

Melody 221

## **ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 221**

Chapter 221: You didn't do anything

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So now he understood what went on between them, what is he supposed to do with this information? It does not sit well with him that the two were that close to one another. Yuhi knew he ought to express these thoughts to her, but right now, he was distracted.

Sumire kept playing with his fingers, her other hand trailing against his shirt. "You're very needy," Yuhi commented as he felt her lips graze against his neck.

Now he understood that she slept with Atsuro because she was lonely. He is having mixed and second thoughts about her desires toward him. Is she only behaving this way because she is lonely?

"Yuhi, it seems you don't believe me anymore."

"That's not true." Yuhi shook his head. He still believes in her, but he needs to clear his thoughts a bit here.

"I am hungry. Could you buy me some pastries?"

Yuhi nods. "Alright."

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It was raining when he got out of the store. But he did not bother waiting for it to stop. Yuhi wanted to return to her as soon as possible. He did not miss the cold and empty gaze in her eyes on the way out. It's not like he is judging her, but it just reminds him of something he saw before.

When he arrived at her room in the hospital, Yuhi paused at the door.

The nurses gave it away, gossiping loudly like that.

He peeked through the door, and sure enough, Atsuro was there. He had Sumire's hands pinned against the headboard, and he was hovering over her.

"Does he satisfy you like I did?" Atsuro mumbled.

"Atsuro..."

Atsuro gently kisses her earlobe. "Are you telling me you forgot this? He can't get rid of your pain Sumire, come back to me."

"We weren't..going out."

"Does that matter?"

Yuhi pauses when he hears those words. Something similar to this happened between Makino and him before. It seems like people will do anything to forget the pain in their hearts.

"Besides, out of all the people you chose, you chose Yuhi? Don't you know he is worse than me? That guy can throw you away easily. He treats those of the opposite gender like garbage, no even his own friends. He once abandoned his friends and used them as a shield so he could escape; he is that kind of scum."

Indeed that happened before. Back then, he was a jerk, and he just wanted to carve his existence somehow - even if it was as a jerk.

Atsuro nipped her earlobe again and ran his hands through her sides. "You don't need him."

Yuhi clenched his fist. Move, move already. He needs to go in there and stop what is about to happen. He glances over at his girlfriend, Sumire isn't in the best state to make rational decisions. If he does not do anything, then something will happen again.

Once again, he will watch somebody important to him get snatched away. Right before his eyes, that scene from before will happen again.

He could remember the sight of his girlfriend entangled in the arms of another man. The sight and state of the house they shared, indicating how many times they did it. The messed up sheets..

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20XX - Tokyo-

Yuhi took a deep breath as he stepped out of the elevator. His gaze fell on the box in his hands, and he sighs. Maybe this is a bit too soon. It's not like they are number one yet. But he wanted to try it anyway. Lately, Touko seemed distant. Yuhi understood that his several trips abroad made her feel lonely, but it was for a good cause. Today he would finally explain the reason why he has been so busy.

He typed in the passcode to the apartment, and the moment he did, he noticed how messy it was. Touko is a bad cleaner, but she normally doesn't leave things out like this. Her shoes were at the door indicating she was there, but Yuhi noticed something else. A pair of men's shoes.

His heart sped up, but he shook his head. She probably has friends over. Maybe the guys are here? Yuhi didn't tell them that he was returning.

Yuhi headed to the bedroom, but halfway through the hall, he heard some ambiguous sounds and the slamming of the headboard. He clenched his fist, and he felt his entire face turn cold. No...it can't be, she wouldn't do that.

Touko has way too much pride to cheat on him. She always looked at people like that with a scornful look in her eyes. It can't be.

He increased his pace and eventually arrived at the door. He was about to turn the doorknob, but then he hears a clattering sound. "Go back to the bed.."

"You like this position, though?"

"Jerk, go back already."

The voice of his girlfriend was clear but the other voice.

Yuhi recognized it all too well. He recognized those shoes at the door too, but he wanted to deny it. Yuhi waited until they left the door and simply stood frozen for a few minutes.

More ambiguous sounds, more dirty-talk, Yuhi knew he could no longer hold back, so he opened the door completely.

Inside the room was his girlfriend and the man she was cheating on him with. He still couldn't believe it even though there was evidence right before him. The man was his best friend and band member.

Morris was the first one to notice him, but even then, he did not alert Touko, who was still moaning in pleasure and touching Morris back. Yuhi could not miss the sly smirk on his friend's face.

When Touko finally realized, she was the first to pull away. But by that time, his emotions were numb.

"So." Touko trailed off. "Your back now?"

Her face did not show any trace of remorse. "This...what is this..."

"Its exactly what it looks."

Yuhi bit his lip when he heard her reply, exactly what it looks?

"This isn't the first time?" A part of him still hoped that it was a drunk mistake or something. He did ask the guys to take care of Touko while he was away.

"It was going on for even before you left." Touko sighs. "You only just noticed? Then again, I didn't expect you to find out earlier, considering how you don't care for me anymore."

"What do you mean—"

Touko glare intensified. "For the past few months, you stopped paying attention to me. You only worked and studied. You canceled all our dates, and at home, you always had your headphones on. During weekends you were tired and simply slept. Even when a guy was flirting with me right in front of you, you didn't do anything."

## **ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 222**

Chapter 222: The regrets from the pas

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

At that comment, Yuhi sighs. "Alright, so my recent behaviour came across as cold. But you should know why. I was working on the album and expanding our music. This was the reason why I went abroad for three months too, and I stabilized the connection. I know that may seem like an excuse but.."

"That again." Touko looked more irritated. "Then tell me, I hung out with other guys late at night, but you were okay with that?"

"I trust you."

"Haaah." Morris, who was silent this entire time, suddenly laughed. "Trust? Don't be a fool, Yuhi, we are living in the twenty-first century. Do you honestly think she will stay by your side after being neglected so much?"

"Morris," Touko interjected.

"No, don't bother talking to this guy. He won't listen to you, and he only cares about himself. He left you alone the past few months and then went abroad. He didn't explain it to you either. This guy is a piece of shit, Touko. You already went through so much; you don't need this garbage."

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The memory of the past vanished when he heard a large thud sound. Yuhi's eyes widened when he saw Atsuro on the ground.

"Yuhi isn't like that!"

His eyes widened.

