



## Storm (The Paper Gods Book 3)

By Amanda Sun

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## Editorial Review

### Review

"The third book in the Paper Gods series is filled with action and romance. Reading this well-written roller-coaster ride is like an out-of-body experience, taking readers to a far-away place with a plot made of their wildest dreams. This read, which is part of an amazing series, is worth your time." -RT Book Reviews

### About the Author

Amanda Sun was born in Deep River, Ontario, and now lives in Toronto. The Paper Gods series, which includes *Ink*, *Rain*, and *Storm*, was inspired by her time living in Osaka and traveling throughout Japan. She is an avid video gamer and cosplayer. Visit her on the web at [www.amandasunbooks.com](http://www.amandasunbooks.com) and on twitter @Amanda\_Sun.

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*Ways to Put a Kami to Sleep Forever*

1. *Leave Japan*

2. *Die*

I tapped my pencil against the paper propped on my knees. Ten minutes, and I only had two ideas, the latter scribbled in Tomo's handwriting. If I went to live with Nan and Gramps, if I left Japan for good, maybe Tomo would be better off. There was ink trapped in me, *kami* power that didn't belong, darkness that caused Tomo's power to spiral out of control. But even if I distanced myself, it wouldn't put the *kami* in him to sleep. He'd struggled before I'd even arrived here. And if he left the country, who knows what would happen? He could run, but the power would still lurk in him. I didn't think it would work.

And the second on the list wasn't an option, not at all.

How to put a dark power to sleep, one that whispered in your ear that you were a demon, one that gave you nightmares and brought your drawings to life with teeth and claws?

"Maybe a really good lullaby?" I suggested. Tomo rolled his eyes. We were slouching on either side of his living room couch, our backs curved against the arms of the sofa and our knees flopped against each other's in the middle. Tomo mashed the buttons on the TV remote, cycling through the channels over and over.

"Or a bedtime story?" Tomo teased back. "*Goodnight Moon?*"

I shoved his knee with mine, gently, but he still winced. The bruises from his fight with Jun hadn't faded yet. They hadn't even had *time* to fade.

Only a few days ago we'd learned the truth, that the *kami* Amaterasu, goddess of the sun, wasn't the only one with descendants. The power to make ink drawings come alive, the nightmares that plagued Tomo and Jun and the others who could control the ink...that power could come from other *kami*. Tomo had sketched Amaterasu in his notebook, and she had revealed the truth to us—that Jun was descended from Su-sanou, the

*kami* of storms, snakes and the World of Darkness. Yomi, or, you know, Hell. Susanou was Amaterasu's brother and most dangerous rival.

And worse, Tomo was descended from not one but two *kami*—Amaterasu, the imperial ancestor, and Tsukiyomi, the god of the moon, her scorned and vengeful lover. The two bloodlines fought within him, which meant that Tomo often lost control of his drawings and himself, his eyes growing large and vacant and deadly. It had become so bad that he couldn't enter shrines anymore; going through the Shinto gateways knocked him out cold. Jun had called him a land mine; he could go off and cause mass destruction at any time. And then Jun had decided it was up to him to destroy Tomo, right then and there. It had been like both of them had lost consciousness, taken over by the ancient hatred between Susanou and Tsukiyomi. Ikeda and I had barely pulled them apart in time before they killed each other.

"Funny," I said. "But I don't think *Goodnight Moon* will cut it."

I wished I could go back to the time I'd arrived in Japan, when the cherry blossoms had rained through the sky and Tomo had just been an annoying senior classmate, when neither of us had awakened the sort of forces we now faced.

I sketched a cherry blossom in the corner of my paper, thinking back on that spring. I wasn't the artist that Tomo was, but I still drew a mean stick figure and flower bud.

Tomo lifted the remote to flip the channel again. The tiny gust of air spun the sketched cherry blossom in circles. I stared at it, my eyes wide.

When Tomo's drawing of Amaterasu had come to life, so had the ink trapped in me. When Mom was pregnant with me, she'd been accidentally poisoned by a *kami* drawing. We'd both barely survived, and now the ink ran in my veins—Jun called me a manufactured Kami, a man-made descendant. I was nowhere near as powerful as Tomo and Jun were, but the ink in me called out to the ink in them. And now it was going totally haywire. I pressed my pencil against the edge of the sketched petal, stopping the blossom from twirling.

