

# Hunted

*Written by "Ina Izumi"*

Since the calamity has struck Numazu no one is completely safe anymore, and even as fast as they have tried to evacuate the town, it is always inevitable that some people will be left behind while everything has happened so quickly and so dizzyingly fast, with so little time to evacuate while the town is plunged into the deepest ruin because of the misery brought to the town by the fulfillment of the prophecy and the arrival of calamity to Numazu, a curse that has clouded the sky, changed the behavior of the animals to make them more violent while the town is isolated by a strange magical field that plunges the town deeper and deeper into despair. Yohane, who everyone thought was the one chosen to fight the curse, has disappeared and no one knows where she is, so the only thing the Numazu authorities can do is evacuate the people on the fly as fast as they can before the calamity affects people's behavior (as it does with the animals) or ends up destroying the town.

However, due to the rapid development of the effects of the calamity, it seems that there are already some people affected by its effects. One of these people is Riko, the town zoologist, who contrary to her usual practice, under the effects of the calamity on her brain, has gone with her instincts and caught Ruby, a small pink-haired fairy who is the sister of Dia, the executive director of Numazu's administrative office. Riko had been obsessed with that fairy, just as Riko is obsessed with all the cute creatures that do not qualify as humans that she sees, especially furry creatures, even though Ruby despite being a fairy and not furry is a very exotic creature and therefore cannot escape Riko's penetrating and invasive attention.

All this time Riko has been restraining herself from bothering Ruby, restraining herself since she is a rational person who can control her instincts, until the effects of the calamity began to manipulate her behavior, especially since Riko was exposed for a long time to the calamity for not being able to flee and be evacuated in time because it took her a long time to take all the material for her research. Things were even worse for Ruby, who went to look for Riko since she did not appear in the lists of people who had already been evacuated.

This is how Ruby, who was looking for Riko to take her to an evacuation point, was caught by a Riko who flashed a strange glint in her eyes somehow, which would alarm Ruby that Riko has already been intoxicated by the effects of the calamity, even though it would be too late for Ruby to do anything about it.

Then Ruby, who would realize that from now on her future would be uncertain, is locked in a glass jar by Riko until her captor decides what to do with her from now on, crossing Riko's mind an infinity of interesting experiments she could do with her, not without first extracting some of her DNA and analyzing it to see what interesting things she could find.

[Drawing 1]

After some hours, in which Riko investigated with some devices Ruby's DNA, she could extract some of her magic in a useful way to synthesize some potions that are useful for some things that Riko has discovered that Ruby can do those powers, like being able to change size (from the size of a fairy to the natural size of a person and vice versa), being something that the evil Riko, affected by the calamity, considers that it could be useful later on.

Riko, satisfied with her recent results, considers that she can continue analyzing Ruby's DNA later and more calmly, so she moves on to something that will greatly amuse Riko's twisted mind in its current state: experimenting on Ruby by applying various substances on her to see how a fairy reacts to them and in what way she might react differently from a normal human being.

The first thing Riko set out to test on Ruby is a hypnotic spray used to train disobedient animals. It does not usually work on humans as it is usually an insufficient amount as it has never been tested on humans in larger quantities to verify how much spray should be applied to the person to work. However being Ruby's body being very similar to a human's despite being a fairy, and being a fairy as Ruby is so small in size (as to be subdued using only one hand fitting in her fist, perhaps something like  $\frac{1}{8}$  in scale relative to a normal human), she is the perfect test subject to experiment this on. Riko then applied the spray directly to Ruby's face a few times without caring about poor Ruby's feelings and started to suggest her by repeating over and over again this slogan: "you are a doll, you are a doll, you are a doll, you are a doll, dolls don't think, dolls are toys, toys are mindless."

