

# BEYOND THE SPIRITS OF AN IRON HEART

S01 E02 - "Tumbling Dice"

*The first episode of the show from Mach Windy's perspective.*

**\*\*NOTE:** Gold Foot uses the term「相棒」. The original word in Romaji has been kept in this document for the sake of script authenticity.

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Tens of thousands of customary people crowded into the central stadium, waiting for the moment of kickoff. Today was a game against Dark Prince, the number one Iron Soccer team in terms of popularity and ability. Their opponent was Silver Castle, a weak team that was considered the baggage of the league. Everyone's expectations for the game were the same: a catharsis of destruction.

The cheers rose to a new level. It was Mach Windy and Gold Foot on the field.

But with the crowd in high spirits, Windy continued to be caught up in an unsettling thought. It was his combination with Gold Foot that was not meshing well. Mach Windy was a prototype in the secret laboratory of the dark fortune, a "works specification", so to speak. He was a candidate for a future commanding Iron Soldier, born of the dark merchant's hidden face.

The AI in Windy used an extremely simple new algorithm to increase the reaction time to the extreme. It was designed so that if one play was thwarted, it could switch to a new play with unparalleled speed, but that simplicity also defined his character as short-tempered, simple, and unacceptably crooked. That ethical circuitry was what made Gold Foot's rough play so bitter as opposed to Windy, who was in pursuit of pure soccer.

The kickoff whistle sounded. Windy pushed his worries away.

They were focused on the game. The difference in ability between the two teams was evident. Gold Foot kept the ball early on and dribbled into the goal. Windy ran down the opposite side of the field. It was a familiar attacking pattern, one that could be communicated in silence. Because of Gold Foot's position and speed, Windy's AI popped the timing of the centering 0.47 seconds later, 63 degrees to the left of the goal. That should have been a sure goal, but Windy was stunned as he ran into the shooting position. To his horror, Gold Foot was nowhere to be found. Before he could wonder why, his sensors caught Foot's position.

Gold Foot was in the middle of a rough fight with a Silver Castle defender who approached him to clear the area. "What are you doing?" Windy shouted, unable to believe the sight.

"I'm playing soccer, aibou." Gold Foot replied, giving the enemy defender a final elbow strike and kicking the ball high into the air. Windy stood frozen, unresponsive to his centering. The ball was saved by Silver's goalkeeper.

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"What is it, aibou?" Goldfoot rushed over. "Is there a problem?"

"Is this soccer to you?" Windy muttered.

Gold Foot gave a puzzled look at the first appearance of accusation. It was as if there was no malice in his gaze.

"The pleasure of dodging and shooting through several defenders, the joy of passing a difficult pass... isn't soccer a sport that uses the limits of a leaguer's craft? What's the value of a pass or a dribble if it hurts and interferes with the opponent?"

Play resumed at that point with Silver's goal kick. Windy's question was not answered. Quickly back in action, Gold Foot didn't hesitate to take the ball in rough play and run to the goal. All of his teammates were hurting Silver Castle more than they should.

"No... no... no!"

Finally, Windy's ethical circuitry rejected Dark's definition of soccer.

"This ain't soccer! I don't need no rough play," Windy shouted as he ran towards Gold Foot in an attempt to steal the ball.