"*Yurusenai yo*," Tomo said in a high, clipped voice, and at first I thought he was talking to me. *I won't forgive you*. But then he made a peace sign with his free hand, holding it up to the side of his face. God he looked adorable. I wanted to reach over and ruffle his hair.

I glanced at the TV, anime sparkles and canned music blaring at me from the screen. A group of magical schoolgirls in a rainbow of skirt colors pulled elaborate poses, peace signs cupped to their faces like Tomo. They blasted a bunch of monsters with their special powers as they backflipped and whirled around the Tokyo Skytree tower in ridiculously high heels.

I rolled my eyes. "How can they fight in those? Where are all the broken ankles?"

The leader of the girls got a close-up now, tilting her head to the side as she posed. "*Yurusenai yo!*" she squeaked, and Tomo looked smugly pleased.

The scene cut to one of the girls smacking a monster in the face with an *ofuda*, a paper scroll that banished evil. Wait. "Hey, would that work in real life?"

"I don't look so great in high heels and a miniskirt," Tomo said. "Unless you're into that kind of thing."

I smacked his knee again. "I mean the *ofuda*. That's a Shinto scroll, right? Couldn't it stop a *kami*?"

He frowned. "I doubt it. They usually invoke the help of a *kami*, not banish one. They're more for expelling demons. Like a larger version of the *omamori* I gave you."

I pulled out my phone, looking at the soft yellow pouch Tomo had risked entering a shrine for, just to give to me. The charm read "*Yaku-yoke Mamoru*," embroidered on the fabric in soft pink kanji. *Protection from Evil*.

The last time Tomo had entered a shrine with me, he'd collapsed in a pool of ink, attacked by some kind of *kami* alarm system as a threat to the sacred place. *I am evil*, he'd told me. *I'm the demon lurking in the shadows*. But even now, knowing he was descended from Tsukiyomi, I couldn't believe it. He was descended from Amaterasu, too, right? And wasn't she supposed to be the protector of Japan? The little bell on the charm jingled as I put the phone back in my pocket.

"If you remember, the *omamori* didn't work so well," Tomo said.

I chewed on my bottom lip and said nothing. It had worked. The *omamori* had fallen out of my pocket and clinked against the floor when Jun had kissed me at his school. It had broken me out of the moment; it had protected me from the awful mistake I'd made. I still wasn't sure if Jun had actually liked me, or had just been using me to get to Tomo. It didn't matter—I'd screwed up big-time, and almost lost Tomo. Heat prickled down my neck as I shook the guilt away.

"We've got to have more options than leave Japan or die," I said, trying to get back on track.

Tomo closed his eyes. "What if I draw Tsukiyomi, and then rip the sketch in half?"

I stared at him; he'd lost his mind. "You're joking, right? Ripping the drawing of Amaterasu nearly killed me. Ripping Tsukiyomi in half might kill you."

He frowned. "There's never been a constant way to stop the *kami*. Sometimes it overpowers me and I collapse, and sometimes I can get startled out of its control, but... I can't see a connection. Maybe I just need to live under a torii and stay unconscious."

I groaned, scribbling out my list. We weren't getting anywhere this way.

Tomo rested the remote on the side table and sat up, resting his hands on my shoulders. "Hey," he said. "Don't worry. I'm sure we'll think of something." He pulled me gently toward him, turning me so my back was against his chest. I leaned into the warmth of him, the scent of miso and vanilla around me, his heart thudding gently against the back of my shoulder.

The paper list slipped off my lap, floating toward the floor and slipping halfway under the couch. The cherry blossom in the corner spun like a pinwheel, and Tomo went rigid beneath me, his breath catching in his throat. "Is that—is it moving?"

I sat up as he grabbed the paper. He frowned as the flower shriveled before us, crumpling into a scribbled ugliness in the corner. "Katie," he said, his voice deep and troubled.

"I know," I said. "Ever since your drawing of Amaterasu came to life it's been happening. But my sketches

don't come off the page like yours. They seem pretty harmless so far."

"Yeah, but this is..." He ran a hand through the copper spikes of his hair. "Katie, I don't want this for you."

"Maybe it'll stop," I lied. "It's not a big deal. We need to worry about you right now. And what'll happen tomorrow."

He dropped the page and leaned back into the couch. I curled up on top of him, my shoulder pressed to his collarbone and my nose tucked under his neck. When he spoke, the vibration tickled against my skin.

