

Melody 471

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 471

Chapter 471: Dangerous Assistance

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

He waited until the girl had left before walking over to the large doors. There stood a man with curly ginger hair wearing a black and purple colored cape. A relieved sigh passes his lips, seeing him unharmed.

"You're going to give me a heart attack one of these days, sir."

"I didn't say anything wrong."

"If you don't think that was wrong, then I question your morals."

This person lecturing him is his 'assistant' Jack.

"Morals huh, I should ask you the same. When did you get back?"

"Don't glare; you know, even if I come back, I have to report back to them first."

Sano sighed. "I shouldn't have lent you."

When he first made a deal with these people, they made an exchange. On his side, he had to exchange somebody valuable. So he traded his most valuable subordinate. Unlike the other people who surrounded him, this is one person who his family didn't hire. It was the same with Raiju because he helped them out, and they swore their loyalty.

Jack chuckled. "I see. By the way, master, I heard that you successfully met up with Ibuki Sumire."

"You stay here." Sano immediately understood why this man waited. "You're not meeting her."

"Huh? Why why?"

Sano clicked his tongue, annoyed. "Isn't it obvious? You're too noisy, and she is still a patient."

"Eh, but wasn't she just here? Since she saved you, I wanted to meet her even more."

Despite his normal-sounding words, Sano sensed the hidden intentions. "You don't have to test her."

"But master, what if she is your enemy? I have to find out quickly what she wants from you; otherwise, she will cause you harm."

This is the dangerous thing about loyal people. Some are loyal to the point they will do anything, even if it means ending another person's life. One of the reasons why he refrained from meeting Sumire sooner was Jack. He didn't think the man was in a stable enough condition, but even then, Sano waited until Jack left for a long mission before meeting with Sumire.

I cannot allow Jack to meet her.

It was the first thing that crossed his mind when he decided to go and see her.

By stable enough condition, he meant Jack's mental state. When he first met the man, he was merely a young boy. He indeed saved Jack but not in the way Jack remembers. Sano stopped him from killing a person, but Jack had already killed so many others before he came.

Jack killed because his previous master told him to; they turned him into a bloody killing machine. Eventually, the boy lost it and tried to kill his master instead.

This is why he is very careful with the orders he gives Jack. He ensures that the jobs he gives do not require taking a life. But even then, if Jack determines the other person is dangerous, he will kill without a second thought.

Many people have questioned why he would keep such a mad man by his side. But they don't understand how it feels to be alone. They don't understand how he felt when he realized that there was nobody on his side.

He turned to Jack. "Come with me to the hospital."

If he keeps prolonging their meeting, Jack will be suspicious; it is better to get this out of the way.

....

At the hospital.

It seemed there was no need to worry. The two were greeting each other like old friends to the point he was getting irritated. Why on earth is she able to speak to other guys so easily? When they first went out, there were many awkward moments; there were times where he racked his head thinking of topics to talk to her about,

They went out rather abruptly after all. So it is not like he got the time to get to know her. Because of this, he easily became jealous whenever he saw the way others interacted with her.

"By the way, miss, can I ask you something?"

"Yes?"

"Is it true you are going out with Terashima Yuhi?"

Sano immediately became alert at those words.

"Mm, correct."

After she said those words, his bad feeling came true. Jack pulled out a short dagger from his sleeve and cut Sumire's cheek with it.

"Jack-" Sano's sentence fell short when he saw the look in Sumire's eyes.

"Too bad, even though you guys look so good together." Jack suddenly backed away, startling him.

"I look even better with Yuhi."

Jack laughed. "I see. But Miss, you really are bold? You knew I had a knife on me all along."

Sano could no longer stand by and watch as he walked over. He brushed his fingers across the cut on her cheek. "Does it hurt Sumire?"

"I am alright; it barely grazed me."

He still doesn't like the idea that she got hurt in front of him. Sano turned to Jack, who still wore his signature smile on his face.

"Jack." Sano simply said his name, but he said it threateningly.

Jack's face turned pale. "Gah, master, you are so scary. I wasn't really going to hurt her, and I know how precious she is. Besides, even if she is dating someone, it doesn't mean you can't snatch her away."

Sano glared at him, and Sumire chuckled. "Well, then your master has to try harder."

Jack's eyes brightened at those words. "I shall buy him more books as pointers." With those words said, the fool hurriedly left.

Sano turned to the girl. She really knows how to handle others. How did she manage to calm Jack down just by looking at him?

"Troublesome woman."

"You're the one being absurd. Are you going to act that way every time another guy says to me?" Sumire questioned.

