

Haruhi's World

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What if Haruhi had read Shakugan no Shana and thought, just for a moment, of what would happen if Flame Hazes were real?

A mix of Shakugan no Shana and The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya.

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1 - Haruhi Creates

I sat in my seat at school, minding my own business. It was a fairly nice day out, I noticed. I had scored an awesome seat- right by the window, second to last in the row. So I could observe the beautiful day first hand. That made it suck all the more that I was trapped in this small-town high school with a teacher that had absolutely no delivery. Worse yet, however, was the bundle of female energy that sat in front of me.

“This is boring! Ugh!”

This was Haruhi Suzumiya’s typical morning battle cry.

“Boring isn’t bad by definition,” I hear myself say. What a waste of time that was. She wouldn’t listen this time. She never did before. Haruhi was the type of girl who did whatever came into her head. Decorum meant nothing to her. Worse yet was that she got away with it, each and every time. No one else could break the rules quite like Haruhi, and no one dared try. It’s a damned shame, if you ask me. If she were normal, she’d be cute, maybe almost beautiful.

“You don’t get it! This CAN’T be all there is! Ugh, whatever!”

That was Haruhi’s typical response, regardless of what I said. She usually coupled it with an icy glare, but not this morning. She must have been tired or something. Whatever. It made life easier on me when Haruhi decided to stay up late on schoolnights.

Okabe-sensei starting his teaching with all the flash and sizzle of a postal truck. I had taken to watching the clouds outside. Times like these made me wonder if Haruhi had a point about mundane life. I wonder if I just defend it out of habit. Or maybe so she’ll keep talking to me? Yeah, right. Then again, stranger things happen in a daily basis when you’re a part of ‘Haruhi’s world’.

Just then, the door to our classroom clattered open. Everyone was here today, so we all turned to see what could be happening. Was someone about to get bad news, delivered by the vice principal? A younger sibling had fallen ill and needed to be escorted home, maybe?

“<Sorry I’m I-, er> shootsure shimasu, sensei!”

Well, I’ll be damned. It was a nervous looking American boy. I picked my head up from it’s resting place on my hand to get a better look. He was of average height, maybe a little taller. He had a cleanly cut crop of dark brown hair on his head, and a nervous look on his face.

“And you are?” Okabe asked, being kind about it. We all knew he hated being interrupted. But when it came to transfer students, the rules were bent for them a little. At least, at first.

“Kojiro Sakai. I’m a new transfer student. I’m sorry I’m late. I couldn’t find the classroom.”

No one believed that was the guy’s real name, but stranger things had happened. It had dawned on me he had started out speaking English, but switched to Japanese quickly. He was dressed like the rest of us, with blazer and tie in place perfectly. Maybe he was half Japanese, with an American mother or

father?

“Oh yes, Sakai-kun. Yes, please take your seat. Just try to follow along today, don’t worry about taking notes.”

There was a sharp tug on my hair.

“Ow, damn it! What?!” I spat furiously at Haruhi. But her eyes were alive with interest.

“An exchange student? An American with that kind of name? Sounds like the SOS Brigade’s new mission!”

The poor guy. He was going to get dissected by Haruhi if he let himself get caught.

“Kyon, bring him to the club room after class!”

“Has it occurred to you that he might not want to join us?” I asked, knowing it was futile.

“Like I care!”

Well, what am I supposed to do, kidnap the guy?!

“Kindap him if you have to!” Haruhi told me, her voice dead serious and her eyes scary.

Is it just me, or can she read minds? Or is it just MY mind she can read? What a horrifying thought.

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After class, I went to meet the new guy. I didn’t speak English well, so I hoped his Japanese was strong.

“Hey, it’s Sakai-san, right?” I asked. If I was going to expose him to Haruhi, I should make his last moments comfortable, so I decided to actually warn him about Haruhi.

“Yes, that’s me. May I ask your name?”

“Well, I go by Kyon...” Damnit, why did I say that? I hate that nickname!

