

Melody 181

Eternal Melody 181 One day will you tell me why?

A treasure? He is talking about her, right? Why does this person care for her so much? Is she missing something? Back when they met, she was just a random fan. How come he seems to care so much for her? Did that night mean so much for him?

Sumire raised her head and cupped his cheeks. She wanted to search for her answers in his eyes. But unfortunately, she couldn't find anything.

"Yuhi-san, one day, will you tell me why?"

"Why?" He repeated.

"Why me." Sumire trailed off. "I feel like there is something wrong. I'm happy with you, but you know too much about me."

"That's because I openly stalk you."

"No." Sumire shook her head.

Something, she is missing something. Perhaps Yuhi knew her from before? She doesn't have any memories of a particular age. If Yuhi knew her from back then, his behavior is normal. But would that mean all of this is due to his obligation towards her? She wouldn't like that at all.

It is too soon to jump to conclusions.

"What's wrong?" Yuhi asked, concerned. "Do you feel sick again?"

"Nothing."

Yuhi bent down and kissed her again. "Don't worry about Touko. I will make sure she doesn't bother you."

'That's not what I'm worried about.' Some jealous woman is the least of her concerns now.

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StarRise Stadium - An hour later -

The reason why her phone was ringing so much was because of Asami-san. When she saw the news, she immediately went to find him. The source of her new problem was Tachibana Masaru. A member of the male idol group Nanairo feather.

"Explain this!" Sumire pointed to her phone screen.

Guest Performer: IbukiSumire

Those were the only words written, but it naturally blew up.

"Are you listening?"

Masaru laughed as he paused the music. "Honestly, lady, is it that bad? You already sang recently."

"Your concerts usually have thrice the normal amount of people attending."

"Are you still saying you're afraid of people? You managed to attend school here for over a month."

It almost sounded like he was lecturing her. "The point is, you know I won't be able to do this!"

"I think you should go for it." Yuhi re-entered the room. "I finished talking to Hino, and many people are inquiring on the company website."

That many people are inquiring? Sumire bit her lip. She doesn't want to cause Yuhi trouble. She doesn't want to sing in front of such a large crowd but...

"Relax, I'm singing with you."

At that comment, her eyes widened. He is--?!!

"You're going to make her even more nervous."

Yuhi raised his eyebrow. "She will relax more with me."

She gets to sing with Yuhi? What one earth is happening right now? This must be a dream. To think she would get the opportunity to sing with Yuhi. Even though they are dating now, Yuhi is still one of the people she admires the most.

"Hey, Sumire? Why did you suddenly turn quiet---" Yuhi trailed off and cupped her cheeks. "Why are you, red?"

She did not need a mirror to understand what he was saying; indeed, she knew her face was bright red. Her palms sweaty, and the sound of her rapid heartbeat.

Masaru chuckled. "Well, of course, she is nervous; she respects you a lot."

"But, I see her as my equal."

E--equal? Yuhi and her? Impossible, his singing is on a different level altogether. How could he possibly say they are similar? Is he messing with her?

At that comment, Masaru shrugged. "Up to you whether to believe it. Well, I will get something, you two take your time."

With those words said, Masaru quickly left. The moment he left, Yuhi pulled her into his arms. "So, I think I get it. But don't act so weird around me. You know I have a high opinion of you."

"I know Yuhi-san but to me your---"

He cupped her cheeks. "I'm?"

"Your my..." Sumire paused and averted her gaze. "Could you stop looking at me? Sometimes I feel like an idiot when you do."

Yuhi laughed. "Well, Princess, I know you like me. But control yourself a bit."

"That's easy for you to say."

"Hey, look at me."

She slowly raised her face and saw a tender expression on Yuhi's face. "..."

"I am serious about this, about singing with you and about my feelings. Sumire, I know you're still afraid. But I won't let you be alone ever again."

"Yuhi." She mumbled softly. "I think I will keep causing you more problems."

"That's fine."

"I like you so much, that's already a huge problem."

"You think so? I like what you were doing to me earlier."

Sumire hits him. "I feel like that's all you ever think about these days."

"Sorry." Yuhi apologized. "But do you understand? I love you, so I want to touch you."

"Do you have to touch me to show you love me?"

Yuhi chuckled at her question. "Well, it's not like that. But it's a good thing for both of us."

A good thing? She doesn't understand that very well. "If we're going to sing together, we should write a new song."

"Mmm, do we have time?"

"Don't underestimate me! I can compose something in a day, and it will be good."

"Then, I'll give you a day."

"Hold on! We're writing it together."

"Mmm, alright." Yuhi nodded.

'But is it okay to ask him that? He seems busy already.'

"Yuhi-San, why do you think Masaru-senpai is staying here?"

Strangely, he isn't going back.

At that comment, Yuhi frowned but quickly shrugged. "Isn't he here to bother Shin?"

"Hmmm, it doesn't seem like that...." She trailed off when she saw him averting his gaze. "Well, I guess I will worry about it another time. Yuhi, should we go back to school now?"

"Give me a break. Why would we go back?"

Sumire blinked. "Well, we still have a whole day of lessons."

Yuhi shook his head. "Let's stay here for a bit. There are facilities here we can use freely to practice and compose. Besides, don't you have questions for Masaru?"

"Questions, huh." Sumire looked at him. "I have a question for you, Yuhi-san."

"Yeah?"

"How many times did you do it with your ex-girlfriend? The musician one?"

At that comment, Yuhi seemed startled. He rubbed the back of his head, awkwardly. "Isn't that question random?"

"I heard some strange things."

"Well, I guess a lot. I told you already we had a sexual relationship."

"Hmmm." Sumire looked at him.