"There's nothing I can't do."

Sumire sighed deeply. "Well, alright, you win. I thought you had meetings today."

"I finished early."

It was more like he only went there to confirm the current status. Sano brushed his hands across her forehead. "Your fever?"

"It's mainly gone. I feel better."

"I see."

Sano moved away and picked up a bottle of medication, and drank it. He turned to Sumire and quickly kissed her. It was just a brief kiss to make her swallow the medication, but it was a kiss nonetheless.

"You're awful," Sumire muttered when he pulled away from her.

"It's your fault for messing around. You just came back from the base too."

Sano couldn't mistake it. This girl actually had the nerve to follow him. If following him was bad enough, she actually used a sword and went against that person.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 472

Chapter 472: Powerless

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

"I admit that I followed you, but you can't blame me. You said you would discuss things with me, but you still haven't." She sighed at those words. "Why would I let go of such a good opportunity?"

Indeed, she makes a point there. It is more surprising that the girl hasn't taken advantage of him yet when she could have.

Should he thank her for being so lenient?

She is so stubborn. "If you followed me, you should have heard the discussion."

Sumire looked at him cautiously. "Do you really want to help me?"

"Is it that shocking?"

"Well, mmm, I suppose."

"I want to take responsibility for my actions that hurt you so much. Even if I didn't know, at the end of the day, I allowed them to use me to hurt you."

"I already said you don't have to go this far."

Sano shook his head. "I understand that, but you have to understand me too. This is something I want to do."

"Then alright." She extended her hand out and brushed her fingers across the cut on his cheek. "I think men with scars are cool."

"Like I will believe that." Sano scoffed.

"Yuhi-san does; his reaction is quite amusing." She drew her hand back. "By the way, you only spoke to a recording earlier."

"Huh?"

"Hmmm, it's like what I thought. He has never shown himself in front of his subordinates. That curtain is there for display."

"But what about the power he used?"

"It is actually easy to fake that kind of thing. I doubt I would have been able to save you otherwise."

Sano knew better than to ask questions. Ever since he learned the existence of individuals with evolved genetics, he understood something. These people live in a completely different world than he does. They may live in the same world, but their status is far above those even with political power.

The woman he loves belongs to that category of untouchable people. If he disliked how far away their status was back when they dated, then what about now?

Why is it no matter how hard he tries, he still can't reach her?

Sumire must have sensed his frustration since she pulled her hands away from his cheek. A strange light appeared in her hand, no now that he got a closer look he realized it was blood. He watched as a hilt of a sword formed from the blood and frowned.

"Is this-"

"Right, it seems I can use blood to create weapons."

"Your blood?"

Sumire nodded. "Having power isn't all great. It comes with sacrifices. Sure it may seem nice, and we may seem like unreachable people. But at what cost do we pay to obtain that status? You know, even before they told me, I felt like I already knew about this a long time ago and unconsciously put a distance between myself and others because of it."

"Sumire."

"I am very tired already," Sumire mumbled. "But I won't stop until I reach the truth."

He wonders what truth she is searching for now. She already learned the reason for the accident, and yet she still doesn't seem satisfied. How much more does she want to learn, and for what reason? Does she truly have to uncover all the dark secrets in the world?

"Why are you getting closer?"

At some point, he was unconsciously leaning towards her.

"Is it a crime to get close?"

"Mmm, you have hidden motives."

"I want to take your temperature." It was a lie; of course, he had bad intentions like she suggested.

Sumire, however, was clever enough to understand and buried her face under the covers. "I want to sleep."

Sano sighed, defeated. Well, he didn't think it would be that easy. Moreover, she mentioned that he couldn't have his way with her anymore. He moved away from the bed and walked over to the couch, where he left his laptop and some paperwork.

The next few minutes, he looked over some documents and compared it to the video on his screen. It was quiet when she broke the silence and spoke up, mumbling quietly.

"Does he always try to intimidate you like that?"

Sano sighed deeply as he looked over at her. "Every single time a subordinate disobeys him. He turns them into statues for one night, or several depending on how severe the situation is."

He never personally experienced it, but he saw with his own eyes and heard the stories. He never thought the day would come where it would happen to him.

"That's-"

"I have never disobeyed him before; it was the first time."

She didn't reply right away, and then he hears sobbing. At first, he thought he just imagined it. Sano quickly stood up and walked over to the bed. He pulled the covers and to confirm his suspicion. Sumire was indeed crying.

This is the first time he has seen her cry since their breakup.

No, this is the second time.

"Why are you crying?"