“It’s nice to meet you, Kyon,” he replied, bowing to me. He bowed pretty deeply, too. Probably out his nervousness.

“Say, listen Kojiro. I’m in this club, and our...chief would like you to join. No pressure, of course.”

“What does this club do?” he asked. He seemed genuinely interested, rather than just being polite.

“Well, uh...”

I had no idea. What DID we do in the SOS Brigade?

“Could you show me to the clubroom, then? I’d like to meet the club...chief, did you say? What’s he like? Or she?”

“She. The girl who sits behind me, actually.”

“Really? Wow, you’re lucky. Sitting in front of a cutie like that.”

Whoa, this guy already had his eye on Haruhi? I felt like I should warn him. I had been warned about her, after all. Share the wealth, right?

“Well, uh, listen. The thing about Haruhi is...well...”

“Oh, are you two together? I’m sorry. I wouldn’t hit on another guy’s girl...”

“No, no, it’s not like that!” I insisted immediately, making the batsu sign with my arms.
Hell no!

“I mean, she’s just...weird. Out there, y’know? Kind of...well, you’ll get to meet her. But don’t be surprised if she turns you down. She does it to every guy.”

Kimihiro shrugged. “Oh, I doubt I’ll get the guts up to ask her out, anyway. I’ve never been good with girls, after all. I had hoped that Japanese girls might be easier to talk to than their American counterparts.”

I didn’t have an answer for that. So I just picked up my stuff. Kimihiro did the same. Once we were both packed up, he followed me to the SOS Brigade (formerly literary club) room.

I felt like I was leading a lamb to the slaughter.

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Haruhi was all over the guy right away. She didn’t even let him get in the room before she seized his arm and dragged him to the center of the room.

“Huh. I guess American boys aren’t all that different from Japanese boys...What about down there?” I winced as Haruhi pried the waistband of the guy’s pants out to get a look down there. He squirmed and protested, but Haruhi had freakishly strong arms for a girl her age.

“Geez, nothing different there, either!”

Huh? You’ve seen this before? How many times, Haruhi? And what was the occasion?

“Oh well! You’re still different, and therefore an interest to our club! These things here are henchmen 1, 2, 3, and 4. You’re number five!”

With that, Haruhi turned to Mikuru Asahina, a cute girl upper-classmen. With a shopping bag in her hand and a gleam in her eye, Haruhi collared Asahina (who had clearly thought about running for it) and began to strip her.

Koizumi and I had gotten used to this ritual, but the new guy wasn’t. He was sitting right where Haruhi

had left him. Closing my eyes out of respect for Asahina-san, I dragged Kojiro out by his tie. The door slammed shut behind us just as Haruhi pried off Asahina-san's shirt...

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Out in the hallway, Koizumi and I introduced ourselves. As in, we used our names, not the numbers Haruhi gave us. It's a minor thing, but how did Koizumi get a higher number than me?! I had been in the club longer than him! It wasn't fair! I mean, I don't care, but it's the principal of the thing.

"You've met me. This here is Itsuki Koizumi," I indicated by nodding my head.

"It's a pleasure to meet you," Koizumi said, smiling and extending his hand. Damn him and his perfect manners!

"Likewise," the ashen-faced Kojiro answered, shaking his hand.

"So, Sakai...why DID you come to the club..."

Sakai seemed a little calmer now. In fact, he even smiled a little.

"Well, you probably won't believe me, Kyon-san, but I came here because of Suzumiya-san."

Damn it! Another one?

"So, what? Are you an ESPer? A time-traveler? An alien? Which one?" I asked, a hint of sarcasm in my voice. I mean, what the hell? Why do I have to be in a class that's a breeding ground for this weirdness?

"None of the above, I'm afraid."

"So? What are you?"

"Human. Not your average one, but human. I was drawn here by Suzumiya-san, but I've got no idea why. I also don't know why I'm familiar with Koizumi-san, Nagato-san, and Asahina-san. I know them, but I also *don't* know them. If that makes sense." It didn't.

