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# VORPAL BUNNY AND FORTRESS UNCLE

## Chapter 01

### Crimson Invasion

Translation by Headpats Novels

<https://headpatsnovel.wordpress.com>



Episode 15

Undercover

“I can’t believe we meet again in a place like this! Were you guys riding this train? Where did you come from? Is this some kind of skill?”

“—huff, Le-length... You’re ki-killing me...!”

Crushed by two muscular arms, I barely managed to draw in a quick breath. I tapped Length’s arms to catch his attention and he finally released me from his squeeze.

—cough, “I thought I was a goner...”

It was a no-PVP area so thankfully my LPs didn’t drop. Still, I was really glad we met him here. He seemed like he knew a secret path out of the station.

“Before we go into the details, can I ask you something?”

“What is it?”

I pointed at the ceiling and asked, “What’s the situation up there?”

He immediately caught on and flashed a grin.

“It’s teeming with players. Everyone went after the train. It didn’t look like I could enter easily with all the congestion so I had no choice but to sneak in like a rat.”

“I guessed as much.”

That didn’t make me happy but my predictions turned true.

“Length. Show me the way from which you came please. Let’s change place first, we’ll talk later.”

“You got it, leave it to me,”—he nodded confidently and turned to the girl that waited by the manhole— “Hima.”

The petite girl had shoulder-length bright brown hair—almost turning to yellow—and a certain cuteness found in small animals. She scowled at Length with a deepening frown.

“What is it now, old man? Also, my name is not ‘Hima,’ it’s ‘Himawari.’”

“What do you mean ‘old’? Anyway, we’re going back. Please take the lead.”

“But we just arrived. We’re just going to go back after coming all this way?”

“These two here are our reward for coming this far. Come on, we’re getting outta here.”

The girl called Himawari showed an unexpected obedience and jumped back in the manhole.

“Come on, follow me. Ah, you too, Letty.”

“—ah, yes, thank you.”

Letty, who had been hiding behind me from the beginning, hurriedly followed us into the manhole.

The cramped tunnel crawled with pipes and cables of diverse size.

“I’m amazed you found a place like this,” I admitted.

I stopped mid-ladder to peek at the depth of the gloomy tunnel when an explanation came from under. “It’s a pathway used by the maintenance crew of the city. The old man and I stumbled on it while we were walking around town.”

As my eyes gradually got used to the darkness, I found Himawari staring up at me with a sour look on her face.

“We’re probably the only ones who know about this right now. There’s nothing on the forum for now anyway,” Length bragged as he started down the ladder.

The moment Length closed the manhole cover, thousands of flurried footsteps echoed overhead.

“Looks like the regular entrance unlocked now that you left the station.”

“Just thinking about it gives me the creeps...”

Thank god we found Length.

“Well then, shall we celebrate our reunion? Though we met yesterday, haha.”

Yesterday meant only a few hours had passed in real life. We had broken off without registering as friends so meeting again like this is nothing short of a miracle.

“So, uh, how did you end up in here again?”

“Like I said, it’s flooding with people up there. I thought we’d never get to ride it first so...”

“Yeah well, that’s not an excuse for working me hard like this,” retorted Himawari, who was clearly in a bad mood.

Length stroked her hair, an elder brother-like, gentle expression on his face.

“There, there. Thank you, Himawari.”

“Awa-- how many times do I need to tell you to not pat my head!”

Seeing her face turn bright red, Letty and I couldn't help but look at the scene with a smile.

“When did you two met?”

“About right after I split up with you, I'd say. I thought she was a lost child and when I went to talk to her, she kicked me in the shin.”

“Sounds like you had it rough...”

Length recounted with a distant look of his face, like a war veteran getting sudden flashbacks. According to Length's story, it seems like Himawari was also actively updating the Wiki as an editor. And when he met her yesterday, she was apparently in the middle of mapping the city.

“—since our objectives aligned, I proposed we should team up for better efficiency.”

“I don't remember agreeing to anything! I just came along because you were begging me and—”

“Ah, right, right. Anyway, that's how we ended up forming a party,” Length hastily concluded.

He also added that his little Himawari was doing an outstanding job.

“—the platform's manhole is locked and can't be opened without the <Lockpicking> skill. And Himawari is building her character around these kind of skills. Like a thief build if you will.”

“So that's how it was, I see. You're amazing Himawari.”

“Hm-hmph. Don't go thinking your compliments make me happy or whatever.”

