

Melody 271

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 271

Chapter 271: Why do I still like her?

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"Welcome back master."

When Yuhi heard those words he looked over to confirm that Nagawa Sano was indeed there.

Sano deeply sighed and walked over to the railing. He replaced his coat with his doctor's coat. "Did something happen?"

"Ah, I was just wondering if I could get my blood checked."

"I'll do it here."

Yuhi does not say anything but silently observed their interaction until Razel spoke up.

"Terashimsan come with me. There is something I would like to check with you."

Yuhi was reluctant to leave them alone and was about to voice out his complaint when he felt Sumire's lips on his.

"Remember to behave."

Damn if she says it like this, he can't refuse her. Yuhi squeezed her hands. "If you don't hurry you're going to miss out on some great pie."

Quite some time has passed since they went on their abnormal night outings due to the events lately. With her getting close to her due date Sumire slept a lot more, and she was mainly sick so Yuhi did not take her out.

Even after she gave birth, he made sure she was at home just in case she had a relapse. Yuhi's gaze landed on the man called Razel who closed the door behind them.

What does this person want with him?

—

After Terashima left Sano turned his attention back to her. He looked away when they were saying their goodbyes because he did not want to see them acting all sweet with each other. But now he watched as Sumire fidget with the hem of her clothes nervously.

Sano sighed. "Don't freak out."

"Uh, I haven't seen you in awhile."

"That's my line, you're quite busy these days. Do you still have time for your child?"

"I do..." Sumire trailed off.

He walked over and backed her against the wall and cupped her cheeks. "Quit looking away from me, it's annoying."

"Sano..."

"Don't apologize for what happened. Those guys are overprotective of you." He honestly felt frustrated about the entire situation. Those guys are merely a simple idol group and yet he could not stand up to them.

"Did it hurt?" She questioned him.

"Well, I've been punched before."

Sumire extended her hand out hesitantly. "I'm sorry...."

"If you want to make up to me, have dinner with me tomorrow night."

"Dinner?"

"Yeah."

"Where?"

"My place."

Sumire bit her lip but nodded. "Alright, tomorrow."

Sano blinked when he heard her reply. Huh? Normally she would evade him. "Are you agreeing that quickly?"

She laughed awkwardly. "Well, you know I feel bad for avoiding you."

If she felt bad then should she not have come to him sooner? Sano shook his head. He needs to stop getting so worked up when it comes to her.

"You knew Razel?"

"Mmm, he helped me out before."

Well, that isn't a surprise. Sano however focused on other things such as the girl's lips, there was something different about it today. Lips that are suited for kissing, that was one of the first things he noticed when he met her. But even then he did not get this

"San?"

Sano's eyes widened when he heard the nickname. "Are you alright? You're sweating a lot."

"Maybe a fever?"

"Sumire..."

"I'll make you something to eat. Why don't you lay down and rest?"

'Nagawa Sano, you must silence Ibuki Sumire at all costs. That is now your job.'

Sano grabbed her arm. "How did you get this injury?"

"Ah, some guys were hitting on me when I was shopping."

Despite those casual words Sano got a bad feeling. 'Could it be they are already making a move?' It looked like Sumire fought with them. Even if it is her she would not fight with normal individuals. So she must have judged that those people were dangerous.

"San?" Sumire said, puzzled.

He wants to kiss her but he probably shouldn't now. "Make me some food."

"Sure." Sumire went to the attached kitchen, while he walked over to the couch and laid down.

He put his arms over his eye and sighed. Lately, he keeps running around helping those people with their work so he is even more exhausted than normal. "What's with the nickname?"

"Hmm, well I decided that maybe you're not so bad anymore."

"...you decided?"

Sumire nodded. "You saved that child."

She must have heard what happened in the operating room. "Hah...."

To think he tried so hard to get her attention, to show her he has changed but this is all he had to do?

"You know, I thought this before but you're a strange woman."

"Hmmm, well I won't deny the strange part. My personality was never good, to begin with."

"Why did you accept my confession?"

Sumire sighed. "Well, it's not like I had a reason to refuse. At the time I needed all the connections I could get."

"But you knew my little brother right?"

"That guy is too innocent and naive. I figured I wouldn't be able to use him well."

'So she was planning on using me too.' That should make him feel better and yet somehow something is wrong here. If she intended to use him then how come she made that expression when he cheated on her?

"Why..do I still like you?" Sano muttered.

"That's also my question, it makes no sense for you to still like me. You only used me for your own benefit but even if you fell for me halfway you still disposed of me in the end."

When he hears it coming from her own lips, it makes him feel bad. "You still stayed with me after you caught me cheating on you."

"Since there was something I wanted from you." Sumire trailed off and sighed. "San, even if you ask these questions now it will have no meaning."

"Does everything have to have a meaning for you?"

"In this illogical world only one thing made sense to me and that was Yuhi's singing. The reason I went out for you was because I knew you would be able to help him."

"To hide his delinquent status?"

If that's all she wanted then she could do so herself.

"No, to hide his crimes."

So she knows about that and yet she remains with him? On the day he saw her again and saw how close she was with Terashima, he immediately did a background check. The rumors from the entertainment industry aside he learned something else.

That man is not as simple as he thought. Sano recalled that serious warning from Terashima after he discovered what he had been doing to Sumire. Those eyes that look like a predator about to devour its prey. It seemed like the results of that investigation was not wrong. He initially thought it was a mistake but now it seems he was correct.

"Yet you still like him?"

Sumire laughed. "It's not like I'm any better."

That reasoning is vague, there is something more to all of this. Sano was about to ask a follow up question when the doors opened revealing Razel. He raised his eyebrow. This guy could have distracted Terashima for a bit longer.

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Chapter 272: What if I kill you?

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Then again, it's not like he gave Razel direct instructions.

"Where is Yuhi?" Sumire immediately noticed him.

"I gave him an injection, and he passed out."

"Wait, what did you give him?!!"

"It was only medicine. It looked like he was in pain and that he was battling something." Razel stepped back, and Sumire rushed out of the room. Sano followed after her and saw Terashima slumped against the hallway walls.

'I noticed it earlier, but Terashima's complexion looks awful.' The one who needs examining is Terashima. Razel must have noticed that.

"Yuhi?"

"..sorry."

"You don't have to apologize. It's not your fault that there are stubborn people who don't listen to my warning. It seems I have to be more direct."

"Don't go."

Sumire shook her head. "Unless I handle this myself, those people will never learn." She leaned forward and gently brushed her forehead against Terashimas. "I will be right back. Will you wait for me at home?"

"I will wait, stay safe."

Sano clenched his fist when he watched the sweet scene in front of him. Why does she like Terashima so much? Sano still didn't understand the reason why. What makes this guy so unique?

....