Yuhi grabbed her hand and brought it to his face. He gently kissed her fingers slowly. "You know, I don't mind jealousy. But my love, I just told you how much I loved you earlier."

"I know."

She didn't know; she didn't want to know anymore. It's fine that Yuhi loves her. But if she learns how much, she may end up pushing him away. That is the last thing she wants to do.

Eternal Melody 182 I won't stop running

Sumire eventually found herself at the park and stopped for a few moments to catch her breath. Quite some time has passed since she ran like that. However, she knew Tachibana Masaru very well; he has a bad habit of -- her thoughts broke off when a petal fell.

She took it into her hands.

"Spring..." she murmured. Suddenly, the wind blew harder. Cherry blossom petals swirling around her. She closed her eyes and covered them briefly just in case dust got onto her eyes.

After a few minutes, she noticed that the wind had died down a little, so she gradually opened her eyes. Right now, she saw somebody, a man with golden blonde hair landing gracefully from the cherry blossom tree.

Sumire blinked started, she suddenly dropped the notebook in her hand.

The large thud led to him noticing her. He did not say something immediately and walked over. He picked up the notebook, and his lips curve to a smile.

"I see you are fashionably late."

She sighs. "I'm sorry."

Her golden hair senpai had a flower in his hand, and he placed it beside him.

A small chuckle passed his lips. "It is fine little lamb. I was a bit dazed out myself for a while and only arrived a few minutes ago."

Sumire shook her head. "You're only saying that to be polite, Masaru-senpai."

He extends his hand out, and she gratefully took it. He helped her climb the tree.

"I've always wondered about this. But how come this branch is so thick? Most tree branches aren't."

She passed by this park several times and found herself stopping here often. There was something different about it.

Masaru chuckled. "You start with strange questions as per usual."

"It can't be helped. It has bugged me for a while."

He doesn't say anything for a few moments before he brings out his saxophone. A quiet and yet gorgeous melody escapes the moment he began to play.

As she closed her eyes and let the melody flow through her ears, she couldn't help but smile.

There was always something about this person playing before that seemed to make her feel at ease somehow. The person who showed her that there is no longer any need to hesitate when it comes to music.

"This is my family tree. It has been around for generations now. Probably since the Edo period. If it were around for so long now, they would have chopped it down and all that. However, it seems like for generations; my families petitioned to keep it. It's been somewhat of a tradition that the third son spends his time here too." Masaru said with a light chuckle.

She raised her eyebrows. "I doubt that last part Masaru-senpai, you're just lazy, aren't you?"

He winks. "But if a beautiful lady like yourself tells me to work, I'll be more motivated."

"Yes, yes."

Her thoughts broke off when he suddenly grabbed hold of a strand of her blonde locks, as he brought it to his lips—a soft smile on his face. "I bet for me though there's only one beautiful girl that can truly motivate me. Who do you think that is?"

Sumire deeply sighed. "If you stayed here to mess with me, then I will get Yuhi to do something."

Masaru chuckled. "I figured you would be lonely here all alone. The others are very worried about you."

"So they sent you here to spy on me?"

"To watch over you. Lady, you can't stay in Tokyo forever. Eventually, you will have to return to Star Town. Before then.."

Sumire quickly interjected. "In Lewis Carols looking through glass, there is a quote from the Red Queen. It takes all the running you can do to keep the same pace." She trailed off. "I won't stop running until I grab the future I want with my own hands. However, that future is subjected to change through my encounters and experiences."

At that comment, Masaru sighed. "Honestly, when you talk like that, not even I know what to do, lady."

Sumire chuckled. "So even you get tongue-tied, huh?"

"Now now don't say it like that. It's not as if we aren't going to see each other again. Besides, we went through longer separations before."

Longer separations, huh?

"This entire time I've burdened you to sacrifice a lot for me. But now that I'll be leaving. I want you to at least advance into the third year now. Its a waste for you Masaru-senpai, learning the second year content and waiting another year before you graduate. You should be in University. I am sure you can still—" Her sentence fell short when he suddenly leaned forward. He rested his head on her chest.

"...Masaru-senpai..."

"I always thought that as long as I stood by your side, then it would be enough. I'm sure all of us were thinking naive thoughts like that, about not having to confess, about just remaining this way forever. But it seems like each of our desires is too strong. It's not possible," he lifts his head up and smiles. "It really isn't. Holding back, we won't be able to anymore. That's why...when you come back, you best have grown up".

Eh? Before she could even react, though, he bit her neck, leaving a visible pink mark.

For once in her life, she found herself blushing in front of the golden hair playboy.

Masaru smiles, "Now this is a sight I haven't seen before. Since you've always been so Tsun-tsun towards me."

"Shut up!!"

"How amusin—" He trailed off. "Right here is your escort back."

Once again, she didn't get a chance to react since he suddenly pushed her out the tree. Sumire braced for the impact of the fall and closed her eyes. But after a few moments passed, she didn't hear the thud. Huh?

She slowly opened her eyes and realized that somebody caught her. Her amethyst colored eyes met a pair of chocolate brown ones.

"Yuhi!"

"Safe."

Now that she thought about it, something like this happened in the past.

He whipped his head angrily at the golden-haired senpai, who was still on the tree. "Masaru you jerk. What would you do if I did not catch her."

Her sweatdropped, well she probably could have managed either way. Her body tends to be durable during unexpected moments like that after all.

A chuckle escaped her senpai's lips. "But I knew you would catch her."

"Your unbelievable," Yuhi said as he shook his head. He grabbed hold of her hand. "Come on, Sumire let's leave him be."

He held her hand so easily.

"Little lamb." Masaru calls out. She turned her head slightly to see him. "I won't do as you say. For some reason, there's something,ng else I've become rather attached and fond of."