As I looked at her with admiration, she turned away, her cheeks puffed out. I was confused and thought I had upset her but Length just laughed and explained she was always like this.

Letty, who'd be silent the whole time, asked timidly, “Um, shouldn't we get going?”

“Ah, right. Let’s get outta here and find ourselves a place to sit. Got any recommendations?”

“Ah, yes, there’s this place called <New World>, it’s a—”

“A coffee shop, uh? That should be perfect.”

As expected from a Wiki editor, he knows the facilities well. As he was nodding to Letty proposal, Length took out his lantern from his inventory.

Himawari had taken out her own lantern and lit it. “This way, then.”

She led us through the complex tunnel, and after a few minutes had passed, I realized that there was no chance I could have made it out without them. The tunnel branched off every few meters and bent erratically, but the small girl at the head of our little party confidently walk us through it without even looking at the map once.

Length who walked behind must have read my thought and called to me. “Isn’t my little Hima impressive?”

As I nodded, he looked proud as a peacock.

“She got an incredible sense of orientation and she says she won’t get lost anywhere if she passed through it once or saw it on a map,” he explained.

“Impressive. That’s a genius for you.”

“I... I wish I were a genius, too...”

Letty who overheard us casted an envious look at Himawari. From the look of it, it appeared that she was bad at geography.

“Thanks to her we’re making good progress mapping the town. Take those tunnels for example, there was no way I could have found my way out alone.”

“Looks like you found yourself a reliable comrade, too.”

“Haha, you said it.” Length grinned from ear to ear, without a care in the world.

“Hey in the back! Hurry up or I’m leaving you behind.”

Himawari suddenly turned back to us, a scowl on her face. I’m not sure if she’d heard our conversation but her little ears were dyed red.

“—we’re almost there.”

After leading us through some more complicated paths, she came to a stop under an even smaller manhole. I brought up my [Mirror] to check the map and, indeed, we were now right below where me and Letty had stopped last night.

“Really impressive,” I said.

“Praising me won’t get you anything,” she retorted as she started climbing the ladder nimbly.

Once she reached the manhole, she activated some kind of ability.

“<Picklock>”

A few metal rustling sounds later, the lock snapped open.

“Old man.”

“I got it.”

Himawari stepped down from the ladder and this time Length climbed up to the manhole cover.

“You’re not going out, Himawari?” I asked, curious.

“I’ve unlocked it but there’s a few more steps left to completely open it. The steps are written on the back of the manhole cover but you need the <Deciphering> skill to read them. And each manhole is different.”

I looked up to see that Length focused his attention on the back of the manhole, trying to read something. I couldn’t catch his mumblings but I saw him push and pull various buttons and levers attached to the cover.

“It’s pretty secured for a manhole, huh.”

“They’re trying to make sure unauthorized personnel can’t casually enter.”

“Wait, that’s... No, forget it.” Letty looked like she had a piece to say but stopped mid-sentence.

Well, it’s not like I couldn’t guess what she tried to say anyway. After a while, a loud bang echoed above. The cover had finally opened.

Following Length, I climbed the ladder and hauled myself out.

“Ooh, nice!”

We now found ourselves in a deserted alley, right next to the coffee shop Letty had suggested.

“Told you, Hima’s guidance is always on point—”

“For the nth time, it’s ‘Himawari’ not ‘Hima.’”

“—ouch?”

Himawari, who just reached the top of the ladder, popped her head out and bashed the shin of Length with one hand. Watching him kneeling in pain, she snorted.

“You two sure get along well.”

“No, we don’t.”

“I know, right?”

They both answered in synch. What a beautiful friendship indeed.

“Here, Letty.”

“Hm? Ah, th-thank you...”

I extended a hand to Letty and helped her up. Finally free, she surrendered herself to the sense of liberation, stretching her body in relief.

“Well then, let’s go in.”

Length put the manhole’s cover back in place behind Letty and the four of us stepped into the coffee shop.

End of episode 15



## Tips

### Susanoo's underground pathways

A labyrinth of tunnels that spread under the town. They facilitate the town's maintenance and are regularly patrolled by the maintenance and checkup unit. Due to its deep close to the central control area, the underground is generally off-limit and whoever is found by the checkup units or the security units will be indiscriminately fired upon with no warning. While it is possible to enter the tunnels using the various manhole that spread throughout Susanoo, they are under tight security and can't be opened easily.

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