***The story so far:*** *Duke Fleed and Hikaru married and they live on Fleed as king and queen. They have had a son, Rex, of two months old. A mysterious being, the Dark One, has sent Jezabel, a powerful woman, who enters into the Royal Palace, killing several men and kidnapping Rex in front of Hikaru, who disappeared mysteriously. Now, Duke thinks that Hikaru and Rex are dead: but a mysterious person, the Ancient One, tells him she is alive and give to him the informations about the Dark One. Hikaru was finished in an unknown beach…*

Duke is looking her, happy and shocked. From now on, he is a father. For the first time, he observes his son. Hikaru is happy: the birth was long, but it was worth it. She squeezes and caresses the baby, while his eyes look at all surprised.

"He…he is beautiful!" says Duke, with a lump in his throat.

"It's true. He is really your son!"

"How we could call him?"

"I have not thought yet...we talked about it many times, and we have not decided anything!"
"I thought you liked Daimos."

"It's true, but I have the impression that this name has already been used...maybe Rex, what do you say?"

Duke does not respond, staring into space.

"Duke, are you well?"

A spot of blood appears on his chest: staggering, he collapses.

Hikaru shouts his name and looks up, seeing Jezabel, scratched on her cheek. The woman fixes on her, with her hand wet with blood, laughing.

"Do you remember me? Do you remember what you did on my face? Now you will pay! "

Her claws tearing Hikaru ferociously, with the child.

Hikaru wakes up, screaming. Her heart is pounding, and she feels the drops of cold sweat down his forehead. Trying to calm herself down, she looks around. She is at bed, in a room with a decor similar to the Earth. The sun seems quite high and filters through the curtains of the window.

*But I was not at a beach? Am I ended up on Earth?*

Suddenly, a door opens and overlooks a woman of advanced age. She is dressed in a simple way, with her hair up; she has an apron. With a worried look, she says:

"Oh, you have awakened! But what was that scream?"

Hikaru does not know her, but she understand her language. She is on Earth, then.

“Do not worry. I' m...I'm fine, thanks. I just had a bad dream. Where am I?"

"You are at home of Dr. Nakashima. My name is Yumiko, I am his wife. My son Jimmy has found you on the beach: he likes to swim at midnight and he has found you there. How are you?"

"Well, I'm a bit 'dazed, but I'm fine, thanks."

Then, Hikaru realizes she's wearing only a nightgown. She looks Yumiko quizzically. She replies:

"Your clothes were a mess. Burned and torn. I have put on you a nightgown who I took once: you are well! However, what you wore is there" and she indicates some clothes on a chair: once were clothes, but now no one would dare to wear them.

"I have put your necklace on the table"

Hikaru turns and sees the necklace that Duke had given to her at the day of her birthday. *When was it? Only the other day, I think ... but it seems it was a century ago.*
Hikaru picks it up in her hand and thinks about Duke: *Is he back at Royal Palace? He had to go to defeat a monster…he has had success? I do not know anything. And Rex? Jezabel has got him?*

She is going to ask if it is possible to contact Professor Umon, when appears from the door a boy with curly hair, dressed in jacket and jeans, which has a bag and greets her with enthusiasm.

"Oh, so you woke up! How are you, Hikaru?"

For a moment, she is surprised. She never saw that boy, how is possible that he know her name? Meanwhile, he continues to speak, sitting beside her.

"My name is Jimmy: I have found you yesterday on the beach. What a surprise! Queen Hikaru in person! How is Duke Fleed? "

Hikaru is more and more confused.

"Excuse me, but how do you know my name? Have we met in the past?"

"I expected that question. You don’t know me, but I know you: I'll show you"

He opens the bag, rummaging in a frenzy: he pulls out a laptop.

"No, not that. Could you hold me this a moment?" and hands it to Hikaru.

Then, he pulls out two or three machines with threads and buttons, and a bunch of other things that were not what he wanted, and passes them to Hikaru and in a little time she is quickly submerged in a sea of ​​stuff. At the end:

"Here! What you're looking is always the last thing you find!"

He skips to Hikaru a DVD series with the image of Grendizer on the cover.

"It is the Ufo Robot Grendizer series: it has a great success here. Modestly, I founded a fan club. See? The girl here is you! "

Hikaru observes the drawing: it is very much like her, apart from the hair, which are short, like those who once wore. She knew nothing of this.

"From where come this stuff?" she asks, amazed. Observing DVD’s covers, she recognizes the faces of her friends and the enemies of Vega, including the monsters who had faced in the past: almost perfect reproductions.

