

## BEYOND THE SPIRITS OF AN IRON HEART

S01 E03 - "Start Me Up"

*Kiai Ryuuken's arrival to Silver Castle.*

It was a mild spring afternoon. From the back of a truck on the road that stretched from downtown to the coast, a robot was watching the budding trees and flowers in full bloom. He had been crammed into a dark warehouse, and for the first time, nature was a polarizing wonder for him to see. He felt the joy of stepping out into the world now, as each landscape was memorized in his memory circuits. The truck was on its way to a place called "Silver Castle".

Ruri Ginjo had just pulled the chili beans for lunch out of the fridge. It was her father Ricardo's only specialty, and he would make a large pot of them so they would have them for the next three days. Ruri didn't complain, as she had become completely fond of it after being fed it repeatedly, but she just didn't like the tastelessness of eating it alone. Sighing and tossing his plate into the microwave, she had just gotten out of her chair when the doorbell rang. The delivery driver left the unexpected robot behind, admiring Ruri's signature on the receipt. Ruri walked up to him, not really surprised.

"Um, I..." He stood there with a mixture of anxiety and anticipation in his eyes, like a puppy that had just been given to him. If it was the first time outside of the factory, it was also the first time he saw a human being approaching him unguarded like this.

"You're the eleventh Leaguer!" Ruri's big eyes sparkled. "Finally! My father will be so happy!"

He stood there, uncomprehending.

"What's your name?"

"Kiai... Ryuuken."

"I'm Ruri. Nice to meet you, Ryuuken."

The world was still unfamiliar to him and Ryuuken didn't know how to react to the unexpected welcome, and he was confused. He heard the microwave chiming in the kitchen and Ruri came up with a great idea.

"Hey, come and have lunch with us! I'll give you some oil."

He found he had little choice. Soon the preparations for lunch began.

"Because it's better to eat with someone else," Ryuuken took the oil as it was handed to him and sat down. Ruri, who finally had someone to talk to, spoke like a dam bursting with water, and Ryuuken, who was quiet to begin with, was almost a one-sided listener.