

# My Oni Love

## Chapter 1

Written by Princess Kay

My first thought, upon waking, was a simple one. *My head hurts*. My second thought wasn't much better. *Was my pillow always this lumpy...?* And my third... Well, my third was downright incomprehensible, on account of the searing pain that lanced through my poor eyes when I tried to open them.

Of course, that didn't mean I could just keep my eyes closed. I mean, in that one moment I had them open, I'd noticed all sorts of things! Like leaves. And branches. And sunlight. Really *painful* sunlight. Like, so painful you'd think I'd gone years without seeing the sun, or something. Which was weird... And concerning... But *slightly* less worrying than the leaves and branches thing!

*Did I fall asleep in the park or something?*

The last thing I remembered was.... Hmmm.... Right! I'd been out drinking with my friends, Ted and Dave. Except they were both super light weights, compared to me, and had taken cabs home early. I, meanwhile, had kept going until closing time. After which I probably should have called a cab, but... Well, I didn't live that far away. Just across the river, really.

Of course, that wasn't to say that I'd driven drunk or anything! No. I'd just decided to take a little nighttime stroll. I mean, if there was one advantage of being a guy, it was getting to walk down the street at night in relative safety! Safety from everything except my own stupidity.

If my admittedly foggy memory serves, I made a wrong turn somewhere, and I couldn't find the bridge. I *had* found the river, though! Which led to me hopping the little fence that separated the road from the water, and wading across. I mean, it was only a couple feet deep! No problem, right? Except for the moss...

The last thing I remembered was slipping on a rock, and crashing into the water. Everything after that was just darkness. Maybe I'd hit my head? It would certainly explain the headache! I could be laying on the riverbank, even now... Though I didn't exactly hear any water...

Well, I'd worry about where I was in a second. The first step was to check my wounds. With that in mind, I raised my hand to feel at my head, and... froze. Cold sweat started to bead on my forehead, which I wiped at it with a thick and heavy hand. Then, covering my sensitive eyes with my arm, I slowly opened my eyes.

"H-Hey..." I whispered, staring at my skin. "This - this is a joke, right? Someone painted me for fun, right? Someone's messing with my head, right?" I forced out a laugh. "Ha. Ha ha. Ha."

The laughter sounded about as hollow as I felt, but I kept it up for about a minute, anyway. Can't blame a guy for trying to escape reality, right? But eventually, I gave in and poked at my forehead, again. Without a mirror, I couldn't be entirely sure, but there seemed to be two protrusions coming from either side of

my forehead. Specifically, two straight horns, thick enough that I could wrap my hands around them and long enough that I actually had to slide the meaty things up a bit to hit the edge. I tried tugging them off, but it only set another burst of pain through my skull, so I quickly stopped that.

It wasn't just the weird horns, though. Even with my eyes half shut against the sun, I could tell that my arms had gotten a lot bigger, and thicker. My skin was blood red, with orange stripes running in half circles across my forearms and thick biceps. I didn't remember being that strong last night, but just based on how I looked and felt, deadlifting a couple hundred pounds wouldn't have been an issue.

That was weird, right? People didn't suddenly get stronger, right? Their skin definitely didn't turn red, and they didn't grow horns. None of these things were stuff that could just casually happen! Right!?

And then there was the matter of my chest maybe... *protruding* a bit more than I was used to. And not because of my new pecs. Not to mention a certain bit of anatomy between my legs that really should have been getting crushed by my new, thick thighs, but was (maybe mercifully) nowhere to be found.

And then I heard a scream. It was so well timed with my own panic, I had to double check I wasn't the one making it, but once I actually focused on it, I quickly realized that it was coming from deeper among the trees. There was another sound,

too, fainter than the high pitched squeal. A low thud of footsteps, and the snapping sound of someone pushing aside branches.

Alright, as much as I hated to say it, self-exploration was going to have to wait for a bit. And not because I wanted to keep denying reality for a little longer, okay? That sound was getting closer to the second, and I needed to figure out whether I was moving towards it or running away!

Of course, doing either might have been a bit tricky. Just taking a step forward almost had me falling flat on my face! I mean, my elgs were a lot longer than I remembered. And my thighs were rubbing against each other in ways that should have been super uncomfortable for a man!

