Tales of Nashi:

Episode 1: Discovery

Nashi sighed as he looked down from his perch. At last, the final dregs of Futurist scientists had left the building and began to fly away, borne aloft by their soratami magic. The labs themselves darkened save for a few lights in the main hallways for the security personnel to monitor.

Nashi was relieved, at least this could be done soon. He did not think it would take this long. It was late and he had to be back in a few hours to not arouse Rumi’s and Hiro’s suspicions. So much for some sleep tonight.

Nashi waited for the last stragglers to disappear into the night before Nashi stepped off the roof he was using. Before he fell too long, he was caught by a long, curved drone that carried him down to the ground before disappearing into the night to await his call again. The drone was one of his own designs and he was quite proud of it.

Quietly, Nashi crept to one of the side doors littering the Futurist compound. He had been here before under the notion of joining the Futurists. While he believed in their plight to bring the future to Kamigawa, Nashi was not interested in helping. He had his own answers to find.

With a quick flick, Nashi placed a small drone into the groove of the sliding door blocking his way. The drone unfurled and crept into the door’s circuitry. After a moment, the door slid open, and Nashi plucked the waiting drone from the groove.

Nashi scurried through the compound, careful to avoid the light and any cameras that could give him away. His padded paws fell silent on the tiled floors of the compound, but Nashi was more worried that his pounding heart would give him away.

After twisting down a maze of long corridors, Nashi finally found what he was looking for: the archives. Entering the archives felt intensely cold, more so than the rest of the place. Long lines of bins and cabinets stretched end to end and came up to the ceiling. Everything the Futurists had done and no longer needed was stored here to gather dust.

A lone monitor was placed in a round desk towards the center of the archives to help sort out the controlled mess. Nashi pressed the metal attached to his right temple. A small monitor extended over his eye and a flurry of information scrolled before him.

“Unmei, you ready?” Nashi whispered. His display lit up in response.

*I got this. Just connect me.*

Nashi plugged a fob into the monitor controlling access to the archives. After a few seconds, the monitor came to life in a flash of light, information scrolling across its display in speeds too fast for Nashi to read. Just as quickly as it came, the display darkened once again.

*Row Shi, NB-23: Tameshi*

Nashi had waited a whole year for this lead. Ever since his mother Tamiyo had disappeared and Kaito Shizuki had told him of her kidnapping by the human Tezzeret, the same man who killed his biological parents, Nashi had not stopped look for her.

It had taken months to track down Eiko, the sister of Saito only to find out that Kaito could walk behind the air just as his mother could and that he was gone to search for the missing emperor. From Eiko, Nashi had learned of Tameshi, Kaito’s mentor who had been working on something related to the Emperor’s disappearance and who had died around the time of his mother’s kidnapping.

It had taken more months still to track down Tameshi’s legacy, now stored in the archives of the Futurist Industries headquarters. And now, after all the time he spent to plan the heist, it was in his grasp. All the work that could lead Nashi to his mother.

Nashi scrambled to the bin that held the clues to his mother’s whereabouts and eagerly combed through Tameshi’s discarded belongings and research. Nashi plugged data chip after data chip into his headset for Unmei to sort through.

However, each only brought more disappointment than the last. Pages after pages of outdated drone designs and kami studies. Nothing substantial. Nothing useful, until a small schematic caught his eye.

Nashi had been around enough to know what it was immediately, an illegal bio-enhancement. The schematic detailed long tendrils coming off from a central processing unit, giving it the look of an eerie jellyfish. Why would a Futurist be studying illegal enhancements?

What’s more, as Nashi noticed the details, is that the device appeared to be using kami merging. That practice had been banned and heavily cracked down on since Light-Paws became regent. Is this device why?

Nashi took the data chip. It was the most significant thing he could find. There had to be more on it, or at least he hoped.

Nashi stole back out from the Futurist compound and headed home, using his glider to cut across Otawara, the city in the skies. He arrived later than planned, but hopefully not enough to rouse suspicion. His brothers and sisters still thought he couldn’t fly, and Nashi was grateful for the supposition for once.

As Nashi laid in bed, he took another look at the stolen schematic. He had never seen its like before. As he scrolled through the information pouring before him, he chuckled at the designated name of the device: the Reality Chip.