"I already told you," Sumire exclaimed. "I don't want you to sacrifice anything,"

Sano sighed when he heard those words from her. "If you can't accept my affections. The least you can do is allow me to protect you. Back then, I couldn't protect you, Sumire. I allowed my parents to walk all over you, I allowed them to mock you, and you had a hard time."

He regretted it so much; he wishes he helped her. It was painful for him to look away.

"So, are you simply trying to make it up to me?"

"You already know the answer."

The girl was still crying, but the strength had returned to her eyes. Sano extended his hand out and wiped her tears with his thumb. "Let me do this much. I won't complain about you and Terashima anymore."

Although he isn't fond of seeing them kiss, he can't do anything about it right now.

"Alright, stop crying; you know I can't do anything when you cry."

"You're just bad at comforting girls. How can you be a playboy if you can't solve something this simple."

"Sumire I--" Before Sano could say anymore, though, they suddenly heard a voice.

"I will take over this if you don't mind."

Sano isn't surprised to see Terashima. This was the time he would normally visit. He stepped out of the way, and Terashima stepped forward. Sumire wrapped her arms around his neck.

"Yuhi."

"Mmmm, I heard. Aren't you too careless? If you're going to do something like that, you have to tell me so I can watch your back."

"Aha." Sumire laughed softly. "Instead of stopping me, you want to join me?"

"Of course, raiding a church sounds quite cool."

Sano watched this exchange silently. She is able to smile when Terashima is around. Just a few minutes ago, she was crying, but now she can smile. He didn't say anything and simply walked away.

It seems he really can't do anything for her even though he went through all that trouble. It is not like he did that to obtain something from her, but even then, it frustrated him. Why is he unable to do something for the woman he loves?

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 473

Chapter 473: No Answers

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

His thoughts broke off hearing familiar footsteps. Sano's gaze dimmed when he saw who it was.

"Didn't you heal faster than her? Why are you still in the hospital?"

The person who just appeared is the researcher who was with Sumire during her disappearance. The man was also somebody Hino despised.

"Now, now I simply came to visit."

Sano looked at the documents in his hands. "You can't give that to her now. She is making good progress healing, but if you give her that, she will do something to worsen her condition."

Eli chuckled at those words. "I see, but is it okay not to give this to her?" Eli pulled something out of the large brown envelope. In Eli's hands weren't papers but a traditional-looking pocket watch.

"It seems she hasn't noticed yet, so she has no need for it." Sano took the watch from Eli. "Besides, we still don't understand how it works. It would be better to keep it under control."

"I see; well, I also thought the same. I came here to hand this to you, however, since if I keep it, she will figure it out eventually."

"So she is on to you." Sano sighed. "You're not very reliable, are you?"

He dove into his pocket for his cigarettes and lighters only to realize they were missing. Eli chuckled.

"It seems you two are on good terms."

"Ha, if only." Sano already knew that Sumire took his cigarettes and lighter. "It's not like that she just doesn't like the smell of smoke."

"Is that so? But something has changed. I am sure even Hino-kun will have no complaints with how things are now."

"You're overestimating me; that girl doesn't love me."

"Right, she doesn't love you." Eli agreed. "But there are many different forms of love."

"Don't bother giving me that kind of speech. I have heard it all before."

"What are you going to do if she leaves Tokyo and returns to Star town?"

At that comment, his gaze darkened more, and Eli's sweat fell.

"Fine. But you know even if you keep it to yourself, everybody wants to know what you plan to do with her. I doubt that stingy old woman will continue letting you get away with this."

"Isn't that why I asked for your help? Have you figured out a way yet?"

"Even if you convince Miss Penelope, it will backfire on you since that old woman knows that she loves you. She will make it hard for Sumire-chan."

"That's why I need to find a way."

Eli paused for a moment. "Why don't you ask her fiance?"

Suddenly Eli sunk to the ground. "I would rather get shot by a gun than face your terrifying killer glare."

Why does he have to deal with so many idiots?

"What did you find out?" Sano asked, changing the topic.

"It was like what you said. It seems there are more people in the elite circle involved in that fire."

He asked Eli to investigate the demise of the Terashima family; what caused that fire? He wanted to know the details.

"The last time I came there, I ran into a few politicians from the central cabinet. It was the first time seeing them there, but from the looks of things, they have been frequent patrons of that man." "I see, so you think they know something?"

"From the very start, that man has shown an unusual interest in Sumire. It wouldn't surprise me if he wanted her since before I broke up with her."

In the last few years, Sano has carefully observed his behavior whenever it came to Sumire. Although he has never seen the man's facial expression, he could tell from his tone. It is too dangerous for Sumire to go near him.