"Tomorrow," he said. "Did you talk to your aunt?"

I nodded, my chin grazing his warm skin. "They want her to come in, too."

The day Tomo had discovered his connection to Tsukiyomi, there had been horrible ink messages dripping from every chalkboard in the school, things like *She Must Die* and *Demon Son*. Then ink had poured from every sink in the boys' change room by the gym. It was a huge mess, and the headmaster was convinced it was Tomo's fault because of the way he'd reacted. Well, true, the ink probably *was* his fault, but there's no way it was the horrible prank they were accusing him of. He'd been just as shocked as any of us to see it. Headmaster Yoshinoma had arranged a meeting for tomorrow with Tomo and his dad, and my aunt Diane and I had to attend, too, seeing as I had been in the change room with Tomo and given the ridiculous excuse that Tomo had been framed. Tomo had said my eyes must have given me away. *They're always earnest*, he'd said, which had made my stomach flip over a little.

"Is she still going to let us see each other? Your aunt?" Tomo laughed, but it was dry and empty of humor.

I tried to smile. "So far you're not making the best impression, no. What do you think will happen, though?"

"Suspension, maybe. Or off the kendo team."

"They wouldn't do that. You're one of the top students, and they need you on the team."

Tomo reached for my hand and laced his fingers between mine, squeezing with their warmth. "We'll face it together, whatever it is."

The colorful anime on the screen blinked off, replaced by a stark newsroom and a bowing reporter in a black suit.

"The news already?" I sat up, pulling out my phone to check the time. "I've got to get home."

"I'll take you," Tomo said, but then his eyes went wide and round as he stared at the TV, his hand suddenly limp in mine.

I glanced at the bold white kanji on the screen, at the reporter who rattled off Japanese almost faster than I could follow.

"Sano Chihaya, known as Hanchi, Yakuza *oyabun* and leader in Shizuoka, aged fifty-seven, found this morning in a puddle of blood..."

My body seized with fear. I couldn't move, completely immobilized by the memory. The Yakuza boss who'd kidnapped us, who'd forced Tomo to sketch money at gunpoint to save my life. The same one who'd exploited Jun's father, making him draw drugs and weapons and money, the one who'd tried to recruit Jun after his father's death. *After Jun had killed his own dad*, I remembered with a chill. His father had had an affair with one of the Yakuza, and left Jun and his mother with nothing after he took off. Devastated and desperate, Jun had scribbled down horrible messages, words of ink that had instantly and accidentally killed his dad.

"Sano was in Ginza district, Tokyo—" Ginza, the same place Jun's father had been discovered dead "—when he had what seemed to be a stroke. Collapsed on the sidewalk..." They showed images of the storefront, the police tape and the traffic being redirected. "He appears to have hit his head," the reporter babbled on, her words like syrup in my ears, thick and almost beyond understanding. "He was found in a significant amount of blood."

They showed it then, a pale blue plastic tarp stretched over the shape of a body underneath, the blood seeping out the sides, unwilling to be contained, to keep the secret of what had happened.

"Police can't identify a person of interest at this time. It appears to be accidental, but due to the suspicious circumstances and his Yakuza connection, he will be undergoing an autopsy at the NTT Forensics Center in Shinagawa, Tokyo..."

My heart pressed against my ribs with every beat.

This couldn't be happening. I could see as clear as day that wasn't blood.

It was ink.

Tomo squeezed my fingers in his, both of us unable to speak. *Jun...did you do this?*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Bertha Montes:**

Reading can called mind hangout, why? Because when you find yourself reading a book specifically book entitled Storm (The Paper Gods Book 3) your thoughts will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every aspect that maybe unknown for but surely can be your mind friends. Imaging every word written in a guide then become one contact form conclusion and explanation that will maybe you never get just before. The Storm (The Paper Gods Book 3) giving you one more experience more than blown away your thoughts but also giving you useful information for your better life in this particular era. So now let us demonstrate the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind are going to be pleased when you are finished studying it, like winning a sport. Do you want to try this extraordinary shelling out spare time activity?

#### **Andrea Winburn:**

Do you have something that that suits you such as book? The publication lovers usually prefer to select book like comic, small story and the biggest one is novel. Now, why not attempting Storm (The Paper Gods Book

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**Denita Lumley:**

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**Katie Mueller:**

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