"I can listen to you condemn and insult me for my reckless behavior. But don't you dare drag Yuhi into this. Don't you dare insult him to my face like that—" She shook her head. "I can't believe you would even say all that stuff. Maybe I should tell you why I picked Yuhi? Other than the fact that I loved him for so many years, but unlike you and the other guys, he actually listens to me. He listens to what I say and doesn't jump to conclusions. I am a mess, and not exactly a good person. But he still loves me for all my faults."

This girl— why does she trust him so much? All of the things he said to her could have been lies. But Yuhi glanced over and saw the determined and strong look in her eyes.

"Are you serious? That man is--"

At that moment, Yuhi somehow mustered the strength to open the door.

Sumire turned to him with a gentle gaze. "Did you get my pastries?"

"Yes."

She looks over at Atsuro. "I think you should go." She didn't say it coldly, or anything but her firm tone led to Atsuro brushing past him quickly.

Yuhi stood dumbly at the door; he couldn't move. He didn't want to move. No, that was wrong. He wants to hold her in his arms right now.

After what felt like forever, he felt a familiar warmth in his arms. Sumire was hugging him tightly. "Yuhi, it's okay."

Right at that moment, he wrapped his arms around her waist.

It's okay.

How many people have said those words to him? So many people already. But only this feels genuine.

"Let me finish what I couldn't earlier." He mumbled quietly; his fingers slid down her forearm. "But only if you want."

"Define stupid."

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Yuhi closed his phone and turned back to the hospital. For a moment, he thought to take a smoke break too but decided against it. After what happened last night, Yuhi wanted nothing more than to stay with her.

"When you told us she was in the hospital. I thought it was the same as before, but why does she look so pale?" Aika demanded.

It was half-past nine in the morning. The school was having another holiday thing, so everybody was here visiting Sumire.

"Well.."

"Also, if you two are going to do it, remember to dispose of the evidence."

Sumire laughs softly. "Oops."

Gosh, she looks cute. Indeed she looked paler, and her condition seemed worse than yesterday. But that didn't matter. He walks back over to the bed and hugs her. "Good morning, sorry I had to step out for a bit."

"It's okay; you had to tell Hino, right?"

Yuhi nods. "Yeah." Hino didn't seem very happy, but they both knew they could not leave Sumire alone. His gaze softens when she buries her face in his neck. "Morning, did you eat?"

"She wouldn't eat until you got here, Yuhi-kun," Asami explained.

He raises his eyebrows and turns to the girl in his arms. "I told you to eat, even without me."

"I don't want to."

He knew there was no use arguing with her there. "Let's eat together."

"Okay."

Yuhi turns to Asami, who quickly set things up. She brought the tray over and placed it in front of Sumire.

Sumire shook her head and pointed to the door.

Yuhi followed her out understanding what she was getting at. After walking around for a few minutes.

His thoughts broke off when he felt her hand on his cheek. "Sumire, I am okay."

"Are you sure?" She looked as though she did not believe him. He didn't either, her current condition worried him greatly. But he could not figure out what was wrong with her. Does he have to resort to consulting Atsuro after all?

"Yeah." He cupped her cheeks causing her to let go. "You look cute, what's with those bunny ears?"

Since he entered the room again, Yuhi noticed something different about her.

Sumire chuckled. "It's called a pom-pom hat. It keeps my ears warm."

"It looks-" Yuhi quickly corrected himself. "You look cute." He kisses her again causing her to laugh.

The sound of his phone ringing however interrupted her beautiful laughter. Yuhi frowns and proceeded to ignore it. Sumire however extended her hand out and took his phone from his pocket.

"It's your ex."

Yuhi already knew even without her saying anything. After all he purposely set a different ringtone for Touko to avoid her calls. He could have just blocked her number but he never did. Was a part of him still clinging on to her all this time? It was hard to tell.

"Ignore it." He wanted to continue kissing her.

"Yuhi."

"I only need you."

Who cares about Touko? Who cares about anyone other than Sumire?

His girlfriend rolls her eyes. "It's most-likely about work, you should answer it--" She pauses. Her violet coloured orbs met his. "Maybe you can ignore it and accidentally delete your call history."

Yuhi grinned. He likes this about her. "Is this sensible?"

This was something she asked him before.

"I think so."

He knew that he could spend all day with her like this but he glanced over and saw her pale face. "It's cold out here, let's go back."

Sumire nodded and she extended her hand out. "Carry me."

Geez she is so whimsical at times. The moment he lifted her, she buried her face in his arms. His lips curve to a smile when he notices something. "Sniffing again?"

"I like your scent."

He likes her scent too, he loves everything about her.

**ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 223**

Chapter 223: Going crazy again

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

God, he could do this all day. The others long left when they returned to the room. A note attached to the basket Asami was carrying earlier.

Have fun -

Yuhi passed the note to Sumire.

"I think we should have fun too."

This girl has no idea what that means right? No, she isn't the oblivious type.

At first, he didn't do anything other than kiss her but after a while, Yuhi felt Sumire's hand trail on his chest. She didn't do anything other than this but his thoughts were going crazy. Finally, she snuggled up to him, her legs entangled in his and her face on his neck.

Yuhi was okay with her sniffing at him again. But when she started to kiss him that did it. "Sumire."

"I love you."

He blinked surprised at her words. This must be the first time she said those words without saying anything extra. Yuhi did not reply verbally but physically. He kisses her back and caresses her hair.

"You feel bad right?"

"Yes," Sumire admitted. "I do not think it is food poisoning anymore."

Did she genuinely believe that? When she passed out like that the other day he knew something was wrong. "Should I get Atsuro again?"

Even though he was the one who suggested it. Yuhi felt very bitter.

"It's okay he already took my blood."

He did that when? Sumire's blood huh? It's probably sweet. An image flashed in his head of him drinking her blood. Yuhi shook his head. He needs to erase that image.

"You look very sick Sumire."

Indeed even as they spoke, she looked paler and paler by the very minute. Her skin felt so very cold. There was none of the usual warmth. As much as he does not like Atsuro, Atsuro is the only one who can help Sumire with her condition.

"I feel it too." Sumire agreed. "Yuhi don't look so worried. But if you are then maybe you can help."

Yuhi blinked in surprise. "You want me to help?"

Sumire nods.

"What makes you think I can help? ❖❖"

"Because." Sumire drawled. "You're a genius."

How come she knows about that? Then again it should not surprise him too much. Yuhi assumed that he was the only one who watched, the only one who was crazy in love. It turns out he was not the only one, she watched him too. He tucks the strand of loose hair behind her ear.

"Then I will think of something." Yuhi knew his reply was vague and uncertain. It contradicts what she said just moments ago. But even geniuses have their weak moments.