Sano recalled what happened at the base earlier. Even though Sumire was right there, he didn't leave the curtain, so it must be exactly like what she said. There is only a recording there.

"But what brought this on?" Eli wondered. "I didn't think you would ask me to abort my other mission and to start investigating this."

"Jack can handle the one you were doing, but he is no good at investigations. He will just kill people the second he gets annoyed."

Eli chuckled. "Indeed, but this also comes with its own set of problems. I don't think Hino-kun appreciates it.."

"Hino is Hino. Whatever grudges you have with him has nothing to do with me. Moreover, I need to use all I can."

This is one of the cases Sumire asked him to look into when they started dating. At first, she seemed very reluctant to ask him for help, but it became unavoidable since the people around them spoke about her inheritance.

"You care so much for her. Indeed it is a waste. But perhaps if you are careful enough, the situation will soon turn out to be in your favor. The only reason you can't get to her now is because Terashima is here."

"What are you trying to say?" Sano felt like he already knew where this was heading. Before Eli could say any more, the doors opened, revealing Terashima.

Terashima tosses him something, and he immediately caught it. It was a packet of cigarettes and a lighter.

"Sorry about that." Yuhi apologized. "I told her already she can't do that with somebody who isn't me."

Despite the normal-sounding words, Sano immediately understood what he was trying to imply.

Sano tossed the cigarettes and lighter into the bin. "If she doesn't like me smoking, I will stop."

"You seem very obedient."

"Naturally, since I love her."

Other people walking by most likely saw small lightning bolts forming between Terashima and him.

The black-haired man sighed deeply. "I suppose I can't argue with that logic. But if that is the case, watch her better. If you were watching her properly, she wouldn't have snuck off."

"You seem quite confident asking another man to stay by your woman for twenty-four seven."

"Of course, I'm confident. I'm the one she chose."

Sano's eyes twitched, annoyed. What is wrong with this man? Not once has he lost his composure when talking. He was about to say something else when they heard the sound of Terashima's phone.

"I got it. I will be there right away."

Sano sensed the sudden shift in tone and listened carefully.

"Leave Yoru in charge until I get there. Yeah, I got it. I will get Atushi too."

Now that he thought about it, there were many unsettling rumors regarding Terashima Yuhi. The bar akagaumi he frequently visits and the place he briefly stayed in before because of Sumire. That place is actually a base for delinquents.

"Sumire? No, she can't go. It's fine. I will update her another time."

It seems Sumire is aware of Terashima's little group. Too bad he can't use this against him. Then again, Terashima isn't stupid enough to take an important phone call in front of them. Sano spotted Sumire peering at the door and sighed.

He didn't want to see any more of their lovey-dovey interactions today, but it seems he will have to. Still, he is curious how she is going to react to this. How involved is she with Terashima's deals?

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 474

Chapter 474: Kill Them

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

Terashima noticed and pulled the phone away from his ear. "It's about that raid; they have tied up the people involved. What should we do with them? You need some for information, right?"

"Ah." Sumire walked over and took the phone from Yuhi. "Kill them."

Despite the vague sounding information, Sano put the pieces together. It seems Terashimas group conducted a raid, and now they are wondering what to do with the hostages.

The way Sumire said the words kill made him shudder, and his body turned cold with fear.

Even though he has conducted some deals using underhanded methods, he has never taken a life before. How can she--give an order like that? Sano thought he already understood how frightening she was, but this was different.

"You heard that, right? Get it done before I go there." With those words, Terashima switched off the phone. He turned to Sumire and patted her hair. "I will report back to you later, boss."

Sumire rolled her eyes. "Mmm, then I will wait for you." She wrapped her arms around Terashimas neck and whispered something.

"Roger that."

Terashima said a few more words before leaving.

Sano, who remained frozen the entire exchange, snapped out of it when the silent Eli spoke up.

"I wonder whose blood you want tonight, Queen."

Sumire sighed deeply. "Even if I don't, they will commit suicide and end their own lives. Moreover, they will kick up too much of a fuss if we search their base. It's better to kill them to save the annoyance later on."

She already threatened to kill him before, so why does this come as a surprise to him? This girl- his thoughts broke off when Sumire tugged on the edge of his sleeves.

"I'm tired now. I will go to sleep, alright?"

Sano, who was still in a daze, nodded not before draping his jacket around her. "It's getting colder. I will get you an extra blanket later on. But wear this for now."

"Thank you."