Sano quietly followed Sumire out of the hospital. For the next forty minutes, nobody spoke a word, but he was gradually getting uncomfortable. Almost an hour has passed since they started to walk, yet Sumire shows no sign of stopping. Exactly where is this place they intend- his thoughts broke off when she suddenly stopped.

"Ah, here we are."

Huh? Sano looked at where she was pointing; there was a large metal gate with a strange engraving at the front. A large castle-like mansion surrounded by a forest. Sano rubbed his eyes and blinked. Is he just seeing things? Weren't they in the main street just now?

He hesitantly looked back but could no longer see traces of the street; there was an extensive fog all around them. "Follow me," Sumire said.

Sano somehow nodded as she opened the gate, and they stepped inside. "What kind of place is this?" He asked a foolish question because he gradually felt his nerves getting to him.

"It's an underground base for people like me."

Sano nodded. 'Right, those people always meet in places like this.' This is the first time he has ever gone to one, though. Usually he would send somebody else in his place.

'I don't want to involve myself too much.' The more he learns, the deeper he gets into this underworld business.

"I thought you didn't know about your abilities."

"Mmm, correct. But, I have always had inhumane strength, so they accepted me." Sumire trailed off and sighed. "Well, now that I think it through that's strange, so I guess they realized the truth."

So she was going to places like this even when they dated? It seems like there are many things he didn't know about her. Then again, did he ever ask?

"Are you going to follow me?" Sumire asked as they approached an old and dark looking entrance.

"Isn't it too late to ask?"

"What if..." Sumire trailed off and suddenly took a step forward. "What if I kill you? Nobody will know."

Even when he found out that she was a member of the underworld, he was not afraid. Even when she punched him that time, there was no fear. But now, he was frightened.

He unconsciously stepped back until his back hit the wall. He felt his breathing go unsteady, and it felt like all the air in this small space had vanished.

Sumire leaned forward and raised her hand. "This is the first time seeing you so frightened. Are you afraid of me, San?"

'I'm not afraid.' But for some reason, those words would not leave his lips.

They are so close, close enough to touch, yet why can't he move his body? Why does he want to run and hide?

Sumire suddenly stepped back. "I will wait for you inside, so stay out here and calm down." With those words, he watched as she disappeared behind the double doors.

Sano slumped against the wall and deeply sighed. What was that just now? That deadly look in her eyes and the way she spoke, was she serious?

—

When humans see things outside the norm, there are only two options. One is to ignore it and pretend that it never happened. The second is to face it. The first may seem relatively easy, and a large portion of people forget it immediately.

If it is unnatural, they will choose to erase it from their memory or merely dismiss it as a dream.

To face something out of the ordinary may seem like the most extreme challenge. But anyone could challenge that and say it depends on the extent of the unnatural.

In this case, the ordinary people here have chosen to face it and mix it with the 'unnatural.'

A place where hanyous and regular humans can be together should be a joyous place for her. But since she stepped in here, the scent of blood has not left her. She does not have to look around to know that there has been a feast of great magnitude prepared here. Moreover, they do not even try to conceal the blood; it's as though they want to bask in it, this disgusting smell.

"Welcome, lady Sumire."

Although they spoke calmly, Sumire sensed the fear hidden in their voices.

"We have not had the honor of your presence since the soiree last winter."

Sumire flinched at the words last winter. Last winter's gathering..she attended it alone, but in the end, Ru followed her. This time around, there is no chance for him to appear and help her. She is alone now; from now on, she will have to deal with these situations alone.

"What brings the lady here to our small and dirty establishment on this fine evening?"

"A few days ago, there was a fool who attacked Terashima Yuhi, who met his end. This person would not have had to die if he didn't act so recklessly." Sumire recalled the sight from the alleyway. "Those people were your men, correct?"

Despite her calm tone, there was a deadly look on her face and a dark aura around her.

"It was not me who gave those instructions."

Sumire sensed the fear in their voices and their body language. They are afraid of her; everyone in this establishment is worried.

Everybody must have heard the news by now about her learning of her ability. They were scared before, but now there is something else.

"With all due respect, young, pure hanyou princess." An older looking woman stepped out of the bar area. "It doesn't matter who you associate within your circle of friends. But, your partner is in a different situation. Some dislike the idea of your relationship with that man. I plead that you take your engagement with Makoto Soujiro seriously."

Sumire deeply sighed. 'Such traditional values. It's unheard of to be in an arranged marriage this day and age, yet they accept it so easily.'

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Chapter 273: A deep fear

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They usually would accept strong people like Yuhi, but the situation is different because of his background.

"May I also say something Sumire-sama?"

"Now look here, server girl. ..."

She already knew that the one to leak out everyone's thoughts is this girl—this young and naive fool. However, she wants to prove that she doesn't discriminate by status, but she must remain composed.

"What is it?"

"So to put it simply.." She trails off, "There are many who dislike the current situation with you two dating. Everybody thinks that at this rate, that dirty blood of unknown origin will infect you."

She already knew that people thought this way because Yuhi does not have a family. When she stepped foot in this society, it did not take her long to realize how important family was. No, it is not as though these people treasure their family. What is important to them is the level of prestige each family holds. Such things as family ties do not concern them.

They scorn and look down on Yuhi because of his origin, and his level is unknown. Sumire increased the grip on her blade. She felt several pricks due to the thorns on the blade, but that didn't matter to her. Calm down, control - but no matter how many times she repeated this, her anger would not vanish.

"They want to cause a riot and come between you two. But since you're so overprotective, they decided to attack when he is alone."

So they have not heard of Huan's existence yet. Sumire knew that Atushi and the others were taking measures to think that not even these people know. If they hear of Huan, they will most likely change their target. For them, it is important who she ends up with due to her blood.

She already knew this is what others thought. But despite knowing this, she felt terrible hearing it in person. Why do people look down and underestimate Yuhi like that? Why do they look at him with such cold eyes? So what if he doesn't know who his family members are. Family doesn't make a person.

Yuh is Yuhi. These people are inhumane.

What empty and cruel words, they don't have a hint of compassion in them. Then again, what did she expect? These people have lived in the shadows this entire time. It's normal for them to resent those people who are not like them.

"Be quiet," Sumire spoke up. The black aura around her appeared again. She could no longer hold back her anger.

The dark aura grew stronger, and she felt the power leak out from her body, a menacing and deadly look in her eyes. These people do not deserve to live; they do not deserve to see another day.

She is no longer in Star Town, but she knew that person kept a close eye on her. So no matter what she does here, nobody will find out. If she massacres everybody in this room, nobody will know.

"S--Sumire-sama." The girl who was acting haughty just now seemed different. She spoke in a frantic voice. Panic and fear mixed in.