"They made a cartoon series on you just Duke Fleed started away from Earth. It was not easy to find this DVD edition"

"Enough, Jimmy! - interrupts her mother - our guest is tired, do not fatigue her. Put this, sweetheart: you're still in her nightgown, had not you noticed?" and gives on a robe.
Hikaru blushes and immediately puts the robe. At that moment, at the room appeared a tall man with a beard and glasses. He wears a white coat and looks good-natured.
"Good morning, ma'am - he says – I am Professor Nakashima. Our son Jimmy is your fan, and yesterday he spoke a lot about you. Are you okay now?"

"Ah ... yes, thank you."

Instinctively, she touches her cheek, where Jezabel had hit her and she does not feel anything, only a vague tingling.

"You had a bad hit there. But I took over the bruise a cream of my invention, which, as you see, it worked. Now the bruise is almost gone"

"Thank you very much – answers Hikaru - I would ask you a favor: could you please call me Professor Umon? It is very urgent! "

"Well...I’m sorry, but you ask for the impossible, my dear girl."

"Why? Communications are not be interrupted also here on Earth, I hope?"

The three people that are around Hikaru, for a moment, are in a puzzled silence.

 Jimmy is the first to speak.

"Excuse me, Hikaru…can I call you that? I'm afraid you have been mistaken. We are not on Earth"

"What? And where are we? On Fleed?"

"Not even. This is the Earth colony of the Betelgeuse planet"

Hikaru is speechless for a long time.

At the end of a good lunch, Hikaru tells her story to Dr. Nakashima and his family. After a moment of silence, Yumiko, the professor's wife, asks:

"And your son, what do you think was happened to him?"

"Maybe that Jezabel took him. He was not going to kill him, but to put him away. He wanted to sacrifice him when the seven stars will be aligned. Or so he said"

"And what does that mean?"

"That will kill him later. The problem is that I know nothing of these seven stars, or when they are aligned" responds Hikaru, worried.

"In twelve days, three hours and four minutes" says Jimmy.

Hikaru turns to him, amazed. The boy puts up his laptop that was on a chair.

"I installed the logger, so, while you told your story, at the same time my computer did an internet search on some keywords that I selected as you were talking" says proudly, showing the remote control. "A little invention that I did."

"I taught the basics of computing to Jimmy" explains Professor Nakashima "My son is a talented kid"

*Wow*, thinks Hikaru, *I never thought such a thing were possible.*

"And have you discovered something else?" asks Hikaru anxiously.

"So, first thing, in astronomy is known the phenomenon of ‘alignment of the seven fixed stars’, which happens once every ten thousand years. No doubt, Jezabel was referring to this. It will happens, as I said, in twelve days, two hours and fifty minutes"

*Remarkable.*
"What can you tell me about Jezabel? She was said to be the right arm of a man named Dark One, who commands six generals"

"The data are fragmentary. This Dark One dominates sections of the universe far away from here: also the Spatial Internet does not add much. Meanwhile, I can tell you that the ‘Hand of Darkness" that you have described is the mobile home of the planets of the Dark One and his generals, who can move on command, like spaceships. That's why you saw them move at the observatory of Fleed"

"But who is this Dark One?"

"I have discovered very little about him. Maybe, with more research...For now, I can tell you that he is a being "shadowed": a very rare event, characteristic of those who have reached a power so high that his body absorbs the presence of light itself and become a living shadow. He commands an exterminated army, led by six Generals leaded by Jezabel, his right arm. About her, I must tell that you have been very, very lucky. In fact, that woman is so fierce and cruel as to be called "the Bloody One". After that you have scarred her, you said that she had attacked you, and at that moment her eyes had turned white, right?"

"Exactly. It was awesome"

"It was the state of *berserk*" says Jimmy, grimly.

"Ber…what?"

"Berserk. The Vikings called “berserk” the warrior completely mad with fury, with an enormous strength; he did no longer distinguish friend from foe. The berserkers became so after drinking drugs or potions and they were always at the forefront of Viking invasions. Jezabel is the head of an army of Amazons, women warriors, greatly feared because they can go berserk in the state of command, in addition to be terrible warriors in normal conditions.

If it was not for the star of gren you had in hand, she would have torn you in a few seconds"

"Heavens" says Yumiko, impressed.

Hikaru reflects. Jimmy is giving to her valuable information. Now, she is beginning to understand the enemy: at last, something is beginning to turn in the right direction.

"But how did I come here?" asks Hikaru.

 “This time, is Professor Nakashima who is talking.

"Only a teleporter machine can have brought you here. As I can understand, you have gone in an instant from Fleed to Betelgeuse. On the beach, where you were finished, I just did some analysis: there are unmistakable traces of teleportation"

For Hikaru, it is like a bolt in the dark that illuminates all things clearly.