Eternal Melody 183 A true story to everything

The moment they left the park grounds. Yuhi stopped walking and turned around to flick her forehead. "Ouch!" Sumire exclaimed. "That hurts."

"Your too defenseless." Yuhi pointed at her neck.

Sumire laughed sheepishly. "Uh, you saw that?"

"Of course, I did! Geez." Yuhi sighed. "I leave you alone for a moment, and yet you let your guard down. Honestly, what were you thinking?"

"Sorry."

Yuhi sighed. "I can't stay mad at you. Your finished now, right? Its a bit far, but there is a better place we can use."

"Yuhis studio?"

"You know way too much."

When she saw him sulking still, Sumire clung to his arm. Yuhi paused. "Is that all?"

She laughed softly. "Um, what else did you expect me to do?"

"I was thinking you would continue what you were trying earlier."

Sumire covered her mouth with her sleeve and laughed again. "Well, mm. Maybe when we get inside?"

"Do you promise?"

This man doesn't think of anything else, does he? But it is because of him that she can walk freely like this.

It is because of him that she can smile properly.

She read in a book somewhere.

Sometimes it just takes patience for everything to happen.

People do not get respect in just one day. It is impossible to be in love with someone they only just met.

Individuals do not forgive themselves easily after committing one mistake. People grow by making mistakes, getting hurt, and learning from their regrets.

Thoughts are there to help guide you to your decision. It's the individual that has to take that first step into the pathway of happiness.

Don't assume; get the facts straight. By assuming, people make the biggest mistakes. What they see as the truth may not be; their beliefs influence their decisions. This assumption clouds their thoughts.

There are a true story and reasoning behind everything.

We all fight for something, but along the way, it is easier to forget the reasoning we want it.

"Hey, quit spacing out. We are already here."

Huh? Sumire blinked and looked at her surroundings. Sure enough, a tall building stood in front of her. Yuhi raised his hand towards the keypad, and the doors immediately opened. Sumire did not enter right away and stood awkwardly at the doorway.

How is it possible? Weren't they in the area near the park? There were no such buildings nearby. Sumire turned back and found they were in a different area of town. A place she never saw before with modern buildings. What is this?

"Hey, do you want to come inside, or do you want just to stand there?"

"Ah, coming."

....

A few minutes later

Sumire ran her hands through his back. She might as well surrender; it is not like there is anything wrong with them getting close like this. But then again, maybe she should care? Yuhi briefly parted their lips.

"Are you okay? Is it too much?"

It's only kissing; he doesn't have to over-react. Sumire didn't know what to do seeing such concerned looking eyes. She shook her head. "Mmm, Yuhi. This is a nice place."

She only briefly looked before he pushed her down and started to kiss her.

"I guess it is. A bit too large for one person, though."

"Then, should I come here more often?"

His lips curve to a smile, Yuhi nuzzled his forehead against hers. "I don't mind if you do. We could do more things like this with nobody disturbing us."

"Say, this place--" Her sentence fell short when he started to kiss her again. Welp, she supposes she could ask him again later. Besides, she likes the feeling of his lips on hers.

To her surprise, after a few minutes, Yuhi stopped. He pulled away; sweat clung to his body. "Sumire, do you want to get changed? Maybe take a shower too?"

"No, uh-- I am fine."

"Then wait here a bit." With those words said, Yuhi quickly exited the room.

Sumire slumped back onto the couch and tossed back and forth. What is she doing? Does she have time for such a thing right now? But Yuhi seemed happy, and she didn't dislike it either. It feels like her emotions are going crazy, but that person is in the same position.

She hesitated for a few minutes before she got up. Sumire left the room and walked down the hall. It did not take her long before she found the place she wanted.

Sumire extended her hand out towards the doorknob, the moment she did, a familiar hand grabbed hers. Yuhi pulled her inside and kissed her. "Lets take it together, do you mind?"

"I don't." She doesn't mind. He already saw her. Besides, something like taking a bath together should be relaxing, right?

A few minutes later, Sumire regrets it a lot. Yuhi kept kissing her all over; it was hard to relax.

"You tricked me."

"You're the one provoking me a lot." Yuhi pulled away. "But well, I should give you a break once in a while."

Sumire wrapped her arms around his neck and drew their naked bodies together. A hum passed Yuhis lips.

"I just think you're stupid. But I want you to help me with this child. I cant think of anybody else."

"That's fine with me." Yuhi nodded.

"Will I get in your way?"

If people find out she has a child then surely they will criticize her heavily. Getting pregnant before she is eighteen? Eighteen already looks bad to people, let alone before then. There is all that stuff Sano mentioned too. She does not want to stand in Yuhis way and cause him problems. If he tells her yes, then she could leave him immediately.

To her surprise, Yuhi shook his head. "I think it's okay. I mean, Sumire, it's not like I am in a position where I can't support you financially and emotionally."

"That's not--"

"I have my whole life ahead of me. I am young. I know all that. But I already enjoyed so much success from when I was a mere child."

Her eyes widened when she heard those words. She did not expect him to say it like that.

Eternal Melody 184 Can I hope for a future with him?

"I enjoyed everything, fame, and wealth. Once I became successful, I got everything I did not have before. That is why I don't mind giving up my career if it means helping you." Yuhi trailed off. "This may be strange for me to say, but I would like to settle down. Maybe because I worked for so many years but I am tired now."

"But Yuhi you still-" He cuts her off by kissing her.

"I waited for you for so long, don't push me away now."

He is so pushy and unreasonable. No, Yuhi is saying this because he understood her feelings by now. Sumire deeply sighed. It seems like it cant be helped.

"Then okay."

Yuhi chuckled. "Want me to wash your hair for you?"

"Alright."

"Mm, you seem to be okay with me touching you."