Sumire laughs softly. "Then I will wait." She intertwined their hands together.

This is one of the many things he liked about her. They can get intimate without doing that. Sumire has these little gestures she-- Yuhi paused when he felt her hands trail on his trousers. He raised his eyebrow.

Sumire sighs. "Going crazy again, sorry."

It was only one word but it was enough, enough to make her cry.

"Sorry don't cry," Yuhi muttered.

"It hurts," Sumire admitted. "I think it might have something to do with the child."

Something? Yuhi could tell that it was. He thought back to when she fainted and sighs deeply. She was clutching her stomach. Yuhi changed their positions so he was on top. He lifted her shirt and kissed her stomach.

"Mm, what are you doing?"

"Soothing." Again one word but Sumire naturally understood. She ran her hands through his hair and he continued his soothing kisses.

"Yuhi, what if I make strange sounds?"

"You already are."

"Should I squeal? You will get caught."

"Stupid girl if I get caught they will kick me out."

"I wouldn't like that but it would be interesting to see."

This cheeky girl, even when she is sick she behaves this way. Then again yes this is another thing he liked about her.

Yuhi pressed his lips above the scar on the right. "Where did this come from?" The scar was small but he could tell it was a deep wound.

"Nailgun." Sumire trailed off. A frustrated look appeared on her face as though she just remembered something. "The fight was already over and both sides came to terms with everything already. But somebody acted out and thus I got hurt."

Normal people would end this conversation here but he was not a normal person. He knew Ibuki Sumire very well.

"I have a feeling that you are deliberately hiding something."

Even if somebody acted out that does not automatically mean she would get hurt, unless she was close. Yuhi fought side by side with her before so he was very familiar with her style on the battlefield. When a fight ends, she isolates herself from everybody else.

Sumire sighs. "You know I am." She mumbled. "Well, I didn't feel heroic at all. I got it after I saved Atsuro. He got angry at me, he yelled a lot and caused a fuss. It was a terrible experience. It's not like I expected a thank you but some acknowledgment other than the form of yelling would have helped."

Yuhi does not reply and continues with his kisses. Sumire does not press the issue even though she normally would have. She suddenly shifted and tugged his hand, he moves her back up.

Sumire presses her lips against his and Yuhi allows her to part his lips. He brought his arms around her waist, their legs intertwined. Right at that moment, he wanted to break that boundary between them. He wanted to once again explore her body, and feel her soft skin.

The sound of trolleys going past made him stop and he drew away.

"Yuhi?"

"Go to sleep."

## **ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 224**

Chapter 224: Stay with me

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

A few days later - Iro Road High School -

School seemed like a foreign thing after spending those blissful days with Sumire in the hospital. For the past few minutes he stood in front of the car looking at the girl inside.

"You have to go to school.." Sumire came with him and said she wanted to see him at the gate.

"I know." Yuhi frowned and looked over at Hino who was driving. "Make sure she goes to the hospital."

"Yes, yes dad I will escort mother."

He turned to Sumire who was nuzzling her face in his neck inhaling his scent again. "Are you sure you want me to go?"

Normally even if he was reluctant he would have gone inside already. But for the last few minutes Sumire did not let him go.

"Well mmm. I don't." Sumire admitted. "But you can't keep skipping for me."

"Before you got here. I only attended school like once a week or maybe even two weeks."

Yuhi knew they would not miss him for a day, he already missed so much. "Ask me to stay." Sumire shook her head so he used the last trick up his sleeve.

"Don't make me leave you right now."

How could he leave her side when she is like this? To others it looks like he is avoiding the problem, but the reality is different. The image of her passing out replays in his head.

Why did she pass out like that? What was with that blood?

"We are already at the gate, people would have seen you." Sumire mumbles.

"That's okay."

Sumire slowly nodded. "Stay with me."

He hopped back onto the car and she tackled him into a hug. Yuhi caresses her hair and runs his hand through her back.

Hino looked at them from the re-view mirror. "You two don't do anything weird with me--"

Right at that moment, something touched his lips. It was Sumire she was kissing him deeply, not intending to stop. Yuhi understood that Hino was thinking of something along the lines of corruption. Maybe he did corrupt her, maybe he didn't. Either way he likes it when she takes the initiative.

After all that kissing Sumire looks flushed and out of breath. She looked gorgeous and alluring.

Sumire laughs. "Uh, I need to stop."

Well, she doesn't have to. But he does like how innocent she is regarding her desires.

"This is typical teen behavior." Hino nodded before adding. "It's not like she was pure before."

Yuhi glared at Hino. "What is true?" Hino argued back.

He turned back to Sumire ready to apologize only to realize that she had not paid attention. She was too busy having a look at his face, not his lips.

Yuhi flicked her forehead. "Alright enough."

Sumire sighs. "Not even a little?"

Seeing how dejected she looked. Yuhi leaned forward and kissed her lips. But he immediately drew back when he felt her hand on his shirt. She looked needy for him. Honestly, he was too but what could he do?

"Well, your underage."

"Ah-huh." Sumire looked like she did not believe him. He didn't either.

"Medicine?" He quickly changed the subject.

Sumire shook her head and slumped her head onto his shoulder. "Sleep."

"Are you tired?"

"Just drowsy," Sumire mumbled. "Hino could you play some music?"

When he heard his song playing, Yuhi raised his eyebrow. "Didn't you say this car—" Yuhi paused when something came to mind. "Forget it, I know you like me."

Sumire laughs. "Mm, leave it at that."

Hino points to the front compartment. "She likes you too much. I rummaged through earlier and only found your CDS."

His lips curve to a smile when he hears that. "Now that is nice." Yuhi nodded. "You only listen to my voice?"

"Like I said I am obsessed with you."

"Yeah." Yuhi cupped her cheeks. "What happened to sleeping?"

"It is a waste not to flirt with you."

"We can do that later. Go to sleep yeah?"

It only took a few minutes after he said those words for the girl to fall asleep. He knew she was tired and yet she came all this way. Actually Yuhi suspected that she did not come all the way here just for his sake.

"If you have something to—"

"Does she know you're going to France?" Hino interjected.

Yuhi sighs. "I will take her with me."

"You know it won't be easy for her."

"The response here was good."

That small article quickly blew up. Many people drop by the school to see Sumire's paintings now.

"Only because she is a celebrity, that won't cut it in France."

"I can't leave her." Yuhi looks at the girl fast asleep. "Look at her she—"

Hino cuts in again. "I know she is broken. I know you are too. I know both of you need each other. But you nor her can live like this forever."