"But I feel...urges. Such as one to protect you and Suzumiya-san. And to obey any directives you or Suzumiya-san give me. I'm to ask no reward in return, and I'm to give my life if necessary."

"So you're a lemming?" This was too weird. But maybe it was good. Another guy could be Haruhi the mad scientist's little white lab mouse. I sure as hell was tired of running through the maze. As if a block of cheese at the end could be reparations for the suffering Haruhi has forced upon me.

"Well, to a degree. More accurately, I've been allowed to preserve my 'sense of self'." "sense of self?"

"Meaning that my personality is still my own. Unaltered, unfiltered. My only mission directive, for want of a better term, is to ensure the safety of you and Suzumiya-san. My own life is to be pushed aside

whenever necessary.”

Sounds damned inconvenient to me. I looked to Koizumi for a reaction. Predictably, he was smiling that winning smile of his. I get pissed off just looking at the guy. That’s unfair, I know, but this guy…

Protect us? Why were Haruhi and I always grouped together for this stuff?!

“Protect us? From who?”

“Whatever comes along. You see, there are lots of organizations interested in you and Suzumiya-san. About three years ago, I began to age in reverse, until I was about 15. In normal time, I’m twenty-one. But thanks to the use of what I call ‘seals’, I can prevent myself from aging normally or abnormally as the case may be, and stay fifteen almost indefinitely.”

“Why? What’s the point of that?”

“I’m not sure,” Sakai said with a shrug. “All I know is, three years ago, my brain told me to come protect you two.”

“So this is one of Haruhi’s wishes? She wants some kind of servant/protector?” It was like something out a light novel

“That’s about it,” Sakai told me. “You see, the problem here is that, while Haruhi created me, she also created enemies for me. I don’t know when they’ll show up, but they’ll always show up sometime when Haruhi is in a bad mood. Even a minor thing. This morning, for example, when she said how boring things were. I had to go fight an enemy she created. That’s why I was late for class. I can’t use the seal around Haruhi, because she can break it. And if she breaks the seal, all hell breaks loose with it.”

I just shook my head. “Great, another sci-fi hero stepping out from the shadows. Okay, so at least tell me this: why did you seem to ask Koizumi for permission to show me this?”

Koizumi piped up this time. “Well, it’s like this. My agency and Kojiro’s ‘agency’ are very close. We have common interests. I can’t use my powers all the time. So if there’s an enemy that operates outside a closer space, I’m totally helpless. Hence Kojiro.”

“Perfect timing,” Kojiro said suddenly. He threw his arm around me and pulled me behind him. Koizumi stepped in front of me, still smiling.

A creature that seemed to be like a giant spider with snakes for legs skittered up the walls and on the ceiling. It leapt toward Kojiro, spitting acid or something at me. Kojiro tossed his briefcase in the way. It was miraculously unharmed. He then proceeded to defy nature by leaping up to the ceiling and punching the creature. It disappeared, leaving no trace of it.

“Are you both alright?”

No. I’m NOT alright. Okay, I’m not! I just wanted a normal high school life! Now all this weirdness

shows up, and I'm in the middle of it! What the hell am I supposed to do?!
Despite that thought, I gave a nod. Koizumi did the same.

"While we're in the seal, which I managed to erect around all of us just in time, I must ask again:
Kyon-san...what is Suzumiya-san to you?"

I didn't have an honest answer. I had nothing. I made a couple stalling sounds, but that was it. I did
manage to hold off my sarcastic 'swell time for relationship chat!' comment that was ripping around in
my head.

"...If she's anything less than a love interest for you, I might have to pursue her. So please, give it some
thought, okay? The last thing I want to do is upset you. I'm already very fond of everyone in the club.
I'd rather not disrupt the harmony with my own selfish pursuits."

With that, Sakai raised his arm again. The seal dissolved. People began to move again. Sakai himself
didn't have a hair out of place despite the strange encounter.