"Unfortunately, that seems to be precisely the case." A stream of red and violet came out of her fingers, forming a huge ax blade surrounded by butterflies. "You mustn't throw away lives carelessly since they will end by my hands."

Sumire understood that Yuhi would still involve himself in this no matter what. But she does not want to give these people the satisfaction of finding another issue with Yuhi. Then again, it is not much of an argument. Even if Yuhi went ahead and did the same thing as her, he had every right to do so.

There is a single simple rule in this society, after all. The strongest are at the top of the food chain no matter what their background is. Before Sumire could use her blade, however, somebody stepped forward and called out to her.

"You're as frightening as always. The young daughter of Bianca." A mocking voice said.

Sumire deeply sighed and turned to spot a man with spiky grey hair and almond colored eyes.

"Kurogane."

Kurogane Kuga, an information broker she often interacted with in the past. Quite some time has passed since she last saw him.

"Care for a drink?"

Sumire deeply sighed and put her weapon away, which dissolved into thin air, and joined him at the bar area.

To conduct their business in the very same place where she had just threatened to kill them all hardly seemed appropriate. Even now, she could feel it.

A deep fear has been engraved in her skin, the fear of everyone in this room. The words of a pure hanyou princess can truly shake the world.

Even if she only learned about her abilities just recently, she understands her role. It all made sense now, the reason why she felt so isolated this entire time.

She is sure that this fear would remain engraved in people. Since her very presence brings fear, that is something that will never change. Now that she is aware of her so-called powers, this fear and distance will only increase.

Sumire wondered if those people would notice it too. The people in school will they notice this change from her? Will they start to fear her? Will she no longer see the smile on their faces? Sumire shook her head. This is not the time to think about such things.

"I hear my wife has been causing you problems, my apologies," Kuga said, pouring the bottle of wine; the red color immediately drew her attention.

She felt a throbbing pain in her chest, but she took a sip of the drink.

"Aside from causing external issues, she doesn't do anything too extreme. So I hardly noticed it."

"I see. Swinging your cursed blade around like that, though, is it wise?"

"I never realized this weapon was capable of such a thing before. I thought Aki-san had strange tastes when he gave it to me."

Kuga laughed. "Well, you are probably right about the strange taste thing. You're surprisingly adapting to this situation well."

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Chapter 274: Do they deserve to live?

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"Is it unsuitable after all?"

"No, I am more surprised to see how fitting it was." Kuga trailed off. "The subject of Terashima Yuhi, though, is something that won't disappear anytime soon, even more so after tonight's ball, and yet you still intend to go through it?"

Sumire deeply sighed. "It is difficult; of course, I am aware of that. It's fortunate that they don't know about Huan's existence yet; when they do, I'm afraid it'll cause more of a fuss."

When they find out about Huan, she wonders what sort of change will occur.

"So you say, but if they go after your daughter, you'll have the excuse to attack them."

"Your wrong Kuga, I don't need an excuse. This isn't the first place I've gone to threaten them. By now, they should all be receiving it. 'Don't lay a hand on or complain to Terashima Yuhi. 'I went around to so many people threatening them with these words. After all, there are too many huge idiots out there, who won't understand that I am outraged unless I say so."

There are far too many people who are deceived by her appearance. They think just because she looks beautiful, she has no brains or the ability to think for herself.

Back when she first joined the underworld society, she was emotionless to everything. Maybe it's because of her indifferent behavior that others thought they could take advantage of her.

"How frightening. But indeed, that is what makes you interesting." Kuga reaches over and cups her cheek. "A pure hanyou Princess like you that has been raised in complete isolation since you were younger, and yet you paved your path from that point onwards." His fingers brush across the nape of her neck, and she shudders.

"Tell me, you who have been exposed to the light now is fighting for the light or darkness? Which one do you prefer?"

"Neither. I shall fight for both. For the light and darkness to coexist is something that will still take a long time. I am afraid that even when this current situation ends, this will go on for another twenty years."

Kuga chuckled. "Well, maybe you can ask for assistance from that man you came with."

"You saw him?"

"I was surprised to see you with him. Is that not Nagawa Sano?"

"You know him?"

Kuga nodded. "Everybody knows him. He is acting like a little lap dog for those leaders not under the Holy Knights sphere of protection."

'A dog, huh.' It's hard to use that word when it comes to him. After all this entire time she knew him, Sano is the one who used others. But at the same time, it is not hard to imagine

"Sumire-sama, there is a man who said he is your companion. Should we let him in?" One of the butlers approached her.

Ah, just in time. Did he finally calm down? She turned to Kuga, who nodded.

"Well, I am satisfied for now. Although it is a shame we could not do anything else, this is fine for now.."

"If I did such a thing, Yuhi would be angry."

Kuga chuckled and hurriedly left. Right as his footsteps faded, she heard the sound of somebody rushing over. Sumire looked around and spotted a frantic looking Sano.

Sano deeply sighed as he took a seat beside her. "The least you could do is answer your phone."

Sumire blinked, puzzled at his words.

"I tried to contact you first. I figured just entering alone would be dangerous; besides that, I wanted to make sure you were safe."

So he was worried about her?

She watched as Sano ordered a drink. 'His complexion looks pale.' Sweat clung to his face.

"This place reeks of blood."

"Ah." Sumire nodded. "I should have warned you."

"It's fine, but did you finish warning them?"

"Mmm, for now, anyway." Sumire knew that her warnings would only have a temporary effect.

In the long run, they will continue and use more force than before. When that time comes, she will make sure to protect Yuhi.

"Then drink with me for a bit."

"Oh."

Sano ordered a few more drinks, and soon, several bottles were placed in front of them. "I have a few things to ask of you."

"To ask me?"

"Regarding Tsueno Mamoru. Back then, you met him often, didn't you?"

Sumire deeply sighed when she heard his question. For a moment, she thought he was going to ask her a serious question. But it seems like this part of him won't change, his desire to possess her.

Sano sighed. "Look, I have no bad intentions asking this. It's just after that time he saved you, and he showed up in front of me several times too."

Huh? Ru met with Sano?

"From the look on your face, it seems that you did not know anything about it."

This is the first hearing of this. She knew that Ru had a bad habit of randomly appearing before others and giving them some life lesson advice. But after his death, Sumire learned that he only approached people he knew would help her in the future.

The conversations that flow afterward do not make sense to her, and she doesn't know how she responded. Many people speak to her so easily and openly, yet she can see it, the fear. They are all afraid, and they are all trying to get on her good side to escape the fear.

Just like that person told her, this world is more corrupted than the plain elite side.

Hanyou elites maybe even more corrupt than the humans who think nothing of money.

The people here do not care about their companions' deaths, let alone saving anyone who is in need of help. Do these people truly deserve to live?