Then the scream came again, much closer than before. It was high pitched, and sounded feminine, though that obviously wasn't any guarantee that it didn't belong to a man. More importantly, the source of that sound was definitely getting a lot closer! I either needed to get out of the way or get ready to intercept whatever was causing the commotion. My body had a lot of new strength to it, so maybe I wouldn't have a problem either way, but I obviously wasn't used to my new form just yet. As such, the smart thing to do would be running - or at least walking - away as fast as my newly long legs could carry me. This wasn't really my problem, anyway... but could I really leave the screamer behind?

Before I knew it, I was moving towards the sound. The heavy weight of my muscles and my own imprecise control meant there was a definite thudding noise as I walked, which made me feel a little self conscious, but I didn't think whoever was screaming was in any state to care. Besides, they probably wouldn't even notice it over the noise of breaking branches, or their own scream.

"Help!" came a voice, as a figure burst forth from the trees. It was a woman, clad in a rough, homespun looking brown shirt and pants. Other than the blue hair that streamed behind her, she looked like a stereotypical peasant girl from medieval times. Or maybe feudal would be a better word, since she looked to be from Japan. Either way, the combination of peasant clothing and blue made me realize that my own body wasn't the only weird thing going on here. The blue haired peasant *and* the massive red demon that was chasing her.

Like me, this demon was blood red with orange stripes across its body, and had two horns protruding on either side of its forehead. Unlike me, he was a man. Lucky? Maybe? I felt like I should be saying that, but somehow the sentiment didn't feel quite right to me. I didn't exactly have time to worry about that, anyway.

If we were ranking according to size, the screaming woman was definitely the smallest person here. If she was five feet tall, then I was seven, and the dude she was running away from was nearing ten. Which I guess would make me pretty damn tall, but obviously lacking compared to this brute. Also, if my muscles were

beautifully big, his were just plain outrageously swollen. His abs would have put a washboard to shame, and his legs were thick as trunks. All of which was on proud display, by the way, thanks to the fact that he was only wearing a loincloth. If I'd been into men, I might have even appreciated the view.

For the woman's part, she froze as soon as she saw me. Her face paled, and she looked rapidly back and forth between me and the man. "Two oni... Two oni? Gods above, whatever did I do wrong to deserve *two* oni?"

"H-Hey! Don't lump me in with that thing!" I pointed at the lumbering monster in protest, and it turned its gaze toward me.

"...You trying to steal my meal, little one?" it - he? Let's go with he - demanded, in a loud and low rumble that had me shuddering in place. It was all I could do not to cover my ears, or run away. "I will gain the strength of this one's body. If you help, though, I'll offer a leg." The oversized oni grinned. His teeth were sharp as daggers, and just looking at them made me shudder. Sharp teeth were fine on a girl, but they sent me all the wrong messages when added to a guy!

Was that sexist...? Eh, Not the time!

"Your... meal?" I glanced between the red oni and the trembling girl. "...Well, that explains why she's running from you. Not that she needs an excuse... I'd probably run, too, if someone like you started lumbering after me."

The man puffed out his chest, and actually banged a fist against it before stepping forward. "...I am starting to get insulted. Little one. You will take nothing, and you will like it! Else I will rend you limb from limb!"

"Or... and how about this..." I edged forward. I had half a plan in mind. In my human body, it never would have worked. Even with this new body, I wasn't sure I could pull it off - especially not with me being so awkward in my new body. All the same, I judged it was the best chance for me and the peasant woman to escape alive, so as the oni stepped forward to fight me, I took a brave step forward... and then grabbed the woman with both hands, slung her over my shoulder, and started running in the opposite direction with all my might.

There was an angry roar from the other oni, but it wasn't like that was unexpected. More worrisome was the woman herself, who started screaming and pounding on my backside.

"Let me go! Let me go!"

"Calm down, would you?! I'm trying to save your life! Unless you want that thing catching up to us!"

"S-save me?" the woman quieted, for a moment, though I think it was more shock at the idea than belief in my words. "Why would an oni want to save me? You're just trying to eat me, instead!"



I'm not a real oni... Is what I wanted to say, but there was no way she'd believe me! I mean, I definitely didn't look *human*, at the very least. "Would you believe I'm a good oni?" I asked, instead. "I like humans!"

She screamed again. Right in my ears, too - I think I might have risked going deaf, if I hadn't clasped my hands over them in time. Which was when I noticed... they were pointed. Not even the shape of my precious ears were sacred!