Yuhi knew Hino was strongly trying to focus on him. But all he could hear from that sentence was Sumire, Sumire.

"Hino, give her time. If you rush her she will break down again."

Besides, lately, she is improving, she smiles more and she talks more to other people. If they rush things she may end up closing her heart off again.

"What about you?"

Yuhi understood from his tone that Hino wanted to ask this before.

"Sumire first."

He can worry about his stuff later.

## **ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 225**

Chapter 225: Let the world explode

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

Before Hino could reply, they heard a knock on the window. Yuhi extended his hand out and pressed a button. The windows opened, revealing a man with sky blue colored hair.

"Sumire?" Shin asked.

Yuhi sighs again. So she had other plans after all. "Going back to the hospital."

She wasn't in a condition to leave, let alone sneak out. He managed to persuade the hospital and said she would be right back.

Shin nodded. "I was just about to cancel. The leader wants everybody around for rehearsal."

"I see."

"Give this to her." Shin slides over a heavy-looking envelope from the window.

It was difficult for him to grab the document without waking the girl up. Yuhi decided to let her go for a moment, but she stirred in his arms right then.

She opened her eyes and then kissed his neckline. Yuhi chuckled softly. That is the first thing she does when she wakes up? How cute.

"Hey, sleepyhead, Shin is canceling."

"Okay." Sumire hardly seemed bothered.

Yuhi gave Shin an apologetic look.

But there was something strange about him. He looked troubled.

"Sumire, come to the studio later," Shin mumbled.

"No," Sumire replied immediately despite being in that daze.

Come to the studio means see Atsuro. So Shin made that face because he saw Sumire's current condition?

Yuhi patted Sumire's hair and squeezed her hands. "I will take care of her so you can relax."

Shin nodded. He still seemed disturbed but did not say anything anymore. "Then, I will get going; please take care."

The moment Shin left, Yuhi noticed Sumire's gaze on the envelope. Yuhi sighs. "You can take a look at that later. Besides, you planned on meeting Shin?"

No wonder she insisted on him attending school. If he were around, she would not be able to sneak off. Right now, she is at her weakest, so he half expected her to cling to him.

Sumire proceeded to kiss him, but he flicked her forehead. "Brat, do you think you can trick me?"

Sumire shook her head. "Not a trick but a bribe, this is a bribe, Yuhi."

God, she makes this so difficult for him. Here he is battling with his self-control, and yet she breaks it with just a few words.

"No need to bribe." Yuhi kissed her forehead and eyelids softly. If only they could remain this way forever. But Sumire is getting closer to the truth as each day passes by. "What would you like to do today?"

"Mmm, I can't do much at the hospital. But ah, I like listening to your voice so you could read for me."

He raised his eyebrows at her suggestion. "Are you a kid?"

Sumire glared at him. "There you go again with that."

"Well even though you're mature and beautiful you have to admit that your requests are childish."

"Did you just call me beautiful?"

Sumire laughs softly again. "I see." She trailed off. "I thought you were a boring guy but I suppose you have your interesting moments."

She is seriously messing with him. But Yuhi briefly got a look at her face. He cupped her cheeks and nuzzled his face against hers. "Let me kiss you again."

"The world will explode."

"Let it explode."

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Later on at the hospital.

Yuhi frowned when he saw Sumire's test results. He knew it would be bad, he already saw with his own eyes what she went through. Still who would have thought that the main cause of her suffering would be the child. That man's child.

Sano entered the room and sat down on his chair. "Looked enough?"

Yuhi sighed. "Something is wrong here."

"That child is harmful to her, face it." He pointed to the screen. "Can't you see that hole caused by the sonic sound waves in her stomach? It will damage her internal organs."

"It isn't that bad." At least he thought so until he heard the explanation.

Sano deeply sighed.

"You have to be joking, not that bad? Look at it."

Yuhi wanted to look away. How could he accept this situation? How could he accept that man's child would harm Sumire of all people? "She cannot get an abortion; she won't be able to do it."

That child is the only thing that makes her smile whenever anybody mentions Mamoru. It is far too risky to get rid of it.

"There are other options." Sano nodded like he understood what he thought. "A premature birth. I will figure out a good time scale for her, as long as it isn't too early. This could endanger her life if we do not handle it."

Endanger her life? Even though the one who does not deserve to live is him. The one who deserves to disappear is him and not her.

"Terashima?" Sano said impatiently.

Yuhi however froze, he could not move. What is he going to do about this situation? He understood that child makes Sumire happy, but he does not want her to die. Nagawa Sano has a method, but Yuhi does not think it will work without any physical damages. Right now, with that organization targeting Sumire, it is far too dangerous.

Think, think, Terashima Yuhi. Think about this situation through there should be a solution somehow. Why is it so difficult to think of something? Usually, he would come up with an idea.

He hears a deep throbbing sound in his ears. His vision gradually turned blurry, his palms sweaty.

The next thing he hears is Nagawa shouting, and the next, he is on the ground.

The world turned black.

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Yuhi wakes up to familiar voices. The one that stood out to him was hers. The girl was shouting, but it still sounded like sweet music in his ear. He rubbed the back of his head as he recalled what happened. Did he pass out?

He glanced over at his girlfriend. She was angrily pointing at Sano and shaking her head. "If you did something to him, I will never forgive you."

"Nice try, you already hate me."

"Gah, that is not the point here!" Sumire exclaimed.

Yuhi coughed, and the two looked over. He smiled at the angry girl. "Hey, you."

Her gaze brightened, and she rushed over immediately. The bed he laid on was not that far away, but she still made it look dramatic. The moment she came over, Yuhi felt Sumire's hand on his cheek. Before he could open his mouth, she was kissing him patiently.

He blinked but laughed against her lips. She mumbled shut up before kissing him again. After a few minutes, she pulled away and sighed.

"Needy."

"Of course, I am. Ah geez, sex makes people crazy. Or maybe it is some crazy hormone since I am pregnant."

Yuhi rolled his eyes at her explanation for the sudden attack on his lips. "Did you ever think that maybe you just like me?"

"Well." Sumire played with his hands. "It is not like but love, right?"

"Well said." Yuhi grinned. It seems like she is gradually adapting to their relationship.

Yuhi thought she would ask him more details, but she did not; instead, he noticed her gaze on his lips again. She must be addicted or something; all she does is kiss him recently. Not that it was a bad thing or anything. But Yuhi felt like his self-control would break.

A clattering sound breaks his thoughts, shattering his upcoming fantasy.