With those words said, the girl re-entered the room. The moment she left, Sano sunk to the ground. Eli looked at him with pity in his eyes.

"If you can't handle that, then you won't be able to get her."

"Shut up."

Ever since he got involved with those people, he has had many bad experiences. There were cases where he got kidnapped just so the trade wouldn't go through. That organization's enemies started to target him, even though he was not directly involved.

His parents raised in such a sheltered environment, and normally he would not have had to experience such things. But due to some relatives' mistakes, it led to their company being on the verge of bankruptcy. They were already losing their reputation and connections. But he managed to score that invitation to the party where he met Sumire.

It was because Sumire helped his family that they managed to get through it all. Yet those people treated her terribly. The Nagawa family business grew so much that they no longer needed her, but he already long fell for her. With her status, Sano proposed the idea of him marrying Sumire, but it backfired.

It seems his parents long arranged a fiance for him, but because of the bankruptcy issue, the other family hesitated. From the very start, they only intended to use Sumire.

....

Sano had a difficult time getting any sleep that night, so he stayed in Sumire's room and did some work. When he stepped out to wash his face, he returned to the room and found that Sumire had a guest. A woman with mid-length purple hair wearing a blue uniform was Kiragi Asuka, one of Sumire's friends.

Sumire had the mini table on her lap, documents in front of her.

"Sorry, there is a lot you need to sign."

"It's alright. I haven't been attending to my duties lately. Also, he hasn't been around either, right? It must be hard on the rest of you."

Asuka sighed. "Futaba isn't very good at watching people. She tends to get distracted."

"Well, Futaba isn't cut out for desk work." Sumire laughed. "Neither am I, actually. But Yuhi-san taught me a lot before, so now I can handle this much."

She looked over at him with a bright smile. "Do you feel refreshed now?"

"Yeah." He looked at the documents, and the girl laughed.

"Just signing, I will finish soon. I have to go to rehab at ten."

Sano nodded. He was very familiar with her schedule. In fact, if there were many changes to it, he would know right away. He knew that many of his employees were aware of his affections towards Sumire. Even though they disagreed with it, they knew better than to do anything. Still, Sano remained vigilant.

Penelope often came to visit him, so many treated her like the lady boss. Those people were openly hostile towards Sumire.

Sumire, however, has never complained about it.

Sumire's eyes twitched, annoyed. "On second thoughts, let me take that back! That guy is just wandering off and leaving everything to me again!"

Sano managed to see the contents of the note.

'I've gone on holiday to hawaii. Have fun, riri~.'

"I'm going to kill him."

"You know before he went, he was worrying about you."

"Then he should have come see me instead of snuck around." Sumire sighed deeply. "What's the point of watching over me secretly? I would rather he not do that so he could talk to me."

"You always act like a spoiled child when Aki is concerned."

At those words, Sano had to agree. Indeed it was the same back when they dated. Sano subtly asked her about that man. He often saw them together with a bunch of strange people.

"Be quiet."

"But the one you are worried about said he would see you at your concert."

"Senpai said that?"

He couldn't miss how her eyes brightened.

At those words, Sano flinched. He already knew what the girl meant by senpai. Although he met up with Ichinose that one time, Sano still felt very uncomfortable. Ichinose Arashi's appearance back then triggered the insecurities he kept hidden for so long.

After that talk, he hadn't seen that guy around here, so Sano assumed that he backed down. But it seems like that isn't the case here. A deep sigh passed his lips.

He has way too many romantic rivals. Why didn't he realize before how popular she was?

"How would he feel if I messaged him? He doesn't like texting. That's why I refrained."

Before Sano could say anything, a flash of black appeared and snatched Sumire's phone.

"I rushed everything, and here you are, acting shy about another guy."

It was Terashima.

He wore a similar outfit to yesterday, except the suit was pitch black this time.

Sumire laughed softly. "Yuhi-san, you are so silly."

"I finished early so we could spend some time together." Yuhi looked over at him like he was asking permission.

"She doesn't have any tests this afternoon, but you can't take her out when she has a fever."

"Cool."

Sano awkwardly watched as Terashima grabbed her hands, and she buried her face in his arms.

The scene looked so perfect.

It made him sick.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 475

Chapter 475: Odd Acceptance

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

'Why am I not the one standing by her side?' Sano knew he would be unable to take the sight any longer, so he quickly stepped out of the room. The moment he did, the doors behind him shut, and he realized that somebody followed him out.

Kiragi Asuka, she was the first one to notice that there was something different about him. She saw through his gentleman facade he put on.

"It seems that warning wasn't enough for you."