"Not to eat!" I quickly corrected, trying my best to put that thought out of my mind. "I just mean that humans are nice! And would you *please* stop screaming? You're telling him right where we are!"

"Y-You really don't intend to eat me?" she asked. I could sense the doubt in her as easily as I could hear the quiver in her voice.

Still, I nodded my head. Then realized half a second later that she probably couldn't tell, and spoke up. "I promise I won't hurt you! Even if you don't believe me, staying with me has to be better than getting eaten by that guy, right? You can run away from me when I let you go, but that guy could tear you in half! So! Just this once! Please believe me!"

There was silence from my back, for a long moment, to the point where I wondered if she'd managed to pass out from the stress. Anything was fine as long as she wasn't screaming or struggling against me, though. I could hear the oni breaking through the tree branches I was ducking under, coming after me faster

and faster, as I started to zig zag and try to throw him off his pace. There were so many trees, and I wasn't sure whether to be grateful or upset that I couldn't find a human settlement. More people might have driven him off, but they probably wouldn't have been thrilled to see *me*, either.

“T-There's a cave...” came the peasant woman's voice, finally.

“What?”

“There's a cave...” The woman repeated. “I recognized the mossy rock you just passed. If you turn left, you should come across a cave. We might be able to hide in it...”

“You know this area well, huh?” There was no time to second guess my good fortune, in that regard. I turned left, feet pounding against the ground with all my might. I continued to duck through branches instead of breaking them, though, despite it taking more time and effort - especially with me still getting used to having such long legs. The sound of snapping branches would only make it easier for the other oni to follow me, though.

I saw the cave she was talking about, before long - a small hole leading into a tall, stone outcropping. An outcropping that made it easy for me to find, even on the run - which meant the other oni would likely find it just as quickly, if they managed to track us here. I briefly considered running right past it, and hoping the oni would waste time looking inside, but... I had no other destinations in mind.

“Does this thing have another exit?” I asked.

“It does, but... it’s a bit small. I don’t know if you’ll be able to squeeze through.”

“If I might not be able to, then the the big dude chasing us *definitely* won’t can’t,” I pointed out, trying to inject some enthusiasm into my voice. I figured if the worst came, I’d let the woman escape. I wasn’t exactly so altruistic that I’d be happy sacrificing myself, though! I was definitely hoping the oni wouldn’t find us, or that I’d be able to fit through the escape path myself!

With those happy, happy thoughts in mind, I moved the last few steps to the outcropping and lowered the woman from my shoulder. “You go first,” I told her. “If that thing grabs you, I don’t know what I’ll do...”

For some reason, the woman’s face turned a bright shade of red when I said that. I only meant that I wouldn’t know where to go!

“Why are you helping me?” she asked.

I wanted to yell at her for wasting time, but... I could understand her reluctance to trust me. *Or* enter a narrow tunnel with me. “Isn’t that the normal thing to do when someone’s asking for help? But please! We can talk about this after we’re safe!”

The woman nodded, and moved into the tunnel. While she only had to duck down a little to fit inside, I was stuck crawling on my hands and knees. It was a

little tight, even with that - I figured there was a good chance the other oni wouldn't be able to enter after us.

Luckily for me, the cave started to widen up a bit once we got a few feet inside. It eventually expanded into a wide cavern, tall enough that I could stand up straight and even stretch. There was absolutely no danger of hitting another wall, either! It was almost a perfect circle, maybe eight meters wide, with another tunnel at the back.

“Um...” The woman was staring at me. She had a faint blush on her cheeks, and kept flicking her attention between me and the ground. For some reason, though, she kept looking to the left and right of where I was standing. It took me a moment to realize that she probably couldn't see that well in the darkness of the cave... actually, wasn't it stranger that I *could* see in a cave? “My name's Tanaka Akari. I-It's a pleasure to meet you...”

“Ah. I'm...” I hesitated a moment. My name... Wasn't exactly fitting for my body. Evan Jones - or Jones Evan, maybe, if I was in some weird fantasy Japan land? The last name was probably fine, but... No, even that felt a bit too masculine for my tastes, in this form. “Joana Ella.” Two names I'd always liked the sound of.