"We should get back to the club. Time didn't flow for us while we were in the seal, but it continued for
Suzumiya-san. We shouldn't keep her waiting."

I followed Koizumi, while Sakai fell into step behind me. I didn't instantly dislike him, not like I did with
Koizumi. But all the same, this new business wasn't welcome in my everyday life!

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When we returned to the club room, Asahina-san was stuffed into a nurse outfit that seemed two sizes
too small. Couple that with the fact that Haruhi had her on all fours in a decidedly sexy pose, and you've
got two healthy males close to drooling. Koizumi just looked mildly curious.

"What took you guys so long?!" Haruhi demanded. "Never mind. Penalty! You three treat us to coffee!"

"I'll get it, Chief. It's my fault they're late," Kojiro admitted. Well, he was right. He walked past me on
the way out, ignoring the money in my hand. I was so used to paying (we had a rule that the last person
to show up to a meeting pays for lunch) that I had been in the motion of handing it to him.

"Alright, down to business! Draw straws! We're going to head to the industrial district of the city!
There's been weird stuff going on. Shipments going missing, workings quitting randomly!"

"What's so weird about that? It's normal stuff," I said. You'd think I'd learn by now.

"In THIS recession? Are you kidding? Everyone's doing all they can to hold onto their jobs, not quit
them! Something weird is going on!" Haruhi insisted. But she wasn't done yet. "And come on, this new
guy, too! A transfer student? From America? To OUR dinky little high school? There are thousands of
high schools in Japan. Why ours? There's nothing special here..."

How wrong you are, Haruhi. You're the most special of them all. And guess what else? Your
classmates are the exact people you're looking for. You just don't know it!

So we all drew straws. I had drawn the same straw as Nagato. Mikuru was with Koizumi (damn it!). That

left Haruhi and the new guy. There hadn't been a straw for the new guy, but by process of elimination, he was with Haruhi. That seemed win-win-lose. Haruhi got to be with her newest mystery (win), the new guy got to go on a 'date' with Haruhi (win), and Koizumi was with Asahina-san (loss). Not that I mind Yuki Nagato's company, but all the same...

It was about now that the new guy returned with the coffee. Sakai set the tray down, then stepped back from the table. That was odd. He had wanted to meet Haruhi in the worst way, but now he was being shy. And Haruhi wasn't anywhere near him. Could it be that he's girl-shy? At his (true) age?

"Alright, SOS Brigade! Let's get moving! If you're late, you get the death penalty! Let's move it!"

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Predictably, no one had found anything. At least, all of us who had come back. Sakai-san was late, and Haruhi was furious. When he finally did show, Haruhi was ready to chew his head off.

"I'm sorry I'm late. But I found something after you left, Suzumiya-san. One of the security guards stepped out, so I got copies of the employee rosters and shipping schedules. I can't find a pattern in them, but maybe someone more clever will be able to."

Haruhi looked the documents over. "Good job, Koji-kun! Kyon, lunch is on you."

"Why me? I wasn't late."

"No, but the only one who was found me something interesting. You didn't even try!"

I suddenly had the urge to hit Sakai in the face. But he shrugged, wincing as he did. It was then I noticed a scratch along the back of his neck. So I made it a point to talk to him. I fell into step with him in the back of the line.

"What happened?"

"There was an attack. Suzumiya-san is correct- there IS something going on here. I want to keep investigating, so I stole copies of those records. I think it may be something of Suzumiya-san's creation."

"You're correct, Kojiro," Koizumi chimed in. "You see, Kyon-san, Suzumiya-san's imagination is getting erratic. There are less closed spaces these days, but there are more legitimate threats. Threats to us, in this world."

"That one pushed me, Koizumi-san. I might need to contact more help. I can't do so right away, because of the shift it took to bring me here, plus the strain on the dimension it takes each time I use a seal. I'll have to be enough for at least a week's time."

This was too much. I already knew what would happen if I asked what could be done. They'd tell me it was up to me to keep Haruhi happy. I didn't like my chances of that. I might be some kind of 'chosen one' for her, but I'm not sure she's aware she chose me.