That's right, the warning. It referred to when Sumire's best friend, Momoi Futaba, beat him up. It happened shortly after the incident where Kanagawa rescued Sumire in the bar. It seemed the pink-haired woman heard about it and didn't hesitate to march into his company and beat him to a pulp.

The girl was the only one who hit him, but somebody silently stood by and watched.

"Do you regret not hitting me yourself?"

Asuka sighed. "There would have been no need to. Besides, the one who ended up hurt the most was you and not her."

Sano recalled the words she said that day. After Momoi beat him, Kiragi Asuka approached him with a handkerchief. Her gaze remained cold, and yet there was something there.

The victim from this will be you.

It seemed like the girl already knew that he had fallen for Sumire. If that were the case, then why did she remain so hostile towards him? Sano sighed, frustrated. There is no use trying to figure that out; the people around Ibuki Sumire are very strange. Even the friends she made here in her new school were unusual.

"I came here to deliver this to her, but I was slightly curious too. It seems your relationship with her has changed."

"I don't need another lecture."

The words Eli said the previous day remained in his mind.

"There is no need to lecture. Besides, I doubt that even Futaba can say anything to you now."

Huh? Sano blinked, confused.

"You have changed. There are still many disagreeable parts about you, but you are no longer an enemy. Moreover, it will upset Sumire if we continue to go against you."

Sano didn't understand this situation at all. So is Kiragi accepting him now? He isn't even in a relationship with Sumire now, so this strange acceptance from her friends is odd.

Now that he thought about it, it wasn't just Kiragi. Even that woman who badmouthed him and humiliated him in front of so many people is less hostile. Terashima doesn't seem to treat him as an enemy. It felt very peculiar to him; he didn't understand why these people were behaving this way.

Kiragi didn't say anything more than that and walked away. Sano stood there in the hallway, dumbfounded for a few moments before he returned to the room. For a moment, he stood back since he saw how close they were.

Terashima stood by the bed and leaned forward.

"I'll be back tomorrow morning. I'll bring you breakfast too."

"T--thank you for the dress."

There was a box on the bedside table.

"Your welcome. I want to go with you, but we will draw too much attention. So don't be careless."

"Yuhi, will he really be there?"

Terashima didn't respond with words and kissed her. Sano froze again, although he already saw this before the sight still left him stunned.

He coughed awkwardly, and Terashima pulled back from her. He didn't say anything else and walked off.

"Uh.." Sumire trailed off and laughed. "You saw that?"

"You're going to the party too?" Sano ignored her question.

He ignored how her cheeks still seemed red and how shy she looked.

"They invited Soujiro and his fiance. So I have to go."

"Too?"

"I'll be attending." Sano kisses the end of her hair. "Do you want to attend with me?"

"I'm going with Soujiro. Besides, what about Penelope?"

"Come with me." Sano brushed his lips against her ear. "It will be dangerous."

"I'm almost recovered."

"Sumire, those people"

"I know why they invited us." Sumire trailed off. "Yuhi said Ru would be there. I want to talk to him; that's why I am going."

"Sano?"

Unconsciously he found himself getting close to her. "Hey, are you wearing perfume?"

"I am; you gave me some after all."

But normally she doesn't wear it. There is no need since she is hosp- Sano paused. She probably wore it because she heard Terashima would visit. Now that he thought about it, she does seem more dressed up on certain days.

"I will take you to the examination, but eat breakfast first."

"Alright!"

Sano paused for a moment. Didn't she already eat with Terashima? He only said that out of habit, but he supposes it doesn't matter.

In one of the many dark alleyways in a certain district in Tokyo, a man with short black hair wearing a black suit and top hat strolled across. There were a group of men on both sides. His gaze fell on the pile of bodies and the broken rubble beside them. He spotted the traces of blood from before.

"Sumire didn't come here, did she?" Yuhi asked one of the men.

"No sir."

But this level of injuries, Yuhi scanned the area and immediately spotted something from the corner of his eyes. It was a brown object, an old pipe.

A deep sigh passed his lips. "There is no need to investigate. I indeed kept some alive, but since Sumire wanted them dead, I would have killed them after getting the information."

It seemed that person determined that these people had no value. But did he really have to go this far? This is an indirect way of courting his wife.

"Sir, what should we do about the bodies?"

"I will call the SF in, and they will take them away, make sure to scam before they arrive."

It is too troublesome for them to move the dead bodies. Besides, if they touch the corpse and get their fingerprints on them, they will all spend nights in cells. Well, except for him, he would never leave any traces behind.

