

Simple Explanations

By SiriusFan13

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Set during episode one of the anime. Kaoru takes a moment to wonder where a simple rurouni would get such a brutal scar. Please read and review!

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1. Simple Explanations

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Simple Explanations

Strange thoughts had been running through Kaoru's mind today. And they all revolved around the unusual young man she'd met yesterday.

There was nothing ordinary about him. Red hair. Violet eyes. The old-fashioned way he spoke. And that sword. That strange, useless sword. But of all these things, the strangest was the scar on his face. He wasn't a warrior. That much was obvious. She could barely hit him, and still send him flying.

She watched the rurouni play with Ayame and Suzame as Dr. Gensai rewrapped her wounds. The redhead laughed as Suzume tugged at his hakama for her turn at riding on his shoulders.

Come to think of it, she'd been silly to accuse him of being Battousai. He was too small and gentle for something like that. Not to mention that he looked way too young.

As she watched him her thoughts again strayed to his face. Where did someone like that get those two brutal slashes? Although those scars were obviously old, they were clear and harsh.

There had to be an explanation.

Some bandits might have attacked him on the road. She shook her head, dismissing the thought. No, he must have gotten those wounds years ago. He couldn't have been wandering

for that long...

He could have been an apprentice to some swordsman. Maybe he was messing around with swords and had cut himself. Not likely, but it would explain why he'd carry a sword with a reverse blade that he didn't seem to want to draw.

Perhaps it a brand of some kind? She'd heard of slaves being marked. Had he been a slave to some cruel master? One who felt the need to mark his purchases, in case they ever escaped? Is that why he wandered? So he wouldn't be reclaimed?

Or was it some other kind of brand...? A mark that separated him from others.

She thought for a moment as a vague memory tugged at the corner of her mind. Someone her father had described long ago. A man with red hair and a cross-shaped scar... Who had it been? She couldn't remember. Of course, it couldn't be this rurouni, anyway. That had been over ten years go. He would have only been a child then. But the similarity was almost frightening.

She watched Ayame pull out a small, wooden top, and try to get the rurouni to help her spin it. It was a simple toy... nothing important. So Kaoru was startled when his wide violet eyes suddenly turned to her, and for a moment didn't seem quite so innocent. There was a pain behind those eyes. Something harsh and ragged... that almost matched the scar on his face.

Then it was gone, and he was laughing with the children once more, showing them how to make the toy work.

Kaoru watched the sudden change come and go. Something in those eyes had removed her desire to know about that scar. Maybe she'd never know. Maybe it was really none of her business.

She turned back to the doctor, who was trying to chat with her about his granddaughters. But even as they spoke, she kept her eye on the traveler... wondering... and somehow knowing...

Somehow understanding that some wounds are too deep for simple explanations.

Author's Note: Just a little something that ran through my head while I was rewatching the first episode of Ruroken. Just wondered what thoughts would have been going through Kaoru's head about the scar. Seemed funny that she thought he couldn't hold his own in a fight, but never wondered much about the scar that episode. Heh... Sorry if it feels rough. I started it ages ago, and for some reason wasn't inspired to finish (or massively edit) it until today. Please review! Thank you so much for reading!

Dewa Mata!