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For the next few days, things were normal for all of us. Except Kojiro. He was late constantly, and I noticed that he was getting hurt more and more often. When he was limping one day, and no said anything, I decided to speak up.

“Listen, why don’t you just contact more people like you? It’s been a week. Why push yourself?”

“I’m...fine, really. I just need to figure out a way to make Suzumiya-san happy... Besides, the only help I could call...well, she wouldn’t deal well with Suzumiya-san. And if this girl and Suzumiya-san got into it, between one’s ability to create seals, and the other’s to break them, it would be...well, catastrophic.”

“A girl Flame Haze? Sakai-san, this is strange to ask...but are you girl shy?”

“Horribly so,” he admitted instantly. “But that’s not the only reason this other Flame Haze intimidates me. But even more than that, she is NOT the type to put up with Suzumiya-san. For the mission, she’ll do what she has to. But she won’t like it.”

“<You should get over this fear, you know. It’s unbecoming of a warrior to fear the female gender...>

“Shut up, please, Alcurad...”

I had heard that. A voice that came from somewhere on Kojiro. But where? And why? Before I could figure that out, the hallway parted, and girl came up. She was as intimidating as Haruhi- maybe more so! With long black hair, a cute face and figure, but an expression that could have chilled all of Japan in the summer heat, even I backed up a step.

“Alcurad? Alastor, you know him?”

<Indeed. It has been a long time, Temper of Heavens (Ten no Kishootsu).>
THIS voice came from a pendant around the girl’s neck. I noticed Kimihiro inch toward me.

<It has, Flame of Heavens,> came the reply. <I see your burning-eyed, flame-haired warrior is as beautiful as ever.>

<Mm. And I see that your Sickle-Moon warrior of Heavens is...hiding?>
That forced Kojiro to step out. “It’s been a long time, Flame of Heavens. Hello, Shana,”
I noticed Kojiro didn’t quite meet Shana’s eyes as he spoke. He tried once, but had to look away.

“Hmph. Why am I here, Kojiro? And you’re still using the name of that mystes?”
The girl’s glare made my blood run cold. Kojiro was close to shaking, but doing his best to reign it in.

“I am. And you’re here because Suzumiya-san’s ‘Crimson World’ is getting more and more dangerous. I’m no slouch, and even I’m getting overwhelmed here. The Rinne are getting out of control, and the Denizen may be someone we need to be exceptionally careful of.”

I was dumbfounded. These two weirdos from a light novel come show up, then they start talking about ‘crimson worlds’ and ‘flames of heavens’ and all that other stuff? I was just getting used to my....semi-normal life, too!

The girl Kojiro had called 'Shana' crossed her arms impatiently. "There wasn't even a ripple when I came here. No sign of danger. You mean to tell me you can't handle this yourself?"

Kojiro tripped over his words as he tried to explain. As he did, the girl stepped mightily toward us. BA-DOOM! A shockwave knocked us both down. Thankfully, it seemed to dislodge the lump in Kojiro's throat.

"That's just it! There's little or no warning! And they're all over the place when they DO show up. The girl is way too powerful. And it's only going to get worse if it's just me guarding her. If her own creations eat her, who knows what would happen. Besides, your last mission is over, correct?"

"Shut up shut up shut up!" the girl ordered, advancing on Kojiro, glaring up at him.
"Don't you DARE bring that up! You know very well how it turned out! And you're still using that name!"

"What is it you said about being 'Yukari Hirai'? 'It's convenient?'"

<"Both of you, stop it. There's no time. If this 'Haruhi Suzumiya' is this powerful, it's power will reveal itself quickly enough.">

<"It's about to, Flame of Heavens. Kojiro, did you sense it?">

Apparently he did, because he was in battle mode. This time, though, was different. He stopped in the middle of the process of creating his seal and turned to me.

"Kyon, please take Shana...er, Yukari Hirai-chan to meet Suzumiya-san. This feels like a small one..."