*Of course! The gift of Duke Fleed! Jezabel had thrown me against the teleporter machine! But it was not idle? Clearly, in some way, it was on!*

"In fact, now that I think, in the royal hall there was a teleporter machine. But it should take me on Earth, not here. Or so Duke told me"

"Really?” says the professor, astonished “I would have liked to see it. The distance between Fleed and the Earth is very large; until now, was not yet invented a teleporter machine capable of filling a similar distance. Hmmm ... logically, I think that the teleported machine was damaged during your battle, so it was not be able to take you on Earth. For this problem, it has brought you here: it has analyzed you in an instant, it has identified as a woman of Earth and it has teleported you to the nearest place where there are people of Earth. Exactly, the Betelgeuse colony. What a wonderful teleporter machine."

"However, what is this ‘Earth colony of Betelgeuse’? I had never heard about it!"

"It's the best thing if I start from the beginning. I do not know if you know the movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* by Spielberg, but something like that has happened to us. Years ago, I and some friends of mine were still on Earth and we were contacted by aliens who landed on Earth from Betelgeuse and needed help to come back home. We helped them, we have exchanged information for some time: we even came here at Betelgeuse several times, finding a climate and vegetation similar to that of Earth. Then, we moved here forever: we wanted to do an outpost where the humanity might, someday, open up the universe. We are also planning the possibility of making artificial colonies: we made some, albeit small, a kind of prototype. "

Nakashima gets up and takes a model from a shelf and shows it to Hikaru.

"Here, this is the model of colony we want to build. It will be called Side 1: We would like to contact the UN one day to have the necessary funds. Maybe it's crazy, but who knows, I think that tomorrow there will be a lot of space colonies"

"It’s his dream" says his wife, smiling, "and eventually he involved me also"

Hikaru is surprised: for once, an alien contact had not been a conflict!

"You were lucky to be here” continues the professor “We are the only ones of the Earth colony: all our comrades have returned home, and in a few days we will leave also. Now, I have a lot of years, and I would spend my last days on Earth. I collected all the information I needed, and, with the help of Jimmy, I can analyze it when we will get back. In addition, he has never seen the Earth, and he cannot wait to go there!"

"You have never been on Earth?" asks Hikaru to Jimmy, amazed.

"No, I was born here. But I've read and seen so much of the Earth, that I would like to see it. I knew my planet even watching Grendizer’s DVD, where there is you also!"

Hikaru smiles, embarrassed. Apparently, Jimmy had taken a great crush on her!

"But what will you do now, my girl?" Yumiko asks.

"I do not know... could you contact Fleed?"

"No, unfortunately, all communications are interrupted several days ago” explains Nakashima “I am afraid that this is due to your enemies. Also, I think it's better that you do not contact Fleed. If you do, the enemy will know that you're alive, will know where you are and you will be haunted. I do not think that someone like Jezabel forgive you for what you did to her"

"Right. Jezabel saw me going through the teleporter machine. So she knows that I'm alive. "

"You are mistaken" says Jimmy "according to my calculations, that teleporting machine must have been subjected to such a tension that it was exploded instantly while maintaining the transporter. It is very unlikely that Jezabel noticed of the transfer: the explosion was simultaneous. The barrier that you have put has certainly protected your son and your attendants, but I fear that the barrier may not have resisted to the action of Jezabel. She has sure broken the barrier and has took Rex. "

*Then Hadi, Ryui, Sara..my maids….now that I think, what happened to them? Jezabel killed them?*

"But surely Duke thinks I'm dead! I should contact him somehow!"

"The only way is to go in person to Fleed, because the communications are cut" says Nakashima "But now, Fleed is a supervised area: Jezabel can discover you! I do not think you will come alive to Fleed!"

Hikaru thinks of the nightmare she has just had on Jezabel and she shivers.

"Damn it, I don’t know what to do... maybe if I come with you on Earth?"

"We will leave in two days, but it will take a month or two of travel. I’m sorry"

Hikaru holds her thumb between his teeth, nervous.

*What the heck can I do? Think, find something...I have to save Rex within these twelve days!*

Suddenly, she has an idea. Crazy, really, but at this point there is no alternative.

"Jimmy" says Hikaru "You told me that Jezabel orders the Amazon, right?"

"Sure."

"Where are they, you know?"

"In the Shadow Zone, on the planet Acheron, where there is the Dark One. Why?"

Hikaru reflects, without answering.

"The Amazons accept candidates?"

"What?" exclaims Jimmy, startled.

"Answer me, please. They accept candidates? "

Jimmy, confused, consults the computer.

"Yes, the planet Bespin is a recruitment center for the Amazon. You can get the planet in a day's journey. You're not going there to became a candidate, I hope!"

"It is the only way to get quickly there to save Rex from that crazy woman."

"Jezabel is a crazy woman, but you also, for this idea!"

"I have no choice," replies firmly Hikaru.

**Next episode (20 August): Here come the Six Knight who will help Duke Fleed…**