’t go questioning people like that. It’s very rude really. So don’t worry about that man, and go play please.” She was trying her best to be reasonable. The disappointed children resumed their afternoon playtime, and the girl gave a relieved sort of sigh. She turned in the direction in which Brago ran.

“Sorry...Brago...” she mumbled. “I can’t...stand to stay one more day in the Mamodo World. It was...too hard. I hope...you and Sherry...can understand why...I needed to come back here.”

Yakune rubbed away some of the tears that threatened to pour down her cheeks. She pouted for a

second and then turned back towards her bench. She picked up her book and studied it. She was back on the Earth, and she had disguised her spell book to look like just a normal novel.

"If I burn it up," she mumbled to herself, "I'll just be sent back to the Mamodo World. I could never do that. Not again..." She hugged the book close to her and rested her shaky legs on the bench. "I hate this book. I hate my existence."

It was nightfall by the time Yakune awoke. She had not realized that she had fallen asleep, and it was pitch black by the time she awoke. Rubbing her eyes, she stood and picked up her book. She opened it to the first page and looked at the scrambled lettering. Good. It was not glowing or a different color. That meant no one had touched it while she slept.

As Yakune walked down the dark streets of the city, she began thinking back to her time in the Mamodo World. Unknown to most, she had visited the Earth hundreds of times by her own free will. And every time, someone had managed to find her book. And then in one way or another, it would get burned. Of course, there were many times between this fight and the fight one thousand years ago where there were no other mamodos to fight. But the people who became her human partners were bad, wanting to cheat others with her powers. She could not help but think that Suzie was the same way.

But was there something else that had come out of her most recent trip to Earth? Sure, she was stuck in another battle with a so-called evil human to cause chaos among innocent people. But when she put all that aside, Yakune began to think that she had gained something. After all, she could hear Zatch scream at Brago, even after she left. He kept repeating how he wanted her back with them on the Earth. Did that mean Yakune and Zatch were friends? Why had Zatch not remembered that she was the Half-Breed Mamodo? It was a pretty widely known fact.

And that was when it hit her. Yakune was finally beginning to be slightly more optimistic when she remembered all the torture of the Mamodo World. The other mamodo children had always made fun of her. Their families did not allow them to play with her for some stupid fear. And Brago was the worst of them all. He would use his attacks for the battles on her. Sure, Brago was definitely a bully, but even the other mamodo children thought he would take things too far when it came to Yakune.

The tears started to build up again. Yakune slapped her palm over her mouth and mumbled something into the skin. Her pace slowed a little, and she found herself taking baby steps into the next town over. "I can't stay here now that I know Brago is here," she whispered. "I need to go somewhere." She pushed back some brown hair, straightened her dress, and quickened her pace. If she hurried, she could finish her to-do list before the airport closed.

When Yakune made it to the next town over, she began scanning each of the homes to find the specific ones. The first one she found was the last place she wanted to go. She bit the lip and forced herself to climb the tree near the window. She peeked through the glass to find a room with fruit lying all across the floor.

Slowly, Yakune reached out to open the window. She let the lock click for a second, and she pushed the glass out so she could hop down on to the floor. Suzie did not stir in her futon. She simply let out a little huff and rolled over.

Yakune sat there for a while, just staring at the person who had once controlled her powers. She would look at the spell book every now and then to make sure it was not glowing. When she finally had her fill of just looking, Yakune leaned over and whispered something into Suzie's ear.

"I'm so sorry, I couldn't do what you wanted," she whispered, being as sincere as possible. "I wish...I could have been a better mamodo to you. I wish...I could be strong...like Zatch. But...I knew from the moment I met the two of them that it wouldn't work out." She paused for a second but then continued. "I love Zatch. I love Kiyō. I care for them both so much. And if I were a regular mamodo, it would work."

But..." She stopped and held herself to keep from shivering. "But I love Kiyo with all my heart. Same with Zatch! So...I could never...stay as your partner. I'm sorry, Suzie Mizuno. I hope...everything works out with you and Kiyo."