'Why are you hesitating? Isn't it obvious what you want to do? Do you need me to take charge, is the light side consuming you too much, Sumire? You are the Queen.' In the back of her mind, she can hear a voice. A voice is telling her not to hesitate and to end it all. But if she were to do that, then things will end up as they did before.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 275

Chapter 275: Kisses for Poison

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Sano noticed it when he mentioned Sumire's name but people gave him an odd look. When he touched her cheek their surroundings became hectic and others who were silently watching approached them which led to this situation.

Currently he had Sumire backed against the wall, her face flushed due to the amount of alcohol she drank. The sight looked very alluring. It did not help that their lips were practically touching and the distance between their bodies was so small. Wow....

"If you take advantage of me, I'll kill you."

Sano stepped back and looked away. "I won't do anything." He still felt uncomfortable after what happened earlier.

'I could have gone home but for some reason I thought it was bad to leave her here alone.'

When she didn't answer her messages he panicked even more. What if those people did something to her? She only learned about her powers recently so he assumed that she did not have control of them. But when he saw the faces of those looking at her, he could see the fear in their eyes.

Exactly what did she do to get them so scared? He did not see any signs of a fight.

Sumire chuckled and entered the room. "So you at least value your life?"

"...so this is why you didn't stop me."

"It's troublesome to ask Razel. That guy has a poker face, moreover he doesn't see me as a woman but a monster."

"..."

So she knows he sees her as a woman and yet he watched as she slumped down on the bed. 'Way too defenceless.' Then again it was like that in the past too. When he first asked her to come over she went with him right away. It was the first night they met too.

Back then he thought she was an easy and foolish woman. That innocent act of hers he would tear it down and shape her into his ideal woman. However at some point he stopped thinking such things and enjoyed her company. When did it start?

When did he stop thinking of using her for his own gain? When did he stop having such thoughts and genuinely desire to be with her? Sano recalled the words from the guys in Quatro light and sighed. Lately it is difficult to get near her because of them. Unlike Terashima, those people do not leave any openings.

"So how long are we staying here?"

"That depends. When you have s.e.x how many rounds do you have?"

Wait what did she just ask? 'Such careless behaviour.' Sano reluctantly gave her an estimate and she remained unphased.

"Then we will stay as long as then."

How could she ask him something like that so casually? Is it because she no longer has feelings for him?

The reason why she can act so indifferent is because he no longer means anything. He already figured that was the case before but when she openly shows this behaviour he does not know what to do.

"Why are you so confident? That I will not do anything?"

"You value your life."

'Is she serious about the killing thing?' No, there is no need to ask such a foolish question. Didn't he see it when he looked into her eyes that time? She was serious, she would do so without hesitation.

"Also, maybe I do trust you."

"Maybe?"

"Sano you-" Sumire paused. "-are still lying to me."

"About?"

"That time you told me to meet your friends, you set me up. For the first time in my life I felt fear that I didn't before. I felt powerless."

"Sumire I----"

"Saying sorry? But you know it's too late for that."

"Then what can I do?"

What does he do to change her mind?

"You sound so desperate. I know your serious Sano. But you have to understand something too. Just dating Yuhi is complicated for me."

"Why is it complicated when you like him?"

"Ahaa, I never thought you of all people would say that."

"I really like you, what am I supposed to do?"

"I can't answer that."

She isn't making this easy for him at all. But maybe her heart is still disturbed after what happened with Tsueno Mamoru.

When he learned that the organisation had something to do with that man's death. He conducted his own investigation but all the files from that time were gone. Somebody erased all the records. They did not bother to replace it, they simply got rid of everything with a trace.

He was about to say something when he noticed how pale her complexion was. Her entire face seemed to have lost its colour. Sano recalled the drink she took from the tray of the waitress. Initially that drink was for him but she took it.

"Shit," Sano cursed, realizing as he took out his phone..

The only thing he could do now is to try and get rid of the poison. He remembered the effects of the poison clearly since those people explained everything.

The victim will gradually lose strength in his/her body and slowly their organs would shut down.

"Didn't Hamano tell you?" Sano heard from his boss that Hamano Atushi learned of the poison so it would not be easy for them to use it.

"I knew, but if you drank it you would be in a bad position right?"

Why is she even considering what happens to him? This girl is still as foolish and naive as ever. She always does these foolish things that make him worry.

Sano deeply sighed. 'It can't be helped now.' He slowly removed his shirt before he turned to the girl. She will most likely kill him for this when she wakes up but he has no choice. He tore the girl's clothes from her body and searched for the mark.

He located it easily a small red mark in the center of her chest slowly turning black. He lowered his face and brought his lips to the mark and started to suck on it.

"Yuhi..."

Sano released the flesh from the hold his mouth had on it and spat the blood and poison out onto his now discarded shirt.

He cupped her cheeks. "Terashima is at the hospital, remember? Razel is there, he can take care of things."

Actually with Terashima's personality, that man probably left the hospital already.

"No you're lying."

His gaze darkened when he heard those words from her. She said them so easily and with such conviction too. 'How irritating, she hates him this much?'

"When did I lie to you?"

Even when he saw other girls when they dated he told her right away. He didn't bother making an excuse. Soft m.o.a.ns escaped her lips and his lips curved into a grin satisfied.

'She is making such cute sounds right now.'

His mouth was filled with the poison, and yet he knew it would have no affect on him. Those people already gave him the antidote to the poison, he drinks it every two and three days.

After a few minutes he felt sweat drench his entire body. 'This is bad.'

He almost sucked all the poison out, he should be able to stop soon.

"San...why are you doing this?"

"Poison." It was just one word but he knew she understood from the way she slowly nodded her head.

Sano raised his mouth and it landed on her lips again. "San?"

"I'm taking advantage of this." Why would he waste this opportunity? This is the closest he will be able to get with her.

After a few hours however Sano stopped when he got most of the poison out.

He scooped her up in his arms and walked over to the bathroom. Sano opened the doors and a relieved sigh passed his lips. 'At least they warmed the water beforehand.'

"I'll wait outside." Sano trailed off. "Can you move?"

She shook her head and Sano placed her on the tub. "Tell me if you need anything."

'I need to get away from her quickly, this is driving me crazy.' She slowly nodded and Sano rushed out of the room.

What on earth is this situation? That girl making that kind of face for somebody like him.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 276

Chapter 276: Are you still in love with..?

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

A few hours later

It was night when Sano eventually woke up. The entire room was black with a small light source from the lamp and the windows. Sano noticed right away that he was not sleeping alone. The familiar figure of the brunette hair girl caught his attention.

Sano immediately got up and deeply sighed. 'This girl should have woken me up. Why did she sleep next to me?' Then again, there must be traces of poison left in her system, and she must feel so unwell that she laid down without thinking about him.