"Well we did it already." Sumire trailed off. "Moreover Yuhi, I know you wont take advantage of me."

"Hmm who knows? Like I said provoking me is dangerous." She felt him intertwined a strand of her hair between his fingers. He gently kissed it. "If you don't mind danger however, I will give it to you everyday."

"Yuhi, why do you like me?"

Yuhi turned her around and wrapped his arms around her waist.

"Uh..."

"Well, I already told you when I confessed to you. But if you are still uncertain, I have my ways to show you."

"Let go of me pervert."

Yuhi pulled her into his arms. "Are you going to say that now? I don't know what is wrong, but please understand that I love you a lot. What kind of song do you want to sing Sumire?"

"A ballad."

"Mm, you sure?"

"Yuhi, would you play the piano? Or the guitar?"

"She is asking so much. But well that does sound like a plan. I guess we can write a love song."

Sumire laughed awkwardly when she heard his reply. She didn't think of it that way but now that Yuhi mentioned it, she supposes it can't be helped.

"So Sumire, how good is your english?"

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Three hours later.

Sumire slumped her head on the table completely defeated. Yuhi is more of a slave driver than Aki or Asuka or even Shin. Writing the emotional parts of the song in english huh? It isn't a bad idea, but she isn't that good at english. She can speak basic conversational words but to sing a song? It wont be easy for her. Yuhi left a few minutes ago to attend a photo shoot. She decided it would be better to stay here then go back.

She already had an idea after what Hino said at the hospital the other day. But he treats Yuhi so well.

Her thoughts broke off when she felt somebody pick her up. Sumire glanced at the source and found Yuhi. She wrapped her arms around his neck. "Bully."

Yuhi chuckled. "You couldn't finish?"

"I couldn't, what about your shoot?"

"There were some issues so it was rescheduled."

She likes inhaling his scent like this, it is one of the reasons why she sticks to him whenever she meets with him after parting. Sumire didn't understand it very well, but Yuhi smelled very nice to her.

He gently ran his hands through her hair and then patted her back. "Do you still feel sick these days?"

"My morning sickness isn't that bad, but I still get drowsy a lot and I crave a lot of things." Sumire trailed off. Speaking of cravings.. She glanced at the bag on the table. "My pastries?"

"Yes, yes."

She immediately let go of him and walked over to the table. She opened the bag up and a lovely aroma filled the air.

"No thank you I see." Yuhi sits down beside her and pulls out a bottle of beer from the bag.

Normally she would lecture him but not today.. Sumire continued to eat her food. But she occasionally glanced over at her boyfriend. It still felt strange for her to call him that. To think she is dating Yuhi. A few years back, she would never have thought something like this was possible. Then again, back then, she did not dare to do many things.

"You know for a pregnant woman, Sumire; you don't have mood swings."

Sumire glanced over at what he was reading on his phone. "Yuhi-san, you don't have to read strange articles."

"But I don't want to do anything wrong."

Her cheeks colored. She felt slightly embarrassed. Why does Yuhi have to do things like this for? So the reason he was silent this entire time was because he was reading articles like this? He made such a serious face now.

He turned silent again, and she saw him concentrating hard. It seems like he is serious about this.

Is she deciding her future too quickly? Some people would argue that she is. She is indeed still young, but Sumire could no longer imagine a future without Terashima Yuhi. If he is taking this seriously, does this mean he wants to be with her in the future? Could she hope for that?

Moreover, these days it feels like her desires are going out of control. She wants to touch him; she wants him to touch her. It is difficult to forget her first time with Yuhi. They were clumsy at first, but after a few hours, they memorized each other's bodies and knew how to please each other.

Sumire never felt such embarrassment right until that moment. Who would have thought she could behave so shamelessly?

With the recent events, she never got much of a chance to think about it. But now things are quieter, Sumire understood how embarrassing that was. Who would have thought sleeping with someone would lead to her feeling so ashamed?

She isn't ashamed of the act. It felt good, and she would do it again. But how could she-- go along with him? It seemed stupid thinking about it now.

"Hey, why are you turning red? Do you have a fever or something?" Yuhi brushed his hands across her forehead. But Sumire suddenly pulled back.

She felt self-conscious and stupid right now.

Eternal Melody 185 I don't mind if something happens

Yuhi is far too busy reading those articles. So he won't bother inquiring any further, right? Sumire told him she was fine, and she thought he would leave it. A normal person would leave it, but instead, he puts his phone down. He picked her up and brought her to the room next door. She saw a large oversized bed there in the center, and Yuhi placed her down.

Sumire felt her heartbeat increase.

Could it be that he understood what she was thinking?

"Y-Yuhi?"

"If you have a fever or don't feel well, please rest. I know we are supposed to be composing. But we still have time." Yuhi said kindly. "I can get a start on it based on the ideas you came up with already."

She blinked, confused.

It took her a moment to realize that Yuhi was serious. Couldn't he tell? He usually is so sharp with everything.

Sumire saw that he was about to leave, and she extended her hand out. She buried her face in his back. "Wait, stay..!... I am acting strange because I want you to touch me."

She spoke slowly, not quite understanding what she was asking for.

Yuhi paused. "Do you know what you're saying?"

Sumire nodded. "I don't mind if something happens."

In the next second, Yuhi is kissing her deeply, his hands on her clothes. "I am warning you." He growled against her lips. "Stop me right now."

But she doesn't want him to stop, does she still have to say it?

Aagh, she has no idea what has gotten into her. What on earth is she trying to do? It is almost June; this stuff can wait. Why is she saying all this stuff now?

He kisses her harder, and she felt him explore her tongue to the point where she completely let him take control. The temperature in the room seemed to get hotter by the minute. The more time passed, the more she wanted nothing more than to get rid of the clothes that restricted her body—heavy breathing, skillful hands on her chest, and her legs.