Riko had no particular interest in dolls, but that suggestion was a good way to test how useful such a hypnotic spray is for training animals. It was a pleasant surprise for Riko to see that it has worked exhaustively, leaving Ruby gone, silent, cute as a figurine and with a seric flexibility that allowed Riko to pose Ruby in any pose she decided, like a figurine, something she did without hesitation, posing Ruby as a beautiful and helpless ballet dancer, something that would match Ruby's dress.

[Drawing 2]

Meanwhile, somewhere nearby, as the calamity continued to ravage Numazu, Dia searched for Ruby wearing her exosuit so as not to be intoxicated by the calamity. However, this had a limit since Ruby had been exposed to the effects of the calamity for too long, so finally her exosuit failed and went into a reboot loop, something that would leave Dia in a state of mental paralysis as her brain was directly connected to the suit's system. Finally Dia, who was flying through her suit, would fall to the ground unconscious and by the impact her helmet would come off her.

[Drawing 3]

This was an opportunity impossible to miss for Riko, who watched the event from his home with binoculars. Riko then brought Dia in a cart to her home, where she could continue experimenting on someone. Even though Riko's priority was to study animals and not humans, now for a Riko corrupted by the effects of calamity there were no limits, for, anyway, "The human is an animal too, isn't?" thought the corrupted Riko.

In her experiments with Dia she found some interesting things, like seeing that, because they were sisters, Ruby's magic was compatible with Dia and suffered effects on her, so she was able to use magic extracted from Ruby's DNA to shrink Dia to  $\frac{1}{8}$  the size of Dia as Ruby's size was. This event

filled Riko's head with endless wicked ideas, especially now having the possibility of perhaps shrinking any human or humanoid being and being able to turn them into figurines. Also, with Dia's case she was able to skip a few steps since, as far as she could see, Dia's brain is paralyzed from the damage caused by the exosuit. she found all this so interesting that Riko built a small exosuit to Dia's new size so that she would look better as a figurine than just naked.

[Drawing 4]

Hours later Riko sensed that her time was now limited, as with her binoculars she saw two guards in exo-suits and someone from the administrative office approaching her house from afar. Perhaps, Riko thinks have they seen her stealing Dia through the numerous security cameras all over town (since they live in a kind of police and surveillance government where they are being watched by Dia's government every day at all hours), yes, surely that is what is going on, Riko thinks. Then she couldn't waste time and started to change Dia's appearance with a brush, some paint and putting on a replica of Ruby's dress that she had already made hours before for her (not to camouflage her but because she wanted to see how Dia looked in the dress, but now it will also serve to camouflage Dia), finally Dia's hair was quickly painted blonde with the brush and changed her clothes, plus Riko attached some fake fairy wings on her, even though she starts to think that that won't be enough to mislead the police.

[Drawing 5]

However, time is running out for Riko more and more, faster and faster, until the policemen break down Riko's door, who reacts with surprise and astonishment. Finally the law has arrived and she has been caught. In the following minutes she would be quickly subdued, handcuffed and arrested by one of the policemen while the other would search Riko's house without finding Ruby and Dia. Meanwhile Ruby and Dia were camouflaged as lamps, with a cloth bell on their heads and with a wire and a light bulb taped to them, for that is all Riko could do to camouflage them in such a short time. However, it seemed that the policemen were not clever or skillful enough to figure out Riko's trick.

[Drawing 6]

Years later, after Yohane reappeared and they were able to end the calamity through their ritual chanting, Riko is still being held for Dia and Ruby's disappearance, and to this day Riko remains severely damaged in her personality with no cure for it due to prolonged exposure to the calamity. Meanwhile, at an auction, Dia found herself being sold as if she were an antique porcelain doll of a ballet dancer, as she was found at some point by some person who broke into Riko's abandoned house and her appearance was changed again to make her more appealing to the auction buyers

[Drawing 7]

Meanwhile, the fate was no better for Ruby, who found herself hanging from her backside as a vehicle rear-view mirror ornament after the same person who broke into Riko's house determined it would be interesting to sell her as a multi-purpose ornament.

[Drawing 8]