Still, quite some time has passed since he last saw her sleeping face like this. He saw it a lot when she was in the hospital, but this is different; they were not directly sleeping next to each other.

This isn't good, and she looks cute. Sano would never have imagined that he would have thoughts like this. To think she would make this kind of her face in her sleep, and underneath those covers, she is only wearing that bathrobe. Sano felt his heartbeat rapidly, and before he knew it, he extended his hands towards her. But before he could remove the covers, she stirred and muttered.

"Ru...."

"..." Sano pulled his hand back. She is still thinking about that man?

Why? Sumire is dating Terashima now. No, didn't he notice this too? Sumire and Terashima look like the perfect couple in other people's eyes, but he noticed something wrong. Occasionally he would see that clouded look in her eyes.

"Ru, don't go. Don't leave me alone."

Is this what Hino was talking about before? So she still misses that man to the point that she would think of him in her sleep.

While it was Ichinose Arashi who made him jealous, that was at the start. After he learned of this man's existence, he felt threatened.

....

It was a strangely warm day when he realized how vital Tsueno Mamoru was to her.

'Late again.' Sano clicked his tongue irritated. That girl keeps bailing on him lately. Due to his workload, he did not overthink it. But the last few days, he has time. She is either late or does not come.

Then again, this is mainly his fault for neglecting her. Sano deeply sighed. Recently the relationship between the two of them is terrible. He thought overtime the situation would improve, but instead, they get into more fights. Unlike before, where she would meekly obey him, she fights back.

What is he going to do? At this stage, she will break up-- Sano's thoughts broke off when he spotted brunette hair approaching from the corner. But the girl was not heading his way.

Sumire stopped and looked at the man beside her with anger in her eyes.

"What on earth were you thinking? You can't just go around stealing things."

"Technically, I was returning stolen property."

The man beside her was somebody he recognized very well. It was Tsueno Mamoru. Ever since that time at the casino, he sees this man a lot more. It is strange how he never saw this person this many times before the incident. To think somebody like this was by her side.

"That's beside the point! You--You-" Sumire bit her lip, and he saw it. She was struggling not to cry.

"Ki, I'm sorry."

"..if you apologize like that, I can't get mad anymore."

Mamoru laughed. "I'll make it up to you."

"I hear there is a new shop that opened up.."

"Great, let's go there then."

"...Thank you for the other day."

Sano watched as he extended his hand out and patted her hair. "You're welcome. But, I was very worried. Please don't do that again."

"It's your fault, idiot...they..they were talking badly about you."

"You'll get mad if I say it's okay. But next time, consult with me first."

Sumire deeply sighed. "You say consult with you, but I can never find you!" Find authorized novels in , faster updates, better experience, Please click #.._51283563982678935 for visiting.

Mamoru laughed and ruffled her hair. "I see you're always searching for me."

"That's because if I take my eyes off you, you go ahead and get yourself in trouble."

"Sumire," Sano called out. 'I've had enough watching this.' How could he watch his girlfriend flirt around with another man? He hated how naturally they spoke to each other. Showing how much they care about each other. Sumire has never done this with him.

Why is she so different when she is with this man?

The girl turned her head, and her eyes widened. She looked panicked for a moment but quickly said her goodbyes and rushed over.

"I didn't think you would pick me up."

Sano leaned forward and kissed her. "San--san?" He only kissed her for a few minutes until she pushed him away.

"You always do this. Did you think if you kissed me, I would--"

Sano grabbed her wrist. "Come back with me."

"Your. .your so unreasonable. I hate this about you."

But even as she said the words hate, Sano noticed how she gradually got closer. The two of them are such selfish people.

...

His thoughts regarding the past broke when he saw a change in her. Tears streamed down her eyes rapidly, and he deeply sighed. He does not know what to do when a girl cries, and he is terrible at this stuff. But he wondered when? Since when did he dislike seeing her tears? Since when did he want her to smile all the time?

...

The following morning, Sano stood silently by the door frame, watching Sumire. He watched as she scooped some miso soup out of the pot with a ladle and poured it into a white bowl. For the last few minutes, he had not moved a single inch and remained there just staring at her.

She wore the dress he ordered Razel to bring over last night. When he asked for an update regarding Terashima, Sano confirmed his thoughts. That reckless man left. But why did he not come here? As he thought this, Sumire turned around.

"Good morning."

"..."

'I thought she would leave.' Sano nodded and walked over. "Cooking?"

"Mm, breakfast." She pointed to the mini table where there was steamed rice, grilled fish, omelet, and now miso.

"Huh...you made all this?"

Sumire laughed. "Yes. It's only a simple meal I'm afraid."

He placed his hand on the counter beside her, which led to trapping her.

Sano leaned slightly over her. "Do you feel better?"

"I do feel better." Sumire tapped the counter with her fingers.

"Last night, did I say something strange?"

"...you mentioned Tsueno." Sano did not see the need to hide it.

"I did, huh?"

Sano could not miss the hollow look in her eyes and frown. "Let me ask you one question, are you still in love with Tsueno Mamoru?"

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 277

Chapter 277: Different worlds

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

It was a question he thought she would evade. But instead, she looked at him with confidence. "That's right."

Sano's eyes widened when he heard those words. Did she admit it just now?

"But then why are you dating..."

Sumire deeply sighed. "With the way Yuhi confessed, it would be too cruel for me to reject him. I have no reason to."

So she felt obliged to date Terashima? No, that does not seem right. After all, she looks so happy when she is with him. She even admitted that back then, she worked so hard for his sake.

Ahh, this gives him a headache. He does not understand this girl.

"Yuhi doesn't mind." Before he could reply to that, the doors opened, revealing Tachibana Masaru. He wore his usual trademark grin on his face as he waltzes over.

"What are you even doing here?"

Masaru chuckled. "Of course it's to see you."

"Don't mess around, I told you to stay--"

"I heard Shin-chan woke up, so I thought I would come and see him."

Sumire sighed deeply. "Then let's hear it."

Before Tachibana Masaru could speak, however, his gaze fell on him. Sano shuddered when he felt a murderous aura around the man. What is it with these people? How many times does he have to experience this unnecessary fear?

"It's okay," Sumire said. "I can explain."

"Explain? Explain why I shouldn't destroy this man limb from limb?"

"Nothing happened. I did this to trick them."

Sano blinked. He thought he would tell Tachibana about what he did, but she isn't saying a word? This girl's behavior puzzles him, he does not understand whether she likes him or not.

Her feelings, huh? Even if she is fond of him, it's not like it was before. Besides, now that he knows she still likes Tsueno Mamoru, he won't overthink anything. This girl will return to him, he is confident about that, but it will not be easy.

"Have it your way." Tachibana did not seem pleased, but he nodded. "You should go to that place lady, if you make your appearance there, then people will listen."