She wonders if Yuhi will do anything, they already worked up this type of mood? Their now sweaty bodies pressed against one another, with every movement, the headboard rocks against the walls. Thankfully they were the only ones in this building.

Sumire gripped the sheets and her other hand - her other hand was occupied. Yuhi was using it for her to touch him back.

Yuhi brushed his lips against her ear. "You okay?"

His sudden gentle tone, despite his beast-like actions, surprised her. "I am okay."

He chuckled. "So, it's okay for me to proceed, right?" At that comment, she nodded her head.

Yuhi brought his face to her legs. "I wonder if it's okay, mmm. Your pregnant; this might hurt more."

"Silly," Sumire muttered. Before anything else could happen the doors burst open and somebody frantically entered.

"Yuhi, we have a huge pro--!" Hino stopped in mid-sentence. He raised his eyebrow. "You know you two...."

Sumire immediately pulled away from Yuhi and fixed her clothes up. When she saw Hino just now, it was like somebody poured water all over her. She woke up from her strange mood.

Yuhi clicked his tongue, annoyed. "Did you have to disturb us?" He still seemed sweaty, hot, and all bothered.

"Yuhi, she just came back."

"Which one?" A dark aura seemed to surround him. The atmosphere seemed to have changed.

"Touko."

Yuhi sighed deeply. "Damn."

"I think she heard the news that your performing with Sumire."

Sumire blinked. But they only decided that stuff earlier, how did that person find out already? So that Touko person is here now? Sumire looked over at Yuhi, who nodded.

"Let's go back to school, Sumire."

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Iro Road High school

Sumire didn't understand why this girl would return to school, but Yuhi knew. She expected them to go to the lobby, but instead, he brought her to his atelier. Sure enough, the moment they entered the premises, the door was unlocked. Yuhi mumbled something about taking that key back as they entered.

When they arrived, a beautiful woman with long blonde hair wrapped her arms around Yuhi and clung to him. "Hmmm, did you get skinnier?"

Her eyes twitched, annoyed. What does this woman think she is doing?

"Touko, why are you even here?" Yuhi said angrily.

Touko looked over at her. "What a pretty girl. I didn't know you had a female friend." She immediately let go of Yuhi and stood directly opposite her. "You would make a great model; your features are so plain so it would be easier to draw."

"Wrong, she is my girlfriend." Yuhi grabbed her arm and pulled her towards him.

Touko burst into laughter. "As if you would date somebody who looks so plain. Besides, I've seen Ibuki; she is pretty."

Sumire looked away awkwardly. Sure she puts on a disguise when she is in school, but does she look that different and plain? This person is a bit different than she thought. Or rather, she reminds her of Yuhi – but a female version of him.

She took out her ID from her bag. It was her star agency ID badge. Touko, who was bickering with Yuhi, paused to look. "The real one?"

"Yes, the real one." Sumire took a deep breath. "Could you let go?" She pointed to Yuhi's arm, which Touko grabbed hold of again. Though she said it normally, Sumire was anything but calm right now.

Touko must have noticed since she lets go. "You don't have to be so scary."

"Oi Touko quit antagonizing her."

"It was just a greeting; you two need to calm down."

"Damn, woman, you don't change at all."

Touko rolled her eyes. "I would like to say the same for you. But you're still as bad as ever. Treasure your art supplies more. What if somebody stepped on your brushes?"

"Well it's not like anybody will come here."

Yuhi was bickering with the woman, and yet Sumire felt weird about all of this. The two of them seem to get along better than she heard. The others told her these two clashed a lot. But isn't this just friendly bantering?

She felt a sudden pain in her chest and quickly turned to the door and didn't bother saying anything else.

Sumire wanted to get away from this place as quickly as she could.

She hears Yuhi chase after her, but she does not stop walking. A strong gust of wind blew, and in the next second, she felt a pair of arms wrap around her. "Sumire, my Sumire. Hold on a moment."

My Sumire? Since when did Yuhi use that on her?

Eternal Melody 186 When did you first start to like me?

"I told you not to run so fast, geez," Yuhi said as he unrolled the bandages and tore one up.

"Sorry." She laughed awkwardly. "I guess I was jealous."

"I don't mind that, but, earlier you...could you explain that?"

Sumire looked away. "Was it wrong?"

"Well, no, it was great, but I am serious. You shouldn't provoke me too much. It's a good thing Hino came. I would have ended up breaking my promise."

So he would have continued?

Yuhi dropped the bandages and leaned forward. "Tonight, do you have some time? You could go back with me."

"Aren't we staying at Atushis tonight?"

Atushi said he wanted to discuss something.

Yuhi bit her ear, and she flinched. "You don't want to? Continue what we did earlier? We stopped, but that doesn't mean it's over." He placed one of his hands on her thighs. "I want to do something fun. You don't want that Sumire? You seemed willing earlier."

Uhh-- she needs a time out! What is with this person? She thought she was good at teasing people. But Terashima Yuhi takes teasing to another level.

"Sumire?"

"I don't know what to say," Sumire admitted. "This stuff is new to me."

At that comment, Yuhi pulled back. He suddenly flicked her forehead. "When you respond like that, even I get confused." Yuhi trailed off. "Well, forget it. I understand that you're different. Your not controlling like Touko or seductive like Makino."

The second part bugs her. If that is what Yuhi likes, she ought to work hard. But uhh, for now, she ought to deal with his random kisses. Those are bad for her heart.

"This will sting." Yuhi lifted her hand and put the cotton bud with ointment towards it.

She flinched slightly, but she was too busy looking at his face. "Yuhi, you're a bit too handsome."

"Crazy girl, what are you saying."