Yakune sat for a few more seconds. Then she stood up, climbed out on to the tree branch, and locked the window behind her. That had been painful. That had been one of the worst things she ever had to face. But it needed to be done. Yakune sucked in some cool night air and slithered down the tree. The next house Yakune came to was a very familiar one indeed. She could see Kiyo's window from the sidewalk, so she climbed up the tree closest to it. She repeated the steps she had taken when going to Suzie's, and she found Kiyo Takamine and Zatch Bell sleeping in their futons.

Yakune did not know who to go to first. She loved them both so much. But who did she love more? It hurt when she finally admitted it, but she had to confess. If she did not, it would haunt her for the rest of her life.

She leaned over Kiyo's ear and murmured, "Kiyo, I love you. I...love you with all my heart. I wish I could have been born a normal girl. Then...the two of us could have been together, but I guess it was just not meant to be." She looked over at Zatch, who was still sleeping like a baby, and continued when she looked back at Kiyo's pleasant, sleeping face. "You were so nice to me. You were the first person ever in my life to show me kindness. Thank you, Kiyo. I was starting to think I'd live my entire life without knowing that feeling." She gently kissed him on his forehead and turned to Zatch.

Yakune was about to say something when she heard something she was not expecting. "Yakune..." Zatch mumbled in his sleep, "...come back. Please....come...back. Brago...make...her...come...back..." He soon drifted back into a complete sleep, but his words stayed with Yakune. He was dreaming about the battle earlier that day. That horrible nightmare was repeating in his head. It suddenly made Yakune feel guilty.

"You are...my friend...Zatch," she softly replied. "Thank you...for forgetting...that I'm the Half-Breed Mamodo." She kissed him on his forehead and wiggled her way back down the tree.

Now the half-breed had two options. She could continue with her plan and sneak out of Japan. Or...she could do the right thing...and then sneak out of Japan. What had bothered her the most about seeing Brago that day was finding out he had been matched with Sherry. It would be a recipe for disaster if she did not warn him. So Yakune stretched her legs and ran down to the giant mansion.

When Yakune made it down to the mansion, she took extra care in camouflaging herself the best she could to avoid being caught by the guards. She was able to sneak past the two at the front doorway and make it around to the side, where a diamond-shaped fence covered in flowers stood. Okay, this would be a little harder than the trees. At least with trees, the branches were sturdy and made little noise. And if they did make noise, most would assume it was the wind. Fences were not exactly supposed to creak for no reason.

Regardless of the risks, Yakune slowly climbed the fence and made her way into the mansion. She tiptoed down the corridors (getting lost a few times) and eventually found Sherry's bedroom. The door had been left slightly ajar, so Yakune could see Sherry sleeping in her bed.

Yakune did not know what hit her at that moment, but it hurt her heart so bad. She did not have the guts to walk into Sherry's room and say good-bye.

As soon as Yakune was about to leave, she felt a thrust on her arm. Someone grabbed her wrist and slapped his other hand over her mouth. The person held her there like that and whispered harshly in her ear, "What are you doing here, Half-Breed?" Brago tightened his grip on her body, constricting her to double over while mumbling into the rotten-smelling flesh of his hand.

Brago turned Yakune towards him and slowly let his hand drop from her face. He could see the desperation in Yakune's eyes, and it almost made him choke on his tongue. It was just a good thing

Yakune did the first of the talking.

"I was just saying good-bye to Sherry," she replied, doing her best to keep her voice down. Brago eyed her for a minute and crossed his arms.

"What do you mean by that?" he snapped back. "Are you planning on 'accidentally' burning your own book so you can go back to the Mamodo World? What good will it do you? You'll just end up getting so depressed there that you come back here and ruin everyone's lives all over again." Those were the same type of cold, harsh words that he had constantly dumped on her in the Mamodo World.

Regardless, Yakune kept her cool and shook her head.

"I'm just going to travel," she explained. "I'm going to get on a plane and go somewhere where no one knows my name. Somewhere where there are no mamodos. I want to pretend that my miserable life never happened. I just want to be reborn."

Brago cocked an eyebrow. "Where will you go?" he asked, his voice getting somewhat softer. Yakune shrugged.

"I don't know. Somewhere."

"Do you have money?"