Sumire nodded and turned to him. "Aren't you coming?"

.....

An hour and a half later, downtown Tokyo, 10:30 am.

Sano thought the place they stayed overnight in was weird. But now they are on the side of town he would never go to. In every city, there is a place for delinquents to hang out. Currently, they were in what Sumire called one of the Holy Knights bases.

For the last few minutes, she kept rummaging through the drawers.

"Now, where did I put it?"

"Sumire, why did you---" Sano finally spoke up. It was challenging to speak to her with Tachibana around.

The girl turned around and sighed. "You were supposed to go on a mission last night to bomb one of the bases. But because I came to the hospital, you rushed over, and then I asked you to come with me."

"...You planned it?"

"Mmm, the guy hitting on me was unexpected. I would have found some other excuse to come."

Hah, unbelievable. She is different now.

His thoughts broke off when he felt her hands on his cheek. "It's strange, but I don't sense malice from you anymore."

"..."

This girl, why is she getting so close? How defenseless.

"I wonder what changed."

'She is so pretty...'

"Lady, can I have a minute?" A familiar voice said. He immediately moved away from her.

"Ah, Masaru-senpai."

Sano felt the man's hostile and piercing gaze on him. "In private?"

"It's fine to say it in front of him."

"The situation with the underground society in Star town is serious. They have attacked several groups, and the enemy has shown no mercy. Each time they leave a strange mark using their blood."

"Isn't this like the victims from the hospital case?"

"Correct. I also think the cases are related. Several murder cases are similar, but the police are brushing aside the obvious connection."

"Naturally, people would panic if they learn that the culprit for each case is still on the loose." Sumire trailed off. "...the people who attacked Yuhi-san, dropped this."

It didn't take long for Tachibana to examine the badge; rather, he let out a large sigh when he did. "I'd stay out of this if I were you."

"You know which group it is?"

Masaru nodded. "A symbol that looks peaceful like water but is a mythical dragon... Only one group can have it. But that's why I said to leave it to Terashima."

Sumire shook her head. "I can't do that. I am his partner, and I will not let him fight battles alone."

There was one thing Sano noticed about Sumire and Terashima's relationship. Sumire's loyalty doesn't waver even after everything. No matter how much he observes their relationship, he cannot figure anything out.

"Please tell us what you know."

Masaru sighed but nodded. "I understand. The group's leader is a rather deadly man, his name Kirasagi Aoi. He is the same age as you, lady, but he is a bit odd."

Sano spoke up and raised his eyebrows at this comment. "Strange...?"

"Yeah. There's something about him that gives off a different aura than all the others. You know anyone that crosses this side emits a different aura than the average person. Individuals who others regard as abnormal have no choice but to cross over to this side. But it's different with him, he has lived a normal life without getting hurt.

People almost worship his strength and treat him like a god. In that sense, you could say that their not treating him like a human but a mystical creature. The aura that guy has far surpasses those of the legends in the underworld society."

Sumire harshly cut in and sighed. "No need to explain. I know who he is." She turned to him. "Sano, have you met him?"

Sano tilted his head puzzled but then paused. Now that he thought about it, there was that unusual man with sea golden colored hair and odd ruby-colored eyes. After meeting Razel, Sano did not think that red eyes were unusual anymore, but now that he thought about it, there was something different about that person."

"Briefly."

"How troublesome. I'm no good dealing with people like that."

Sano did not say anything to that and remained silent as the two discussed more subjects. The world they live in is completely different. He wishes he could help her more, but he does not know much about these matters. Where did this desire to help her come from?

But now he understood after seeing a part of the world she lives in why he always felt that distance when they dated. It all makes sense now, and yet this is painful.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 278

Chapter 278: The start of something new

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

A few days later - Iro road high school.

Yuhi walked down the long halls. It was hotter than usual today, and he felt the sweat cling to his shirt. He was heading in the direction of the pool. 'It's better to take a dip.' His thoughts broke off when he heard rushing footsteps approach him.

He didn't need to turn to see that the people were panicking about something. Gee, and from the looks of it, it just has to be in the direction that he was heading.

Terashima Yuhi wasn't amused at all. That damned Akatsuki, he knows that the deadline is today, and he goes around accepting another job. What's more, it just has to be in a big studio.

'I decided it was better to go to school, but in the end, I will still have to go to work.'

People have stopped him several times to ask if he came here to meet with some idols. Those people ask such pointless questions.

Yuhi did not intend to go to school initially. But when he thought of what Sumire would say, he ended up here again.

He wanted to delay as much as possible going to work, knowing what kind of job it was—a job working with some female models. Then again, he is equally in a pinch here. 'Working with female students from the fashion course.'

However, he didn't have much of a choice. They had to get the piece put together, and it just so happens Akatsuki has the other parts he needed to finish.

Yuhi deeply sighed; this is the reason why he didn't want to pair up with the guy in the first place. But with that particular piece, one needed a partner.

No matter how well he could draw, even he couldn't solo the project this time. This is why he chose Akatsuki, and it's not as though he had many to choose from.

When he arrived at the area, Akatsuki waved him over. "Ah! Just the guy I wanted to see."

His eyes twitched in annoyance. "Oj, you qu---" Yuhi trailed off.

The members of Quatro light were using the gym stage and performing.

Quite some time has passed since they came here. But he does not see them enough.

"They just came back from a tour, from the looks of it."

Tour huh? So that explains everything. But if that's the case then, he scanned the room, hoping to see brunette or blonde.

He knew that the girl had a habit of changing between the hair colors ever so often. But he never fails to recognize her.

His scanning didn't go unnoticed, but not by his friend.

"Mimi isn't here, you know? She's at a banquet."

The voice belonged to none other than a certain maroon-colored haired boy. Quatro light's leader Maon Kou.

"Banquet?"

"To meet her beloved fiance. She would have seen him sooner, but she came with us during the tour." Kou explained.

Iwa Ran hit the guy over the head. "Oi don't say that."

Tetsuo nods. "Indeed. It is merely a formal greeting."

Meeting her fiance, huh? Several images appeared in his head. 'I still can't get along with that guy, but he does not directly interfere with his relationship with Sumire.'

"However, perhaps that wording isn't incorrect or inappropriate as your all thinking. Somebody informed me about it that day. 'There is a person she wants to see again. I am sure it's Makoto.'"

Yuhi doesn't respond. But his thoughts spiraled out of control. Whenever it came to that girl, after all, he was never able to remain calm.

The emotions he buried away due to the scars from his childhood.

"Nay madam seems thy know."

"Yuhi?"

A perfect plan doesn't mean having everything go within expectations. Others can achieve an ideal plan when it has the capacity to deal with problems that may or may not arise.