To her surprise, a light tint of red appeared on his face. Ah, quite some time has passed since she last saw this. But she is speaking the truth here. He has a good looking face, and she unconsciously looked towards his chest. Whenever he wore T-shirts, she could see the muscles through his clothes.

Sumire quickly looked away. She needs to stop eyeing him like a creep. Even if she is his girlfriend...

"You know if you wanted to check me out, you should do it when we take a bath together."

She raised her eyebrow at that comment. "You mean we will do that again?"

"Yeah, it's relaxing."

Is that so? Perhaps Yuhi wants to do some other things with her too, but he hasn't said anything. This person holds a lot of things back for her sake. If she considers the people he dated, he is tolerating a lot of stuff. He treats her differently from them, that shows she is special.

Just now, what upset her was seeing Yuhi speak so casually with another girl. Aaah- now that she thought about it, she probably looked very rude there. That woman even backed away when Yuhi introduced her. Touko probably isn't a bad person. Well, the cheating factor aside- she is probably a normal person.

"What are you thinking about now?" Yuhi sighed. "Don't think anymore, weird things."

"I won't, but Yuhi, I do have a question for you."

"Hmm?"

"When did you first start to like me? I mean, you weren't interested in me when we first met." She trailed off. "Or were you? You had bad intentions bringing me home that time.." Her sentence fell short when Yuhi flicked her forehead again. "Ouch, that hurts."

"Quit messing around. Does it matter when I started to like you? You already figured out that I liked you for so many years. That information should be enough for you."

It should be, but she isn't satisfied. Perhaps Yuhi knows something. The accident she ended up in when she was younger. The accident that led to her losing her memories. Does Yuhi know something?

Sumire slumped her head in his arms. "Yuhi-san, will you pat my head and console me?"

Yuhi puts the antiseptic down, and she felt his hands on her hair. A content sigh passed her lips.

"You okay, Sumire?"

"Well, I am repenting for my behavior a few minutes ago. Jealousy is a monster in disguise. I should know better."

"Regrets?"

"Just a little." Sumire trailed off. "You two get along better than I thought."

"Well, she was my rival for the longest time. I guess I feel comfortable around her. However, Sumire, you don't have to worry. I said all that stuff about Touko cheating, but there was more to it than that. I didn't hate her when we broke up. But when I thought how toxic our relationship was, I ended up hating her."

She raised her face then. "Toxic?"

"She was controlling and possessive not so much me but my art. If I painted something different and not like my usual style, she would get mad. This prevented me from exploring other themes."

"Ah, the thing you mentioned before about weakness?"

"Yeah. Honestly, it didn't bother me as much back then. I didn't have you around, so I did not need to paint such gentle pictures. But things are different now. I want you to smile more."

Her eyes widened when she heard those words. So that was the reason why. When she saw that painting, she immediately felt happy. The painful feeling in her heart and her other concerns vanished. That warm and gentle painting, his use of soothing colors, it was all for her? No wonder she felt so strongly connected to it.

Sumire stood up. She sat on his lap and wrapped her arms around his neck, burying her face in his neck. For a moment, she does not say anything. But in the next second, she gradually placed light kisses there.

"Mm, comforting me?"

"Yuhi, were you lonely all this time? Waiting for me."

It was something she wanted to ask him this entire time.

Eternal Melody 187 The right to express themselves

There was a brief moment of silence. For the next few minutes, Sumire felt tense. Was it a bad idea to say that?

Yuhi never told her specifically that she was the one he was waiting for this entire time, maybe she misunderstood? But she understood from his words and actions alone. This person has always thought of her.

"Hey Yuhi, I have an idea."

..

"Drawing on the old school building walls, you sure are bold," Yuhi commented as he placed the last bucket of paint down. He took a seat on the stool beside her.

Yes, this was her idea to paint on the walls of the old school building. Now that Touko woman is back, Sumire understood that many people would doubt her place by Yuhis side. The only thing she can do to bypass that is to paint with Yuhi again, to work on another piece.

Sumire tilted her head confused. "It's old, and nobody comes here anyway."

"It is still part of the school grounds."

She laughed softly. "I wonder how long it will take before somebody realizes. Besides," Sumire picked up the brush. "Were you not the one who said that every artist has the right to express themselves?"

"Why do you remember something I said such a long time ago?"

"Well that's because I like you, of course, I will remember."

At that comment, Yuhi looked down. His sudden silence made her curious, so she glanced over at him. Her eyes widened when she saw him blushing. Sumire grabbed hold of his shirt. "Are you embarrassed because I said I like you?"

"Like hell."

"That isn't it?"

Yuhi sighed deeply and flicked her forehead again. "Quit being so cheeky; you already know how I feel about you."

"Do I?"

"Damn you.."

"Besides, why are you hesitating? Arent you the genius painter Terashima Yuhi? I don't remember accepting the confession of such a boring guy."

His eyes twitched, annoyed, and Yuhi pinched her cheeks. "Brat, your talking like this even though your--" Yuhi paused when he looked over at the small part of the building she already painted. "I can't even call you a normal person, damn."

Sumire laughed at his reaction. "Do I have your approval, Mr genius?"

"Of course you do." Yuhi trailed off. "I know your doing this to prove a point. But I find this exciting."

"The thrill and danger of getting caught?"

Yuhi shook his head. "More like painting with you is exciting."

Sumire saw the bright look in his eyes, and her gaze softened. It seems like he defeated her once again. She wonders if Yuhi understands. Only a short time has passed since she came to Tokyo, but he already made her experience so many happy and joyful things.

No matter what dangerous things happen from now on, at least she has experienced happiness beforehand.