## **ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 226**

Chapter 226: Pretend

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

About half an hour later he is taking a bath. 'I didn't think there was a place like this here.'

His thoughts broke off when he spotted brunette leaning against the door. "You can come inside you know."

Sumire laughed softly. "I shouldn't, you'll take advantage of me."

"That would be a great plan."

"Hey Yuhi, I want to go check on Sano a bit. Would that be a bad idea?"

Yuhi sighed. 'I knew she was concerned when he left the room like that.' "Take a bath with me first."

She kept laughing. "What is it with you and baths?"

"I thought you liked it last time."

"You know, I am enjoying dating you. It's more fun than I expected. But I wonder Yuhi, how much longer do we have together?" Sumire mumbled.

"Did Hino talk to you?"

Sumire nodded. "He did but briefly. He told me to ask you the details. If there is something you want to do, I won't stop you."

"You don't want to go with me?"

"I wonder." She trailed off. "If this relationship can last forever. These days I am a lot calmer. But I clearly remember how I was a few months ago. I don't want you to see me that way Yuhi."

"Come here Sumire."

The bathtub was too far away from the door. He could stand up but he knew it would be hopeless unless she came inside herself. After a few minutes, he hears the door slid open. Sumire slowly walked over to where he was. The moment she stood a few feet away, he grabbed her wrist. But Sumire shook her head.

She crouched down on the floor and leaned her back on the tub. "My emotions feel like they are exploding lately."

"Sumire, it's okay."

Sumire shook her head. "But it isn't okay. The current me is very unstable emotionally. The current me only knows how to mess up and hurt people."

"It's okay to mess up."

"But is it?"

Yuhi knew he could not answer her there.

---

If nobody knows it is easier to pretend that everything is okay.

She did not want to cry in front of him again which was why she quickly left. It is a good thing that he did not say anything. Not that she expected him too, Sumire figured out a long time ago that Terashima Yuhi would not pressure her to talk even if he had questions.

The person she needs the most right now is him.

He does not pressure her to talk, he does not intimidate her. He just listens. It is enough for her for him to just listen. She does not need comforting words, she does not need kindness. All she needs now is for somebody to listen to her, for somebody to share this burden and sadness.

It is selfish for her to do that. Why would she purposely burden somebody else like that?

The real reason is because she cannot face it alone. She cannot cope by herself anymore, it hurts too much.

No matter how much she washes her arms, Sumire still felt it - the blood stain on her skin. One day she will wake up and that nightmare will come true. There was so much blood. But whose blood was it? Was it her own?

She can wash it all away as much as she wants. But it does not change that one day it will happen. She will end up doing something she regrets either to herself or somebody else. One day she will completely break and fall apart.

A deep sigh crossed her lips as she looked at her reflection in the mirror. Her eyes still looked sore and puffy. But at least she was no longer crying. Sumire made sure that nobody was around when she cried. She did not want to risk all the stares and whispers, all the judging that would come along with randomly crying in public. This was why she did not cry in front of Yuhi either - people would walk by. Nurses would come in randomly. She did not want to risk people thinking badly of Yuhi.

It does not matter what they say about her, she already deals with enough things like that daily. But not him, she doesn't want Yuhi to hate the world for her sake. It is enough for one of them to feel like this. Yuhi has his own problems and his own burdens. She wants to create a beautiful world for him.

If she sings again properly, if she returned to the stage it is killing two birds with one stone. She can sing and make him happy and release these frustrated feelings and emotions. If she sings again then maybe the pain will go away. Singing for her was another coping method. As much as she liked it the main reason she sang is to get rid of the pain.

Is this why it hurts so much now? Is it because she can't sing?

But there is another thing she can do. She wonders if Yuhi has any paper or a pencil or maybe even some paint. Could she go back though after walking away like that? As Sumire thought these things somebody grabbed her arm.

She sighs when she sees the owner. "Sano."

This is great, the last person she wants to see her like this now is Nagawa Sano. This guy is not the best person to be around when one feels terrible. In the past, he brushed off all her sadness and pain as typical teen angst. In the future, he seems to acknowledge there is something more but he is still the same insensitive- her thoughts broke off when he spoke up.

"Are you okay?"

## **ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 227**

Chapter 227: It was so tiring

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

The thing with insensitive people is they do not know they are insensitive.

Does that give them an excuse to hurt another person?

The answer is no.

These insensitive people may not know they are hurting someone. But it does not change the fact that they hurt somebody; they may have triggered another person's breakdown.

It takes just a few words to break somebody who broke already.

It takes just a few lines to destroy somebody emotionally.

This person in front of her asking her if she is okay is one of those people. She slowly nodded, and the moment she did, he pushed her against the wall.

This action did not surprise her. She saw the look on his face when he exited the room earlier, a familiar warning look. When she thought of their relationship, Sumire wondered why she even continued to date him. The relationship was so toxic and bad for her.

It was obvious why she just wanted to be normal. She played around with the idea before to be normal. During that time frame, she met Nagawa Sano; he was a good guy on the surface. He knew a lot of people. He was one of those friendly types. He was a good person.

She felt his lips on her neck and shuddered. "If you do anything, I will stop talking to you."

"I thought you said you didn't hate me."

"Mmm."

"So--" Sumire pushed his hand away, and she shook her head. Does he think just because she no longer hated him, he could do this to her? Just being near him still made her feel disgusted.

"Quit acting like you own me."

"Your mine." Sano's words are firm.

"We'll take these." She did not respond to those words and pushed a small box into his fingers.

"You still have this?"

"Habit." She grabbed some in the pharmacy earlier when she saw his behavior, but this response should calm him."

She hears somebody call his name, and Sano leaned forward. "See you? Another doctor will be in charge later?"

"Have fun at your meeting."

He pulled away from her, and a relieved sigh escaped her lips. Sano pointed to the stairwell on the side. "Sit down."

"You're not going to--" Sumire stopped when she saw the look on his face. She took a seat beside him, and Sano rested his head on her shoulders.

She sighs. "You're not making this easy for me."

She wanted for Sano to leave so she could return to what she was doing before. What was she doing before? Getting sad and thinking of how tiring life was? Maybe it is better to deal with Sano's nonsense then go through this.

"Like my change? It's just for you."

"It can only be Yuhj; even then, I do not know how long this will last."

"You're insecure." Sano nodded. "This won't last long then."

Her thoughts broke off when he removed his head from her shoulders and sat up. He took something out of his bag, and he pressed a strawberry to her mouth.

"Tasty?"

Sumire slowly nodded.