Ibuki Sumire's lifestyle is something that agrees and fits that statement perfectly.

"If Yuhi-san is quoting Shakespeare, I have to capture the moment."

His thoughts broke off when he heard a familiar voice and laughed. Of course, she always appears whenever he becomes easy. Before he can have any more negative thoughts, she would appear.

Yuhi stepped forward and wrapped his arms around her waist. He brushed his forehead against hers. "I thought I would see you in a fancy dress."

Sumire sighed and rolled her eyes. "You should stop enforcing your fetishes on your girlfriend."

"Is that so? Maybe I can enforce it on my wife."

"Silly."

Yuhi felt her hands on his. Sumire wasn't wearing a dress, but she wore quite formal clothing. "Were you with Nagawa?"

"Yes."

Lately, he heard rumors that Sumire keeps dragging Nagawa with her. It would be a lie to say that the rumors didn't bother him. But he does not want to make her feel uneasy.

He was a fugitive with dirty, blood-stained hands. He lived that way for many years, and yet when he met her, that changed. It all changed when he met this girl.

"Mimi." Kou stepped forward. "Since you are here, maybe you should perform too."

Sumire sighed. "No, thank you, I came here to attack Yuhi-san but look at him not getting the hint at all."

Yuhi froze when he heard those words. What crazy thing is she thinking now? Then again, she said something similar recently, didn't she.

Yuhi awkwardly scratched his hair. "I'm just surprised to see you."

"Well, please get over it and take me away already."

'Goodness, what do I do with her..' Moreover, it was difficult to do what she wanted since he felt a pair of hostile gazes on him. Gazes from two people, Maon Kou and Iwa Ran.

"I want to see you sing too."

"Well, it seems I can't avoid it." Sumire reluctantly pulled away from him.

The absence of warmth in his arms upset him greatly. But such thoughts vanished when he felt a pair of soft lips on his.

"Then Yuhi-san, let's continue this later."

Yuhi nodded and watched as she walked onto the stage. The students who gathered around to watch Quatro light slowly dispersed, but some remained. He even saw people take out their phones. 'Those people are doing that on purpose.'

Kira Jun spoke up. "Don't bother, and she won't appreciate it even if you stand up for her."

"I know." He understood that about her very well.

"Besides, these people will regret it in the next second."

Sumire sat down in front of the piano, and a gorgeous melody filled the arena. A soft and gentle voice.

"I love you, hurray!

I'm glad you're here; our present is right here.

I love you, hurray!

This is just the beginning, best regards for tomorrow - this isn't the goal line.

Smile! If you're sad, love will blow it away.

When you smile, the scenery will change, and the sun will peek out.

Even when you're uneasy, the road that leads to happiness.

Can be seen in the blue sky."

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 279

Chapter 279: More things to love

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

Ibuki Sumire was everything he wasn't.

Maybe that's the reason why he fell in love with her.

But, she is someone who kept up with his strange mind set. She often shared the same thoughts and the same ideas.

She is enthusiastic and eager to make things work. 'The two of us are similar and yet, occasionally we have our differences.' But those differences only make them closer.

Back when he was still in the Holy Knights and worked alongside her as his partner. They fought a lot and yet she remained by his side.

She read his thoughts like an open book.

Maybe it is. Whenever he is around Ibuki Sumire, he acts differently. 'Have I become soft?' It's true that he does not fight as much anymore.

"So we are skipping class now?"

After she sang on stage Sumire dragged him away to the abandoned music room.

"I've been skipping since morning."

This girl, he can't tell if she is the serious type or not. His gaze fell on the guitar in her hand. For the past few minutes she strummed a few chords.

"Did you want to play?"

"No." Sumire passed the guitar to him. "You play and I will sing."

Yuhi deeply sighed when he heard her words. 'I thought as much. No wonder she held back when she sang on earlier.'

"The song was good but you made mistakes." Yuhi trailed off. "It was deliberate?"

"Bingo." Sumire winked. "If I want to perform seriously, I want to do so with Yuhi-san's music."

Here she goes again with that. Not that he minded too much. Yuhi nodded and he watched as her eyes light up.

He felt his cheeks turn red. 'What's with her?' Even though she is normally so confident and acts mature.

"Even if it seems like I can reach for your heart..

I can feel you close from the distance boyfriend.

When I am lost while looking for the whereabouts of your feelings.

I will not lose my courage.

I can feel a little warmth flowing from that finger

and I feel like I want to become that same warmth.

Reach out with this hand and embrace tomorrow.

I want to convey this song into your heart.

Even if I struggle in this rushing world, the only thing I won't do is regret..."

After that one song Yuhi put the guitar down and grabbed hold of her hands. "So? What's the reason why you wanted to

takes a lilac ribbon box out from her bag, " Here, my chocolates. "

A tint of red appears on his cheeks. He wasn't expecting this at all. Then again he didn't think he would see her again before she left, she's a lot more calm in contrast to when they spoke the other night.

Yuhi accepts the box, " Um, it's a lovers chocolate, I guess? "

" It's not a lovers chocolate. " Eh? Sumire continues, " Were still lovers, but there's something more special. "

At that comment his whole face goes bright red. Hey hey now, isn't she being a bit too bold and direct? Damn, he supposed this is what he gets for acting so calmly about everything the other night.

"I wrote my feelings on the chocolate."

"Is this handmade?" Yuhi suddenly asked as he recalled something.

Sumire chuckled. "Indeed, it seems I learned about double boilers since then."

"O--okay." Yuhi said nervously as he opened the box. But that feeling vanished when he saw the the words written on the chocolate.

The words rival written in capital letters.

"Rival chocolate! I was so moved after watching Quatro light. But then I realized something. The one standing at the top of the entertainment world is you, the one who beat them is you. So starting today, you're my rival."

Yuhi didn't know what to say.

He is speechless. She's done so many incomprehensible things before, but this is the first time she left him this speechless. Yuhi exhales deeply.

"Who even thinks of giving their boyfriend something like this. You led me on. This isn't romantic at all." He exclaimed but the girl only laughed.

"I will end up performing in a good music show alongside Yuhi."

So that's why she is bursting with energy. Geez, he supposed that's exactly like her.

"What is it?"

Yuhi extends his hand out and flicked her forehead.

"What was that for?" Sumire exclaimed, as she placed her hand on her forehead.

"Taking on me as your rival by yourself? That's some guts you've got."

"But I am going to become the first- star idol. Isn't it better to have stronger rivals?"

"I can't argue with that logic. Looks like it's a race to see who can become the first."

"Yeah." Sumire beamed happily.

'She looks so cute.' Ah he can no longer resist. Yuhi pulled the girl into his arms and Sumire laughed.

"Did your self control break again?"

"It did." Yuhi trailed off. "Your voice has gotten better."