She glanced over at Yuhi, who was painting away. There was something different about him right now. She rested her head on his shoulders, and Yuhi paused. "Should we go back inside? You must be tired."

"No, I just want to flirt with you. Do you not like it?"

At that comment, Yuhi chuckled. "Why would I hate it?" He trailed off. "I am sorry for making you uneasy even if it was only for a moment. I don't want you to end up with some sort of inferiority complex to Touko."

"Yuhi, you know that girl doesn't bother me. I mean, I told you before, it is easy for me to deal with my rivals. But my main concern is you getting hurt for my sake again, and you get dragged into my mess."

"Like I told you before, I already got myself involved in something bad." Yuhi cupped her cheeks and brushed their forehead together. "I love you too much. You don't have to think of anything bad, you have me, and I will never leave you."

Sumire laughed softly. "Your amazing Yuhi-san, you know what to say to calm me down." She trailed off. "Then there is something I want your help with. You see, I don't have any memories from before I was seven years old. It seemed like I got caught up in some kind of major human trafficking case."

This was the reason why her parents treated her awkwardly. They blamed themselves for what happened and didn't know what to do.

"You want me to help you find the truth?"

She nodded. "But its more of a support role. I want you to support me just in case I have a mental break down or something. There must be a reason why I cant remember. Something traumatizing must have happened that led to me sealing away the truth." Sumire trailed off. "The reason is, I am looking for someone. Back then, there was somebody with me."

At first, she thought it might have been Ru, but he told her it wasn't when she asked him about it. The hand she held that day, that small and yet large hand. "I only have vague recollections of the time. Most people would want to burry away such an accident."

But the badge she saw that day on Rus accident remained in her head. When Sano allowed her to look at it properly, Sumire confirmed the suspicious thoughts she had in her head the entire time.

It's the same - it's the same as the vague fragment she recalled that day.

Yuhi grabbed hold of her hands. "Anyhow, are we painting this thing or not?"

Sumire laughed softly. The unease she felt from moments ago vanished immediately. "How do we paint like this?"

His gaze softened, and he kissed her forehead lightly. "Follow my movement."

"Okay--" Sumire paused when she noticed something. He was trembling. She bit her lip when she realized that. This person isn't any better than her; he is just as weak at times. But no matter how weak they both are neither show weakness.

It must be suffocating for him too.

She wants to tell Yuhi that it was okay and that he wasn't alone either. But something prevented her. In the back of her mind, a voice told her not to; if she were to say it, then something bad would happen.

Chapter 189: I want to try the impossible

If audio player doesn't work, press Stop then Play button again

"So what is the story behind that sculpture at the front gate?"

Yuhi who was eating his meal looked up. He tapped his fingers against the desk. "How did you know that was my piece?"

"For one it isn't strange considering how the school treats you." She noticed it from the moment she transferred. Yuhi could get away with skipping class, he even had his own atler. The teachers never say anything when he does attend class and sleep.

Despite his words earlier, he seemed oddly calm at her suggestion even if meant vandalising school property.

Yuhi raised his eyebrows and was about to argue with her, but she cuts him off and presents more evidence.

"Well I suppose so. The story huh? There isn't much to say."

"Are you sure? That piece is different from all the others."

"I was thinking about my family."

Yuhi nodded. "Indeed they abandoned me. But I do have vague recollections of my mother singing to me gently. If she disliked me so much, she wouldnt have done that. I could just be delusional about all of this. But even so, I hear it occasionally, a voice telling me to stay strong."

So that is why that sculpture is a woman holding her child. Others may see it as a girl carrying a basket, but she wasnt like them. They see it that way since they only looked at it briefly. But she stared at it for a very long time.

"Do you miss her?"

It was a stupid question. Of course Yuhi missed her, otherwise he would not have made that piece. Family huh? Its not like she is any better than him, she missed her family too. She missed them a lot, occasionally she would look around and expect them to appear.

But it is already too late.

Sumire quickly changed the topic sensing that the atmosphere became odd. "So it isn't just painting for you?"

When she learned that Yuhi was the one who sculpted that piece, she was very impressed.

"As artists we have the freedom to express ourselves." Yuhi mocked and she rolled her eyes. "At the start I only wanted to paint. As an artist yourself you should know how time consuming certain mediums are. I wanted to focus on becoming a better painter. But at some point I changed my mind."

"Now you're an artist who is good at everything." Sumire finished for him.

His lips curve to a smile. "Well I wouldn't say everything, there are certain mediums I can't handle."

Sumire rolled her eyes when she heard him say those words. What mediums can't he handle? As far as she is concerned Yuhi is good at everything. But she has to admit that he does have his clumsy moments.

Her thoughts broke off when Yuhi edged closer to her. "Are you okay Sumire?"

For a moment she didn't understand what he was saying until he brought his free hand to her cheeks.
"Your face is red."

Bthump, thump - Sumire clearly heard the rapid sound of her heart.

"Are you embarrassed? I didn't even say anything yet.."

"Ahhh, it's because you're too handsome and you randomly kiss me. Plus you give me that strange look too--" Sumire covered her red stained face with her hands. "I sound like an idiot."

Even though she is usually so calm and collected. When she is with this person she ends up behaving like an idiot.

Yuhi to her surprise did not make fun of her. He did not reply right away. After a few minutes passed he kissed her forehead softly. "I understand that you're nervous, the same goes for me too. Let's take things slowly and get used to each other. You will learn to be calm with me."

"I don't think that's possible, you drive me crazy."

"Mmm, I get that too."

Yuhi is trying to say that it is the same for him. But is that truly the case? How can it be the same? How is it possible that he has the same feel- her thoughts broke off when he removed her hands from her face. He kisses her fingertips slowly.

"You're so beautiful Sumire and you're mine. It feels like a dream."