"Take it all." Sano passed her a small container.

She raised her eyebrows when she saw the container. A small pink fancy decorated lid. "Is this your gift from your cousin? If so, I probably--" He placed the container in her hands.

"It's for you."

"For me?" Sumire repeated, puzzled.

"Look, didn't you say I have to make it up to you first? So that is what I am doing now."

Indeed she said such words to him and doing something like this would make her happy. If Yuhi did it, she would be very happy right now. But since it came from him, all she could do was behave cautiously. Still, she opened the box and picked up another strawberry.

"I will eat it."

Is he genuine or not? It is hard to say. It was like that at the start too. Sano did everything he could to convince her. He put in that much effort to convince her that he was sincere. He persuaded her, or did he? Back then, she was even more of a mess.

Sano noticed that and took advantage of her. He whispered sweet words into her ear. He behaved the way she wanted, so it was easier for him to manipulate her.

It was easy for him to make her suffer because he knew from the start. Sumire did not know whether he knew everything, but he must have sensed something about her.

Her thoughts broke off when she hears a flickering sound. A metallic sound —is that the sound of a lighter? It can't be, right? But sure enough, when she looked over, she saw Sano smoking. Huh?

"What is with that face? You already knew about this."

"I did, but—" Sumire could not finish her sentence. Normally he would not show her. Could it be that he is serious about this change? No, she can't fall for it. Remember what he did before; remember the pain from that time.

If she remembers that, she won't fall for his trap again.

"Why did Yuhi pass out?" Sumire decided to swiftly change the topic before he notices what she is thinking.

"I told him about you." Sano paused and proceeded to explain, but she cut him off.

"This child will endanger my life, right?"

"You can tell?"

"Mm, it is my own body."

She knew from the very start, that was why it surprised her when she heard about her pregnancy. To think the child of the man that made her happy is the one that is causing her to suffer.

"I will keep the child."

Samp sighs. "You know as your doctor, I have tried to maintain my professionalism but—"

"What are your real thoughts?" Sumire asked. She wants to know what is going on in his head.

If she hears his opinion on this, maybe she will get a glimpse of the current him? She was experimenting. It sounds cruel, but how else could she trust him? Sumire no longer wanted to experience the same anguish and pain as back then. Even if she tests, there is no guarantee that things will return to how they were before.

Does she even want to return to those days?

It was suffocating pretending to smile, pretending to be strong when she wasn't.

It was so tiring for her.

But it was the only way to make him stay. Back then, she did so much just so this person could remain by her side.

## **ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 228**

Chapter 228: Escape

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

Sumire did not know what type of response she even wanted from him. So when Sano shook his head disappointed, she felt relieved.

"You must be crazy. I know your almost eighteen but you are still underage. People will look down on you. It isn't good for your career either."

Yes that is what she needed to hear. This is one of his only good points. Sano will say things bluntly. He will say things people avoid to say just because they want to remain polite. It is a good trait but also a double edged sword.

"It is a good thing Tsueno is dead."

At that comment Sumire raised her hand and slapped his cheeks. Right at that moment Sano angrily grabbed her wrists. "I am losing my patience."

"So you were only pretending to be kind?"

Sano's gaze darkened. "Pretending? Well won't that be convenient for you."

"Don't make this sound like it's my fault."

"You're impossible!" Sano shook his head. "How do you expect me to---forget it." He angrily lets go of her arm. "If you want to think that way then suit yourself."

Sumire doesn't bother chasing after him.

...

A few hours later

The doctor that replaced Sano for the night was a young thirty year old male. He seemed like the quiet type and would only occasionally talk. Sano told her before that this guy was one of his friends. But it's hard to imagine.

Hino was keeping her company while Yuhi fetched her some food.

"You know this time it's your fault."

Sumire glared at him. "Of course the best friend says that."

"In think Sano is a jerk too." Hino admitted "But this time around--"

She immediately interjected. "Do you think he was sincere?"

"Yes."

"That's difficult to believe." Sumire recalled what he said. The anger from earlier had yet to vanish. "He said it was good Ru was dead."

Whenever she said the words Ru and death in the same sentence it still felt hollow to her. How is it possible for that guy to die and leave her behind?

"So the general public doesn't chase him. If he was alive then they would chase him."

Wait, what?!!! Sumire's eyes widened when she heard those words. Indeed she could see it that way. But even then something is wrong here.

"Lately you keep meeting up with Sano. Why is that?" Hino suddenly said.

Sumire sighs deeply. "It's just about the business deal."

"Are you sure? Sorry if you got offended. But it feels to me that you're not trying hard enough to push away his advances."

"I want to see what he is planning that is all." Sumire admitted.

"You don't have to play along with him Sumire."

"It's not that." She trailed off. "What do you think I'm doing?"

At that comment Sumire sighed. "Isn't it fine for you not to know?"

"Why do you think I am still friends with Sano?"

"Because your like—" Sumire paused in mid-sentence. "I don't actually know the real reason."

"That guy is a good person when it concerns those he cares for."

"Are you trying to say he didn't care about me?"

"No he cared too much to the point he became obsessed. Your different Sumire. I never saw Sano behave the way he does with you towards other women."

"It doesn't matter."

Hino looked frustrated or was it anger on his face. "I am telling you that he was being honest with you. Sano maybe a jerk but he is not a completely bad guy. If he wanted to hurt you Sumire, he could do it easily. For one he would have gotten rid of Yuhi by now. Yuhi is famous yes and has power. But Sano still has a higher social standing, If he wanted to hurt you he would have hurt Yuhi directly."

So that means Sano understands Yuhi is important to her? Then how come he could still do that stuff? It was hard for her to forget the sensation of his lips on her neck from earlier. So forceful and cruel – she assumed it would be the same as before.

But now that she thought about it what Hino is saying makes sense, His behaviour since they met again was very strange. But other than those few harsh exchanges at the start he did not do anything else.

But she can't forgive.

She no longer wants to return to those days. He was controlling and very possessive. He took charge of everything she did. He had that bad habit of checking her phone. He would question whoever certain names were on the phone and made sure to have a meal with them.

It was like he was trying to tell everybody that she belonged to him. At that time she did not mind it too much. No she does not enjoy the idea of somebody controlling her but back then it was what she needed. She needed somebody to decide for her. She did not trust her own decisions then.

Her thoughts broke off when she heard the sound of her phone ringing.

From: Sano

Talk?

From:

No.

From: Sano

Meet me later.

Sumire sighed and tossed Hino her phone. "You still want to defend him? He is being too pushy."

