

# SICKLY GIRL, BUT A DRUG ADDICT

I have 1 hour and 45 minutes until my life expires.

I arrived at the old school building, dragging my feet.

The wooden building constructed hundreds of years ago boasts its antique charm, but the space is occupied by small, elite clubs.

Popular clubs are all located in the Verdandi Building, which was built with the latest technology.

I suppose it was based on the calculation that the durability of old buildings couldn't withstand the high traffic.

Regin Academy's financial status is fairly good.

Of course, the old school building also undergoes monthly safety inspections, so there's no need to worry about it collapsing, but...

[Characteristic – 'Greenhouse Flower'] [Active]

"Ugh...!"

As an old wooden building, it has many uneven surfaces.

So every now and then, my toes catch on the wooden joints, and naturally, my body falls forward.

Since there aren't many clubs occupying the building, there aren't many people around to catch me when I fall—.

"Kyah...!"

If I don't perform a proper break fall or...

If I'm even slightly careless, this is what happens.

Thud.

I fell, hitting my shoulder slightly.

Usually, Pixie, who would be sleeping on the floor, would have acted as a cushion.

This is a series of ridiculous misfortunes.

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<< Shana Midgard >>

Regin Academy / Aesir Dormitory / 2nd Year

— Enhancement Effect 'Vermilion Heart' Applied

(Time Remaining: 118 minutes)

[Status]

Vitality 1/12

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Ouch.

This is screwed up.

“Haah... really.”

Due to that mistake just now, I wasted an additional hour.

32 minutes left until my life expires.

I got up, tidying the hem of my skirt.

I still have to go a few more meters to reach the club room.

... Surely I won't fall again on the way there, right?

But probability is always tricky and makes me look foolish at unexpected times.

There's no guarantee I won't trip and fall again in just these few meters.

'Let's stick to the wall...'

People might wonder what I'm doing if they see me.

It's so hard to survive alone with this frail body.

Why not accept help from others, you ask?

What if that affects my future vision?

Let's not forget.

This world seems to be modeled exactly after the extreme difficulty of Day-R that I played until the end.

Although I defeated the final boss of the extreme difficulty.

I survived as a professor alongside Athenas.

And a happy ending was waiting for me the day after the final battle.

What's the characteristic of this game called Day-R?

An extreme real-time reactive roguelike game.

Depending on the choices I make, the ending branches into tens, hundreds, thousands of different paths.

I burned through fifteen hundred hours to see just one happy ending.

The professor in extreme difficulty was truly hopeless.

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<< Goal: Day-R, Save Professor Yggdrasil >>

— Success: Happy Ending

## — Failure: Bad Ending

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If there's anything fortunate, it's that there's a milestone toward survival.

Although it's a real-time reactive game, if all conditions are met, specific Athenas can prevent specific calamities on Day-R.

Professor Yggdrasil's secretary, the fairy of tutorials, Lost.

Student Council President, Thunder Emperor Stormbringer.

Vice Student Council President, Ice Emperor Kandinavr.

Secret Vigilante Leader, Flash Black.

Clairvoyant swordsman, Wild Dog Ti.

Just by putting these five Athenas into Professor Yggdrasil's squad at the right time, I can prevent the calamity and save the professor.

So to stay at the academy, monitor the key figures' movements, and ensure that the events that must occur until the day of destiny happen in order...

I need to minimize unnecessary interactions and stay behind the scenes.

So as not to accidentally place an extra card on a house of cards standing in the face of a weak wind.

"Mom, that scared me..."

"Is she sick or something?"

"Ah... I think she's probably fine?"

The students of the old school building who discovered me sliding along the wall to avoid falling are startled and busy whispering.

Perhaps because many people know my situation.

They don't try to help directly like before.

Don't be too surprised.

I'm not doing this because I want to.

'I might die before saving the professor, damn it...'

Through the sign made by the troublemaker Rukia.

I see the words 'Social Service Department' and a gray cat.

Finally arrived.

I'll organize my thoughts for 5 minutes in the quiet club room.

Then act for the remaining 25 minutes.

I've survived for years until today, so I can't die like this.

When I opened the door, dust floating in the morning sunlight from the window sparkled like glitter.

Bookshelves full of comics filled the west side of the room.

Cabinets filled with stuffed animals and small toys occupied the opposite side.

Inside the old glass freezer that was humming, it was full of ice cream and chocolate.

The wooden floor by the window was slightly bent downward due to a wooden bed and a 50kg dumbbell.

Fortunately, there seems to be no one here.

Before the enhancement effect of Vermilion Heart ends, I can glimpse into the dimension of possibilities as much as possible.

Let's run a simulation with concentration.

If I calmly analyze the situation, I can survive.

“What, department head. When did you get here?”

Holy shit!

“Kyaak!!”