They are both acting like idiots. They will end up regretting this one day. There is no such thing as a love that will last forever. Sumire understood that better than anybody, and yet she still wanted to give it a try. She wants to try that impossible love with this person.

....

On the way back it was quiet. Sumire didn't know what to say to him. After that she barely spoke to him, a few nods, yes and no. How does she face him? She isn't used to somebody treasuring her this deeply. It is a new feeling that she does not know what to do with.

"We have arrived."

Sumire looked up and realized they were in one of Yuhi's other apartments. It did not take long for her to realize that Yuhi had apartments all over town. It seemed like he never stayed in one place for a long time. This building was slightly older and only had one floor. But Sumire liked this place more.

He unlocked the door but Sumire wrapped her arms around him. She buried her face in his chest, mustering the remaining courage she had.

The next few minutes they remained that way in each other's arms. Yuhi caresses her hair softly and places a light kisses on her head.

But then she hears his phone go off.

Yuhi chuckled at her attitude. "You know I could stay here all night and not let you go. But I think Hino will kill me if I don't attend the conference."

Sumire didn't say anything, but she dropped her hands to her side and yet don't pull away. She mumbled softly. "For some reason I don't want you to leave."

He raised his eyebrow. "So you don't mind Hino killing me."

"I don't actually, just stay."

She felt something brush across her forehead. It was his lips again. "Alright, but you explain when he shows up angry."

"Okay."

Chapter 190: I think I like your surprises

If audio player doesn't work, press Stop then Play button again

Hino showed up like Yuhi said. He was furious.

It was around seven thirty in the morning, she woke up to a large bang on the door. But she ignored it at first. Sumire looked at Yuhis arms wrapped around his waist, his lips were on her forehead. "I think I am getting too attached to this."

Yuhi only asked her to live with him because of her current situation. If she wasn't so fragile, would he ask a random girl to stay with him? No matter how much he likes her, normally one would not ask somebody to live with them so easily.

Others would say it is normal for guys to ask a pretty girl to stay with them. But is that genuinely the case here? If that was all Yuhi wanted from her.

"..ove..."

Sumire blinked when she heard those words from his lips. It was vague but what other word would end in ove other than love? She leaned forward slightly.

"I love you Sumire.."

Her eyes widened. Is this person an idiot? He must be a fool. He shouldn't love her this much, she does not deserve this much love and attention.

Another bang, followed by yelling.

Sumire knew she had to snap out of this blissful dream. She sighed deeply. She picked up her clothes and slipped them on, and combed her hair back with her fingers. Her dress from yesterday was wrinkled slightly but it would have to do.

Sumire took a deep breath and she walked over to the door. The distance from the door to the bedroom was not a lot, this was a regular flat. The moment she opened it, an angry Hino greeted her.

"You finally opened up you bastard. How could you skip like that? I thought we discussed this properly a year ago. You said you would make an exception for this event." Hino was still ranting, clearly he didn't have a look at who he was speaking to.

"He is sleeping. Stop yelling."

Hino looked at her. "Sumire."

She closed the door behind her and walked a few steps ahead until she arrived at the set of stairs at the end. It was colder than she thought it would be. But that coldness vanished immediately when Hino draped his jacket around her.

"Aren't you going to--"

Sumire half expected him to yell and get very angry.

"Well he stayed because you asked?"

"Yes."

Hino looked frustrated but nodded. "Alright."

"Alright?" She repeated puzzled.

"Sumire you know already that I investigated you. I know about your..situation." Hino chose his words carefully. But Sumire found it useless.

"That's not--" but the words were stuck in her throat. He was absolutely right. She had a moment of weakness and as a result asked Yuhi to stay with her.

Silence fell on them for a few minutes before she broke it with an apology.

Sumire knew he did not say it deliberately but it felt like a jab. It is exactly like what Sano said. She will stand in the way of Yuhi's career, his dreams and his future.

"I would do the same for him."

Hino sighed again. "Well I guess that's that."

"What was the conference about?"

"You will find out soon." With those words said Hino quickly left.

Sumire could only look at his retreating figure with a flash of disappointment in her eyes. Who was she disappointed at? Yuhi? Hino or maybe her self. In the end she can't do anything for Yuhi but hinder him. That is the undeniable truth.

...

When she returned to the apartment, Yuhi immediately backed her against the wall and started to kiss her all over. It felt nice and warm, especially after the cold she experienced briefly. Hino's jacket slipped from her shoulders onto the ground. Yuhi lifted her dress.

"Yuhi." Sumire interjected. "Not now." Her voice was firmer than usual.

"Sorry." He apologized and drew his hand back. "Do you not feel well?"

"No." She actually felt fine for once. It was a rare change, her feeling okay.

"Then is it me? Sorry, am I scaring you?"

That isn't it either. But she just felt that doing this now was wrong. Yuhi brought his lips to her neck. He kissed and bit along the soft flesh and she shuddered.

"Don't be scared Sumire."

"I know you won't harm me."

"Yeah."

"Yuhi, I just want you to clarify-" She trailed off when he traced her lips with his fingers. "--are you hiding something from me?"

"Yeah I am."

At that comment she sighed. "If you immediately say yes, it is difficult for me to get mad."

Then again she finds it difficult to get angry at him. No matter what stupid thing he does, she finds it hard to get mad.

"Okay, let's try this again." He mumbled. "I love you Sumire. So can you please do me the honour of letting me touch you?"

"Where do you want to touch?"

Yuhi scooped her up and brought her to the bedroom. He placed her down on the bed. "I guess you will find out love."

"I think I like your surprises."

"I know you do."

She wants to ask him why he knows. But that thought is washed away when his lips fell on hers and he was hovering over her. His shirt discarded onto the ground. When did he take that off?