"You should at least talk to him." Hino passed her the phone back. "I answered for you."

Sumire glared harshly at him. "What did you do that for?"

"Just meet him and hear him out. Look, normally he wouldn't call back after fighting."

"I don't want to."

'I know I am acting stubborn, but I can't.' Sumire couldn't say that when she saw the look on Hino's face.

"You know." Hino trailed off. "I don't think you're a bad person. In the short time I got to know you I think you're a great girl, we get along well too. I see why Yuhi likes you. But," He sighed. "This is one of your bad points. Why are you trying to run away instead of confronting the issue?"

This is one of the things she noticed about Hino. For some reason he understood that aspect of her. The part of her who wants to hide and escape from all the pain, from all the confrontations.

### **ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 229**

Chapter 229: What if I stopped running?

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

Sumire was just leaving the library when she spotted somebody waiting for her.

Yuhi was leaning against the wall, lighter and cigarette in his fingertips.

"You came?"

His lips curve to a smile. "To welcome you back to school."

"Are you leaving later?" She buried her face in his arms and felt his hands wrap around her waist.

"Yeah, work." He trailed off. "Did you get scolded?"

Sumire shook her head. "Some judgemental stares. I mean I think somebody saw us in town that time."

"Then they should understand. Exercise is important for a sick patient."

"I thought you said schools were a institution to force their values?"

Yuhi chuckled. "Indeed I do think that."

"Then they wouldn't understand since they believe their way is right."

He patted her hair and ran his hand through her back. "You seem tired."

"Well I have been sleeping most of the time. I still feel sluggish too."

"Lets ditch for a bit. You can sleep."

Sumire slowly nodded her head. Normally she would say no but her drowsiness was strong. She lifted her face from his arms and Yuhi squeezed her hands. "Alright of we go."

Since that day she did not speak to Sano neither did he message her again. She thought he would persist more but maybe it was exactly like what she thought. He got tired and decided to move on. There are other people who are easier to manipulate, Why would he bother with somebody like her?

She shook her head. There is no use thinking about such things now.

.....

A few hours later

It takes all the running you can do to keep the same pace.'

But what if she stopped running?

What if she stopped looking ahead?

If she stopped, then what would happen?

A deep sigh escaped her lips when she saw the name on the screen. It was a good thing that the teachers had to speak with Yuhi. Her gaze lingered on the screen for a few minutes before she decided to pick it up. At first the other person on the other end of the line seemed busy, but then a familiar voice called out to her.

"Sumire, are you there?"

"Yes. Are you done running away from me?"

She hears laughter on the other end of the phone and sighed. "It isn't funny, quit messing with me."

Dont appear before me if you're just going to disappear again.

Sumire swallowed those words and took a deep breath. "You wanted me for something?"

"A little bird told me that you're contacting that person frequently these days."

"I never said you had to entangle yourself to this extent." Aki trailed off. "When I helped you back then it was not for this purpose. I didnt bring you to this world for you to fall into a deeper darkness."

"It wouldn't have made a difference."

In the end she would have fallen down this dark path. It just so happened that Aki saved her and the process was much slower due to this interference. "I can guess who is telling you things. But my goal has not changed."

"The path of vengeance does not suit you." Aki did not reply to her previous statement and concluded things on his own.

"Whether or not it suits me, it is already too late to go back."

"This stubborn behaviour of yours makes me speechless.."

Sumire laughed weakly. "I know you don't think that highly of me."

"If you need help, just say so."

"I know you're busy, and you have already done enough for me." Sumire could hear the voices in the background. "Aren't you in a pinch right now because of those random attacks on high members of the underworld?"

"You got me there. But Sumire, even if it isn't me, will you at least rely on Yuhi?"

"What makes you think I don't?"

For the next few minutes nobody spoke. Sumire felt a cold gust of wind blow by and she tugged on her cardigan pulling it down.

"For one your behaviour. If Yuhi knew about this do you think I would need to call you?"

It seems he is still unnecessarily trying to pry into her affairs. She is grateful for what he did. He helped keep her mind occupied and introduced her to such kind people. But, whether it was that incident or Rus' accident - she would eventually have had to walk this dark path.

'I never had anything to begin with.

Every time I tried to reach for something with my own hands, it slipped away. It was never mine to begin with.

So how could I lose it?

But these days, why does it feel like I lost something so very important?'

The more she pondered it the more confused she became. Sumire felt a throbbing pain in her head and crouched down to the ground. It hurts so much, her head hurts and this pain in her chest. It is so suffocating. Why does she still feel this way?

Her thoughts broke off when somebody crouched down and gently took her hands. "Hey love, is the view nice down here?" Yuhi's tone is playful but she saw the concerned look in his eyes.

"It got better just now." Sumire mumbled. She was on the verge of crying but just now when she saw Yuhi she wanted something different. She extended her hands out and he picked her up.

"Want to go somewhere?"

"A quiet place."

.....

A quiet place meaning a corner outside the main building where nobody would find them.

Yuhi rubbed the edge of her eyes with his thumb. "Cry if you want, crying silently hurts more."

"You know I am tired of crying all the time." Sumire trailed off. "Besides I feel like I used up all my tears that time."

"Unfortunately you can never run out of tears."

"Stupid."

He leaned forward and brushed his forehead against hers. "I'm here."

"..."

Why does this person say the words she wants to hear? A part of her is still afraid. This behaviour is familiar. Sano did the same. He acted like he understood her but threw her away when it was convenient. However Sumire understood already, these two are different. There is nothing superficial about Yuhi's words.

### **ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 230**

Chapter 230: Crazy things

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

"Be quiet, hugging you has a healing effect."

Sumire genuinely felt healed whenever she hugged him.

"This is nice and all but later we should become more affectionate."

"You're the one who pushed me away earlier."

"My love you do realize we are in school right?"

She rolled her eyes at that comment. Now he is saying that? Who is the one who practically harasses her with kisses before they go to class?

Yuhi sighed. "You know I normally wouldn't mind. But lately you go overboard."

"I do?" Sumire repeated innocently.

He extended his hand out and flicked her forehead. "You do, quit teasing me so much when you know how dangerous I am."

Dangerous huh? Yuhi always warns her that he is a bad person but she does not think of him that way. If Yuhi is a bad person then what does that make her?

Her thoughts broke off when he wrapped his arms around her waist, and pulled her onto his lap. "Alright you I give up, do what you want."

Sumire stared at him and grabbed his face with her hands. "Did you get more handsome?"

Yuhi chuckled. "If I became too handsome, my dearest would throw a fit and get all jealous."

