

ETERNAL MELODY

Chapter 8 - Nothing Has Changed

Iro Road High School Class 1-A - 3:50 pm

They stayed out far too long, so the teacher told them to stay behind and clean up. Yuhi sighed when he put the last canvas away. 'Todou-sensei doesn't hold back, does he?' Then again, they did stay out for long. He reentered the room and discovered something. Sumire was fast asleep on the table. He glanced over and noticed the window was slightly open.

'Geez, this clumsy woman.' He walked over to her and draped his jacket around her. The moment he got closer, though, he noticed small droplets of tears against her eyes.

"Mamoru." She mumbled.

"...."

It's not like he didn't know. Ibuki Sumire is still in love with Tsueno Mamoru. But, he supposes hearing it directly from her like this is more painful than he thought.

Yuhi often regretted not asking for his memories to be erased too. Especially on days like this, where he ends up much closer to her, then he should have. All the pain comes crashing down on him. A curse to remind of what has already longed passed between the two.

A long time ago, yes, he met her. He knew about her for the longest time. Back when he was still in the dojo, he already met her. But it's normal she already forgot what happened then. It surprised Yuhi when she said it to him, 'I knew you once before, didn't I?' He couldn't contain his excitement and said yes.

Nothing has changed between them. They did not meet in so long, but his relationship with the woman called Ibuki Sumire hasn't changed at all. Her clumsiness is still the same.

Not much has changed, except well, the important things. But everything minor remains unchanged - the way Sumire laughs, how she fiddles with her fingers when she gets nervous.

Whenever she blushes, her entire face would heat up and turn several shades of red. How, whenever he gets close to her, Yuhi can hear her heartbeat. Whenever he accidentally made contact with her hands, she would laugh nervously and look away.

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But everything important has changed - she still calls him Yuhi, but now she is cautious. Everything between them has changed. Yuhi can't stand it, but he can't escape.

Although he accepted the fact that some strange fate connected, he didn't expect it to turn out this way. He glanced back at the room where he could make out Sumire, still fast asleep.

He placed his hand on his eyes, covering his face, blocking his eyesight. His cheeks were still flustered. Crap, Sumire went ahead and did it even though it was taking him everything not to do anything to her. The fact that she goes ahead and caves based on vague remembering and feelings isn't fair at all.

Tsuneo, how on earth did he date this woman? She is so reckless.

'You're in love with me, aren't you so why don't you just say it?'

If she says it so directly like that, how can he deny it? He isn't good at love; even now, he still doesn't understand it well. What is the difference between

love and partners? But whenever he's with her, there is a strange attraction, a peculiar pull that he can't seem to escape. He can't escape her.

Yuhi recalled a brief conversation he had with her last year.

'Yeah. Switching it to the point of reincarnation. No matter how many times the soul goes through that cycle of rebirth. There will always be traits that remain the same. Well, it's not usually noticeable. But it's obvious in you.'

Those traits remain the same, huh?

It seems like things will never change. Yuhi was unusual, and unlike most people, he could remember his past life memories clearly, which is why he was finding this whole thing to be ironic.

After all, it was the same back then too, their fates crossed closely then too. In the end, it's still like that. Even if he doesn't understand love, what he feels towards her is different than the others.

His thoughts broke when he someone wave a drink in his face.

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A man with short blue hair wearing a white lab coat. Nakara Shichiro, one of the youngest teachers in this school. Twenty years old, a young genius who was accepted into an American university at the age of ten.

"Nakara."

"So did she remember?" he asked, casually leaning against the wall beside him. So it really was a set up like he was thinking.

Yuhi had heard about the physics teachers' connections with the girl - directly from the girl herself. He has yet to see them interact, though. Nakura is testing it, whether or not it's possible to get back something that was supposed to be gone.

Even if he doesn't admit it directly, he does want her to remember, huh?

"A little." His explanation was vague, but Yuhi blushes when he recalled what happened earlier. Was it just him? Or when he kissed her, there was a moment where she kissed him back?

"If I weren't a teacher, I would hit you." Shichiro seemed frustrated.

Yuhi laughs. "Yeah, maybe I do deserve to get hit."

It isn't fair, after all. It isn't fair on all the guys who's been with her this entire time. He was the one who vanished from her life and just conveniently reappeared in front of her again. It isn't right. But, for now, none of those other guys are here.

"If she were to tell you she loves you. What would you do?"

He shuts his eyes and opened them again. "There is no way that would happen."

After all, just now, he saw her expression. Sumire was horrified; she was confused and puzzled at his actions how she seemed to be disgusted by what she did.

She won't fall in love with him, because she is still in love with Tsueno. Tsueno Mamoru is still the only one for Sumire. Even if he is no longer here, her heart still calls for him.