"Mmm, lately I've been practicing."

"Are you still afraid?"

"I am but." She closed the distance between them. "If I am with you, it's all okay."

Before he could kiss her however the doors opened revealing Asami. "Sumire-chan! We need your help with-" Asami made eye contact and her cheeks reddened. "Ahem, carry on."

"Hey! I won't attack her here."

Sumire laughed. "Uh, let me go and check it out. I will be right back Yuhi-san."

Yuhi nodded and proceeded to sit down but Sumire tugged on his hand. "Is something wrong?"

She leaned forward and whispered something in his ear. Yuhi felt his heart beat increase when he heard those words. Is she serious about that? He felt a soft pair of lips on his cheek but before he could react she already left his side.

Yuhi remained frozen and didn't hear Asami leave. 'Then Yuhi-san, today I will lead.' If anybody else heard those words they would misunderstand. She is only talking about kissing.

He walked over to the piano and noticed a familiar lilac coloured notebook. 'Is this the reason why she left her gathering half way? She practiced secretly here.' His gaze softened when he saw the post it notes and highlighted notes.

She is serious and diligent when it comes to music. This is the kind of thing somebody does when it comes to studying. Yuhi closed the book but something fell out. He bent down and picked up an old looking plain bookmark.

Yuhi blinked surprised. 'Isn't this mine?' Despite the worn out look, he knew it was his immediately. He bought this random leather bookmark a long time ago in an antique shop. He liked the simple design.

This is bad, he keeps finding note things to love about her.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 280

Chapter 280: I want her to see the light

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

Instead of waiting for her inside the music room, Yuhi found himself going outside. He found a random empty spot in the main building's back and laid down on the grass. For the next few minutes, he was at ease when he heard a pair of approaching footsteps.

"Yuhi."

Yuhi looked up and saw a familiar face. "Back from the dead teach?"

The person standing over him is none other than Nakara Shin.

"I wish, it still hurts."

"Yet you came to school?"

"It's the last day before the summer holidays; of course, I have to attend." Shin trailed off. "What are you doing in a place like this? Did you go somewhere again?"

Yuhi sensed his tone and reluctantly sat up. "I was with Sumire."

Silence fell on them, and he sighed. He probably shouldn't have mentioned it to this guy, and he will say that he is hogging her.

To his surprise, Shin nodded.

"The thing both of you have been wishing for the most has come true. Since then, you've been wandering around looking for her. God saw it all, and that's why I am glad that you two have mutual feelings for each other. I prayed for it the entire time. I am glad."

His eyes widened when he heard those words.

Ah. .this idiot. Why did he pray for something like this? But in the first place, Shin has always been the one who supported the two of them the most. Whenever he is lost, and in doubt regarding Sumire, he would always prove so otherwise.

"Sorry."

"Huh, why? Did you bully her again? Was she doing fine?"

He can't mention the kiss now. Yup, even if he were to die. He won't mention the kiss. "Nothing."

"Hehe, your weird."

He is a strange guy. But Yuhi is grateful for having a friend like Shin by his side this entire time. His thoughts broke off when he felt a familiar throbbing pain in his chest and started to cough. Yuhi immediately placed his hand on his mouth.

"Yuhi?!!"

Yuhi couldn't respond as a stream of coughs escaped his lips. For the next few minutes, he kept having short bursts of coughs, but the pain increased per cough.

"Are you alright?"

"It's nothing," Yuhi muttered. It was a lie, of course, but he did not want anybody else to know about this.

Shin shook his head and reached over to grab hold of his hand, revealing the blood in the palm in his hand.

"Shin. .. this is. .."

"Stop it. You haven't been alright for a long while now. I knew it all along. Please don't hide it from me anymore."

His eyes went wide at his companions' words. Did he know all along?

"Yuhi, I want you to understand this. We're both here, but you always carry the heavy burden by yourself. Even if I want to help you carry the burden, even just a little bit of it, I always end up just seeing you suffer, and I can't do anything about it. That's painful, above anything else. As your friend, in your difficult times. I want to be your best support. That's the thing I have wished for the most."

'As your friend, huh?' The word friend still seems like a foreign word to him. But he is gradually starting to understand. To think even somebody as indifferent as Shin would end up saying something emotionally like this.

"Ever since then, you've always wanted to ask, right? I see it in your eyes. Whenever you try to, I always answer you with strong feelings, the same thing. The reason I hesitate to listen to Atsuro's orders regarding Sumire is because of you."

He really is a fool. But just like that time, his words can easily lift the things he hid in his heart.

"Shin, the truth is that I am afraid. I'm afraid of even thinking about the future a year from now. I don't if my heart is still working fine by this time or if it's still beating. I'm afraid that the time will come when I won't be able to protect her anymore, more than anything else."

He is afraid, what will happen to her when he dies?

"That's why, if possible, even if I shorten my lifespan. I want to take her out from that darkness."

He wants to take her out of this darkness and show her exactly how beautiful basking in that light is. Just like she showed him, he wants her to see that light.

Shin sighed deeply. "Don't do anything reckless anymore. You know she won't like it."

"I know."

Sumire will lecture him if she finds out. Yuhi recalled the tears in her eyes when she found him in that condition. He does not want her to make that type of face again, but at the same time, he wants to see it. That was the first time he saw her look like that, and he found it very cute.

Yuhi's thoughts broke off when he felt a familiar pair of arms around his neck. He was occupied speaking with Shin that he didn't realize when she came.

"Sumire?"

Indeed it was his girlfriend. But there was something different about her.

"Wahhh, I fell."

Gosh, she is cute.

"I'll get some medical supplies, and you two wait here." Shin immediately understood and quickly left.

Yuhi reluctantly puts the girl onto a bench nearby. "You fell?" Yuhi repeated, examining her now torn dress.

"I saw some reporters." Sumire deeply sighed. "I did skip half the party, so I figured they would come after me, but they came way too soon."

"I see."

'Those reporters again, huh?' How frustrating. Even though he has the power to crush them, he always ends up missing when they openly harass her. It is difficult to crush them when he has no actual evidence.

Sumire laughed softly. "Yuhi-san, you don't have to do anything."

"Who said I was?"

'Maybe I can fake the evidence..' If he does that flawlessly, he can get rid of those pests.

His thoughts broke off when Sumire brushed her fingers across his eyes. "You're making a scary face again. It's okay, Yuhi, this isn't the first time this has happened."

"Does that make it okay?"

"I wonder. But even before I became an idol, people naturally disliked me. That's why this is fine. There is something about me that people don't like. I have already given up trying to explain."

This girl is so stupid. How is that okay? How can she be okay with that kind of life? Receiving so much hate is painful. He understood that very well. How can she cope with that?

How can she cope with all that pain and suffering?