Yuhi exited the alleyway after picking up the pipe and putting it in his pocket. This area of town was a lot livelier than the rest, but the people who come here are different. There were many young people, all wearing unusual clothing. This downtown area is a place for delinquents and other underworld deals.

Now then, what else does he have left to do here? Sumire gave him some instructions, but he was reluctant to follow them all. It is not like he doesn't trust her, but if she continues behaving recklessly before returning to the entertainment industry, it could potentially backfire on her.

From: Sumire

I'm sorry about what I said earlier.

The truth is I would rather not ask you to do such things for me.

But the way I am now, I can't move very well.

Yuhi paused as he read the text and sighed. She doesn't have to apologize. He was the one who told her that he would shoulder all the demons she has to carry.

But is she truly okay with taking a life?

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 476

Chapter 476: This Should Be Enough

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

It was something Yuhi avoided asking her. The topic isn't taboo since they both work in this business but for the two of them who once spoke about their dreams to have a normal life, it was a sensitive issue. Although he resigned from the underworld organisation Holy Knights, he only stayed away from underworld matters for a short while.

Before he knew it he gathered his own group of people, and thus akagumi. At first Yuhi did not intend to do anything with the group. They can all gather around him due to their respect and all that, but he didn't care for them. But several incidents lead to them becoming close.

He couldn't leave them alone, even though normally he wouldn't involve himself in impossible looking situations. They are the ones who gave up on leading normal lives, they all chose to take this path. They should be responsible for their own actions.

Yuhi recalled the time he stumbled on Yoru facing so many people alone. His partner had abandoned more like got captured by the enemy and they used the poor kid as leverage to beat up Yoru. Another member ended up involved in a gambling debt and had to pay millions. It seemed his girlfriend signed off his name and tried to sell him out.

All his members went through similar dark and gruesome things. He could have left them alone, but when he thought about how Sumire helped him he understood. He could have ended up just like them all powerless, and alone.

If there is just one person who is willing to extend their hand out, then maybe hope will return to their eyes, maybe they can live again.

It was a stupid and foolish gamble. What if it didn't work out well and he only made the situation worse? Some of his members had other people they could have turned to but chose not to, they chose to face their hardships alone.

They could have criticised him for interfering, he might have even made their situation worse. But he couldn't bare it, he couldn't just walk away from that sight.

He really has become soft, but he supposes that wasn't a bad thing. If it were the past him he would have hesitated more. Back then he wouldn't have wasted on such things that would drag him down. The moment somebody invests in something to the point it becomes a burden, is the moment where things fall apart.

It was a sign of weakness, caring for other people, feeling something and acting carelessly on such feelings.

Yuhi paused in mid-thought and sighed. His gaze fell on the grey coloured skies. Is it going to rain again?

He thought back to what happened recently and paused. He wondered if it were okay to give it to her like that. But recently they have not had as much time to spend together. With her staying in the hospital he has to refrain from seeing her.

Jae and Atushi keep acting considerate but he knew what they really thought. Sometimes Yuhi didn't know what he was doing with Sumire. No matter how much he loved her, there were days where he would wake up not understanding why he even approached her. The reason he thought this way has nothing to do with her. While Sumire hesitates a lot regarding their relationship, the girl has persisted through all the complications.

She seems a lot more comfortable around him now, she can smile more. Moreover, a huge sign that something had changed is that she returned to him. One of the things he feared when they first dated was Sumire leaving him. If she ever left for whatever reason, he knew she wouldn't return.

So the fact that she came back to him already shows that she has changed, and that the situation is different. She returned to be with him, that is enough progress.

Yuhi was walking around the main streets, before he found himself in a quiet shopping district area. It was here where he realized that somebody was following him. He glanced back and somebody quickly hid behind a pillar. They moved quickly but he still caught a glimpse of the person, to be exact their hair colour. Brown coloured hair- Yuhi had many acquaintances but only one person has that shade of hair.

Yuhi rolled his eyes as he strolled over. "The little miss that is hiding over there. Are you my wife?"

"No!" Sumire exclaimed.

"If you're not her then I guess I can bully you-" Yuhi's sentence fell short when she left her hiding spot. The girl raised her fist to hit him but Yuhi grabbed hold of it as he calmly said. "I am only joking, I won't."

Sumire didn't say anything but moved her hands away, she kept her head down. Yuhi looked at her carefully and noticed something. She wore the earrings that he gave her recently.

Yuhi picked her up and she immediately buried her face in his neck. For the next few minutes nobody spoke and he allowed her to continue sniffing. He eventually hears movement and asks her. "Did you miss me, Sumire?"