“It's a pleasure to meet you, Joana-san.” She stared at me for a moment - or in my general direction, anyway. It was a little uncomfortable, and after a moment I found myself rubbing at the back of my neck. Or at least I tried, before my hair

got in the way - I hadn't even noticed it, with everything else going on, but my hair, which had previously been black, was now pure white. And far from the short cropped style I'd had it in, it now ran all the way down my back.

It was really sort of uncomfortable how much I had changed. This girl wouldn't have been staring at me if I was still just a normal dude from the call center. Not that I'd ever really been comfortable in my body, anyway, but... "Is there something wrong?"

"N-No... I just. Never expected an oni to have such a normal name," she admitted. "I mean, it *is* a little unusual sounding, but I thought it would be something like Airigo the Horrid, or Lirg the Putrid..."

"H-hey!"

"Ah. Sorry. You did save me, after all... And you haven't tried to eat me, either. I've never heard of an oni who didn't like to eat humans, and had a human-ish name, though..."

"W-Well... I was raised by humans." I decided to go with something that was technically true, and which might sound more believable. I was pretty proud of what I'd come up with on short notice, but again the woman was just staring at me.

"What is this time?"

"Well... I've never heard of an oni being raised by *anyone*. I thought you just sort of popped into existence..."

I puffed out my cheeks in aggravation. “Well we don’t, okay?” Though maybe I sort of *did* just popped into existence, as far as this place was concerned. “...How do you know so much about oni and the like, anyway?”

“Well...” The woman was looking away from me, toward the tunnel at the back of the cave. I couldn’t blame her. The sound of the oni was getting closer, and it was probably best that we be ready to run at a moment’s notice. “I don’t think I know a lot about oni in particular... But isn’t it normal to learn a little about yokai, when you live in the outskirts?”

“The outskirts, huh?” I wondered. So not the park. Not that I hadn’t figured that out already - I mean, between the appearance of the oni, the seemingly endless expanse of trees, and my own last memories of hitting my head in the stream, it wasn’t exactly hard to figure out what had happened to me. Still, just to make absolutely sure... “Hey. What’s the nearest city?” I asked.

“The nearest city? That would be Taeko... but that’s easily three days away from here. The only thing close is my town, Kyoj...”

Neither of those places sounded particularly familiar. So either that shallow river had taken me really far away, or - like I’d already pretty much guessed - I’d taken more than just a tumble on the rocks. It was entirely possible I had died, and been reincarnated.

Wait. If this was a reincarnation, it was going to be a pretty short one! There was an oni coming to kill me, and I could hear it getting closer and closer.

“Hey... about that escape route...” I murmured, looking down the tunnel. I didn’t think that the hulking male oni would be able to squeeze his way into the tunnel we’d come through, but I still wanted to check the route out.

“Right!” Tanaka-san started to walk to the other side of the tunnel, and I followed her a polite few steps behind. She seemed a little tense having me so close, but she’d just have to bear with it a little longer. Both our lives were at stake, after all. Before I could even bend down to enter the second tunnel, though, the blue haired woman let out a little cry of dismay. “A-ah! It’s caved in!”

“You mean the only way through the tunnel is...” Before I could even finish the thought, a red hand shot through the opening at the far side of the cave, scraping at the stone floor of the cave.

“Come out, little women...” came the bellowing voice of the oni. “Come out, and be feasted on!”

“W-Why does he even want to eat you so badly, anyway!?” I demanded, turning to face Tanaka-san. “Did you do something to piss him off!?”

“Of course not!” The woman almost looked insulted at the suggestion. “It’s because your kind have a taste for human flesh, isn’t it? I heard you even absorb our strength by eating us...”

“In that case, he should eat something a little stronger, shouldn’t he!?”

Something... Like me!? I really hoped he wasn’t a complete cannibal. Even if my life was going to end, I didn’t want to disappear down some red beast’s gullet. “How are we supposed to get out of this? I don’t think I’m strong enough to take him on...”

Strong enough...? The oni had said something about gaining strength from ‘eating this one,’ too. If I ate her, would I be stronger? Not that I really wanted to consume her flesh, or anything, but... Maybe if I swallowed just a tiny bit of her?

“Hey. Tanaka-san...” I whispered, doing my best to meet her eyes. “I think I have a plan to beat it... But I’m going to need your help.”

“What?” she asked, confused.

I swallowed hard. “Tanaka-san... in order for me to gain the strength to beat this monster up... Please let me eat you out!”