"That person sounds unreasonable." She traced the buttons on his shirt collar. "yuhi..."

"Mmm, what?"

"I will become busy soon... unlike you I don't know how to manage my time and our relationship. But I don't want you to think I am avoiding you."

"I understand wife, that's why I changed my schedule to coincidentally match yours."

Sumire blinked and laughed when she heard those words. "Are you sure you want to lower your jobs for my sake?" she joked but she was very pleased.

She leaned forward and kept kissing his cheeks, and lips.

"Mmmmmmm, Sumire. Quit attacking me."

She pouted childishly. "Why?"

"Because it makes me want to attack you."

"Then attack." Sumire didn't understand why he was hesitating so much. "Yuhi I love you...."

"Mmm, me too Sumire."

Lately he doesn't say it....

He didn't get another woman did he? Sumire shook her head. 'I am so cute and so loveable. Why would he find somebody else?'

Yuhi chuckled. "What's wrong?"

"You forgot to say it."

He cupped her cheeks. "I want to save it for special occasions."

"But I like hearing it."

"It's not like I stopped. You just don't notice."

Is that truly the case? She no longer understood her own heart.

....

Four days later - 8:00am - Nagawa Residence

People do crazy things to escape the pain and suffering, they do crazy things even if it will hurt the one person who cares.

She pushed him away and Sano seemed surprised.

"Are you rejecting me now?"

She did not reply to those words and averted her gaze from him.

"Just leave me alone already."

It is frightening to be alone. But if she stays with this person, she will end up doing something stupid. If it were the past then she would have gone through with this easily. But the situation has changed unlike back then. Yuhis face always comes to mind, the pain in his gaze and tone when she told him the story regarding his girlfriend and best friend betraying him.

She cannot do that to him. It hurts and she feels suffocated, she wants it to all go away. She wants it to stop.

However she won't use this method to cope.

Sano suddenly drew back surprising her. Sumire watched as he moved away from the bed and leaned against the wall by the window. He pulled out his cigarette from his pocket. "Thought of Terashima?"

"...."

"You know you're still easy to read."

Sumire pulled the blanket to her lap and hugged her knees. "Be quiet." Why did she even come here in the first place? What possessed her to come to Sano's place of all places. She ought to have gone to somebody else.

But Tokyo is still unfamiliar to her. While she has made friends here, none of them know about her situation. They do not know how broken and messed up she is. It was a risk coming here to Sano's place - but at the very least she is with somebody who knows.

"Do you feel sick?"

She nodded slowly and mumbled. "Yuhi.."

"At work, that's why you came to me."

"...if you knew that, why didn't you just tell me to leave?"

"Well, I thought I would take my chance."

Sumire laughed awkwardly at that statement. "Is that all you want from me after all?"

"Hino knows, you didn't have to come here."

"I trouble him a lot already. Besides I know he is working hard on something for Yuhi's sake. So I didn't want to bother him too much."

"The real reason?"

"Hino, he doesn't know what to do when I'm like that. He tries to understand but he can't do anything."

Hino is a good guy, he is so considerate of her but that isn't enough.

"Say Sano." Sumire mumbled. "Can I ask you something?"

"That depends. Are you going to criticize me again?"

"I wonder."

"You know, it's not like I actually hate you. I was just hurt. When I calmed down I realized that the two of us just weren't meant to be." She trailed off. "No, I realized that you never considered our relationship properly."

The truth is the two of them weren't ready for a relationship.

"Did you ever consider that we could have a future together? That I would be the one that would stand by your side through all the painful and harsh times?"

He might criticize her again. He might try to twist her words again. However this is the only time she can say this.

"I did."

Sumire blinked when she heard his reply.

Before she could reply she felt the creaking sound of the bed. Sano grabbed her wrist. "Do you believe me?"

Well--what? Sumire still couldn't believe he said that. Didn't he admit to using her when they broke up? Didn't he say that it wasn't serious and that he would have eventually thrown her away? People always praised her memory, it was stronger than most.

"Don't lie."

"Am I?"

He must be lying and yet for some reason Sumire avoided his gaze. If she looks at his eyes right now and sees something different. If she saw sincerity, then it would be even more difficult for her.

Her thoughts broke off when Sano suddenly placed his hand on her forehead. "Your fever went up again...Can you lay down?"

She somehow nodded and laid down on the bed.

Sano adjusted the pillows slightly before moving away again. "Does your head hurt?"

"A little."

'This is very strange. Why is this person suddenly so attentive?' He must be tricking her again. All of this is a lie, she won't fall for it again.

"Sano..."

"Yes?"

"Why are you so kind to me recently?"

He was still acting like a jerk not too long ago. How come his behaviour-- her thoughts broke off when she felt his sharp gaze on her. Sumire immediately averted her eyes and then she heard a large sigh.

"You complain when I act like a jerk, you complain when I give you gifts and now that I am reflecting on my behaviour and acting nice you still don't like it."

Eh? Reflecting on his behaviour?

"About me harassing you when Terashima was in hospital." Sano suddenly brought up. He looked uncomfortable. "Originally I didn't intend to approach you at all. I was content with just watching. But you're very careless."

Sumire blinked. Wasn't he going to apologize? Why is he suddenly blaming her? She doesn't understand this man at all. Before she could make a retort however he suddenly took his phone out. Sumire glanced

at the screen and saw several photographs of different people all working in her school. She noticed how she was always in the shot.

She trembled slightly when she realized why. These people were watching her, they were waiting until she was alone. Now that she thought about it Sano only approached her when there were loads of people. He never tried to approach her when it was quiet.

"I was trying to make my presence known, so they could leave you."

"Your approach was wrong." Sumire mumbled. Even if he intended to protect her, the way he treated her like his possession was too much. Before she could speak again he cupped her chin so she could look at him.

"Do you know why up until now I haven't done anything to you?"

What does he mean he hasn't done anything, he has kissed her several times already?

"Because you were trying to figure me out?"

"Correct just like you are testing me, I am also testing you. You're different than before. You no longer obediently listen to what I say, and your guard is always up. You're cautious about people to the point that whenever others go near you, you flinch."

Hmmm it seems he has been watching closely. No longer obedient huh? Back then she only followed whatever he said because she didn't have anything to lose.

She did not care about her pride or even herself. It was all meaningless to her. Later on the years, she slowly became more aware of her surroundings and became frightened.

The world is a terrifying place. People can back stab you without batting an eyelid. The people who stood by your side for the longest times can hurt you without a second thought.