A small girl ran up and supported me as I was about to fall forward in surprise.

This makes me look like a gray caterpillar stuck between branches.

“See? You were about to fall again.”

“Rukia. I told you to make your presence known.”

“Kihihi. When have I ever announced where I’m going?”

A girl with long, voluminous blonde hair cutely tied in twin tails.

Her pupils are of a mysterious color that reminds one of the rising sun under the dark light of dawn.

The fact that she wears a hoodie, which is rarely allowed on campus, is also one of her characteristics.

A troublemaker who doesn’t follow school rules.

But she’s intelligent and has never missed being at the top of her class.

Except for me, she’s the only brain in the Social Service Department.

Rukia Nilapr.

“So. Why do you look so unhappy? Did something happen, department head?”

As smart as she is.

She knows about my Vermilion Heart consumption.

“Perhaps, is it related to Vermilion Heart? Don’t tell me the professor caught you~?!”

However, Rukia was peculiar in that she showed no interest in anything other than gambling, theft, and comics.

Even when she first hinted at me, I pondered for more than a day whether to reveal it or not.

But whether I revealed it to her or not, the impact on the future vision was as small as a fingernail.

I suppose it's because she herself is an Athena who doesn't move regularly. She's truly the embodiment of chaos.

"You're still sharp."

"Ehehe. I've lived by this one thing, so of course~."

That's why she, along with Lost, is the only Athena with whom I can discuss Vermilion Heart.

Of course, due to her personality, I couldn't use her systematically like Lost. ... Until now, that is.

"But, it's a big deal, right? You'll die without Vermilion Heart, department head."

"...That's right."

"Oh no! Major crisis! What to do. Are you going to die, department head?"

"At this rate, I'll die in 28 minutes."

"Argh. Absolutely not! I hate that!"

Rukia rubbed her face against the nape of my neck, as if throwing a tantrum.

"First, I need to think about it. There's enough time, so if I can just find a way, we can manage somehow."

Rukia, who detached her face from my chest, puffed her cheeks.

“Department head. It’s good to be confident, but you’ll die that way, you know?”

“I won’t die if Rukia doesn’t interfere.”

“Bang! Complete shock! You see me as such a nuisance?!”

Rukia falls away from me as if disappointed.

But judging by her expression, she seems to have a good idea.

“Don’t be like that, department head. I have a good idea.”

“What is it?”

“I happen to know a big shot from a gambling den. That uncle said he’s making replicas of Vermilion Heart. Probably for distribution in the underground world~?”

Extreme difficulty is a kind of CPU cheat mode.

Unlike the user-friendly easy difficulty which skips most of the complexity, such as quickly collecting relic items that can easily clear the game...

Perhaps that’s why, an external force I’m not aware of continuously reinforces the axis of evil.

In the past, I worried that this might ruin the future.

But indeed, the judgment that maintaining the status quo and suppression is the best option was not wrong.

Thanks to that, an opportunity to use them like this arises.

“Recently, except for a very weak side effect, he made a product exactly the same as Vermilion Heart.”

“I see.”

“Why not try that?”



The meeting with the connection Rukia is offering perfectly aligns with the two objectives of preserving life and mitigating catastrophe.

“What were the side effects?”

I’ve lived a long time soaked in Vermilion Heart.

Red flowers bloom all over my body, created along with the aftereffects of the medicine.

So I don’t care about side effects.

For someone like me who knows what fate Athenas faced in all bad endings...

If I can survive with a happy ending, I don’t mind if my body gets a bit damaged.

“According to that uncle, if used long-term, cute dolls float around in the air?”

“...”

“He said you won’t be bored when you’re alone!”

... Having one more strange thing wouldn’t be so bad.

Come to think of it, the dog that used to bark every night has been quite quiet lately.

I can’t properly form friendships with Athenas to begin with.

Having friends increase in this way wouldn’t make me lonely.

‘There’s no other way...’

Finally, I used 5 minutes of my remaining 28 minutes of life one more time.

Based on memories derived from thousands of hours of playtime and the awakening effect of Vermilion Heart, I simulated tens of thousands of dimensions of possibility.

With a 99.9% probability, Black would get involved, and it would head toward the future vision I know.

Not bad.

There's an extremely low 0.1% chance that a blockhead might get entangled, but in this urgent situation, I don't have the luxury to consider that.

If I don't choose the replica of Vermilion Heart that Rukia introduced, I will soon breathe my last.

Now that the sun has risen, there's no other way to get Vermilion Heart within the short time of less than 30 minutes.

It's impossible to beg Professor Yggdrasil.

That would be the same as admitting to the theft.

... I just borrowed it for a while because I needed it.

Why should I become a thief?

"Please guide me to that uncle, Rukia. Preferably within 10 minutes."

Rukia shone her innocent eyes and giggled.

"Of course!"