"Some. I'm going to sneak on a plane."

"What about living?"

"I don't know, okay? I just need to get out of here." She stopped for a minute and looked at Brago. His expression was less angry and more neutral. That was a look of his Yakune had never seen before. It was almost as if he was...sorry for her. "I need to go. The airport closes soon. But before I do, I need to warn you about something, Brago."

"Warn me?" Brago repeated. "What on earth could you possibly need to warn me about?"

Yakune bent down so she was the same height as the mamodo. She leaned over to him and whispered a bit of advice in his ear. "You can't care how cute she is. You can't even consider her as a possibility. Unless you want another Half-Breed Mamodo like me, DON'T fall in love with her, Brago. It's not right. You're a mamodo, and Sherry is a human, so DO NOT fall in love with her."

Brago stumbled backwards and stared at Yakune, flustered. He lifted a hand and pointed a shaky finger at her. "I would never!" he cried. "That's disgusting! There's NO WAY I'd EVER fall in love with a pathetic human like Sherry! Okay, so she's my book owner, but she's just a stupid human I need to become king!" He stopped for a second to hate the smirk on Yakune's face.

"I think you think about her a little bit MORE than that," she hinted. She stood up straight, turned, and began walking down the corridors to find her way out of the mansion. She only stopped for a moment to turn back and mouth something to Brago. Then she continued running to the window she left open. Brago stared down the dark hallway for a few seconds and gritted his teeth. Why would Yakune mouth, "I forgive you" to him?

Yakune was on a plane for the rest of the night.

"I have no idea where this plane is headed," she mumbled to herself as she sat in the luggage storage area. "I just hope...it's not going somewhere in Japan. I need to get out of Japan. I don't care where I go...as long as I can leave this country."

When the plane finally landed, Yakune snuck off it without anyone noticing and ran out to the highway on the other side of the airport. The writing on the street signs was in a language completely foreign to her. Okay. That at least meant she was no longer in Japan. But where was she actually? Well, did it even really matter anymore? She was out of Japan and able to start a new life.

Or so she thought. Just moments after she ran out on the grass, she saw a blinding light coming her way. And that was the last thing she ever witnessed.

The next morning, Kanchome turned on the TV in Folgore's dressing room and flipped a few channels before settling on the morning news. Folgore sat down next to him, and the two listened to the early morning report for the weather. Not that it mattered anyway. They were still going to have the concert if it was raining.

"And now for a sudden report," the woman said. "Last night, the body of a young teenage girl was found on the highway near Italy's National Airport. Police officials believe a car that apparently spun out of control on the roads and crashed off the side of the road struck her. No identification of the girl has been reported. The only clue left at the scene was a single book with strange lettering. Detectives are currently keeping the book under close watch for any clues."

Kanchome stared at the TV slack-jawed. He could barely hang on to his morning breakfast (a chocolate bar) without shivering. Forlgore turned his attention to the mamodo.

"What's the matter, Kanchome?" he asked. "You know the girl?"

"She's Yakune!" Kanchome squealed. "She's the Half-Breed Mamodo!!"

Brago's eyes flashed open wide. He gasped and tried to feel out the energy in the air. Suddenly, one energy had gone missing. He calmed down after a second and mumbled, "She's better off dead anyway. That pathetic creature's miserable life was just a waste."

Kiyo and Zatch awoke that morning and opened the window to greet the sunshiny day. Zatch smiled wide at the giant star, but Kiyo kept quiet for a little while. He brought his knees to his chest through the blankets and said, "Enjoy it while it lasts, Zatch. I think there's going to be a storm today."

"Oh, man!" Zatch pouted, sitting on the wood floor of the room. He turned to his other friend. "That means no going to the park today, Vulcan." He sat like that and then suddenly turned to Kiyo with a random question. "Kiyo, do you think I'll see Yakune again?"

Kiyo perked up. "Probably, Zatch," he replied. "I think that once you're king, you can command everyone to be nicer to her." He got out of bed and walked to the window. He and Zatch stared up at the blue sky filled with wonder. Kiyo just smiled.

"Yeah...I know we'll definitely see Yakune again."

THE END