"You were late, I got worried."

"Like I would miss a date with you."

Sumire sighed. "I doubt that talking to another gang can be considered as a date. But, these people have been stepping out of line recently. If I don't go personally then they will use it as a chance to question my position."

Right, it wasn't a date. The two of them had to go speak to another gang about the dealings they are conducting on their turf. Even though Sumire is involved in the underworld society, there are certain

things she doesn't tolerate. One of them is drug exchanges, it is one of the first thing she prohibited when she rose to her position at the top.

Naturally there are many groups who disliked this rule, but normally people followed it. The ones who sneakily try this end up found out by her and the punishment is beyond harsh. Before he left there were many times where he went along with Sumire to punish these people.

"Did you tell Nagawa?"

"I did! After you left, I had an extra breakfast, went to rehab and did a few consultations. But it's so boring."

Yuhi chuckled when he felt her lips on his neck. "Enough sniffing, you did tell him properly where you were going right?"

"Che, I did. But enough of San, Yuhi. Aren't you forgetting something?" Sumire drew her face back from his neck and looked at him with expectation in her pretty eyes.

"Maybe you can remind me."

He obviously knew what she wanted but he wanted her to take the initiative. There is nothing more pleasant than his wife kissing him.

'Gee she is too bold recently."

It was a scent he was all too familiar with. How did Nagawa get her to drink? Yuhi however didnt try anything more than kiss her. Sumire must have realized since she pulled away, but by that point she had already done some bold things.

"Are you sober now?" Yuhi asked.

Sumire slowly nodded her head.

Her cheeks turned red as though she just realized what she did.

"If you're going to drink alcohol, you should do so at night and with me."

Sumire pushed him away with her hands but he grabbed hold of it. "I don't like it when you run away."

"Don't tease me Yuhi. I--"

Yuhi softly kissed her forehead. "Mm, I know."

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 477

Chapter 477: Unsent Letters

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

How can he not know what she is thinking? For Sumire, being in a relationship is challenging. This is one of the reasons why he doesn't overdo being affectionate with her. Sure his behavior at the start of their relationship was questionable. But he had to admit that he didn't think rationally then.

He felt overwhelmed that she even accepted his confession and went along with the flow for a while. When he finally snapped out of it, he decided to rethink his approach towards her.

Although it is hard for him to hold back at times, he has adjusted to not jumping on her randomly even though everything she does makes him want to attack.

"Have some water." Yuhi passed her a bottle of water from his bag, and Sumire accepted it.

"I'm sorry, Yuhi, I didn't mean to drink. But Sano looked upset. I knew he wouldn't spill, so I used this way."

"Don't apologize." He didn't say anything more than that. A part of him sympathizes with Nagawa, after all.

But there is a limit to his sympathy. He disapproves of Nagawa getting Sumire drunk. Even though the two have had that talk now, there was still something unusual about Nagawa's behaviour towards Sumire.

This is why he cannot completely trust the man. Nagawa still has to prove himself. This is also

"This looks good on you." He swiftly changed the topic and pointed to the earrings.

"T-thank you, Yuhi. You know I don't normally have things like this. Even though I have plenty of money now, I have gotten used to people saying I don't suit such girly things. So these earrings and the dress- " He cuts her off by softly kissing her lips.

Kissing is nice; he wants to do more than a kiss, though. But Yuhi only entertained those thoughts for a short while when he felt the warmth on her cheeks. Yuhi pulled back and pressed his hand on her face to check it wasn't a fever.

It seemed fine, but her face felt very hot just then.

"Yu-Yuhi?" Sumire said, startled.

"Every time you're honest with your feelings. I lose control." He mumbled against her lips. "Do you understand?"

Yuhi knew he didn't have to explain that much to her. She isn't that clueless.

"I-I'm only-"

He kissed her again, but this time more passionately. At some point, his hands were on her shirt; he raised it slightly above her belly button and touched her breasts. He kisses and touches her for a while like that, both of them gasping for air after the long kiss.

"What were you going to say?"

"Stupid was late now," Sumire mumbled as she rested her head on his chest.

Yuhi's gaze softened. "I really can't control myself around you. You should prepare yourself when you get out of the hospital."

"R-right. Uh," Sumire trailed off and laughed. "I'm sorry, Yuhi-san, but could you give me a hint?"

"A hint?"

"What are you going to do? I feel that I should do something too, but I don't know much."

She really is clueless.

He did say he would teach her, but Sumire isn't like those other girls. It would feel weird if he showed her what to do.

Still, she looks so interested.

"A bit like this, but something more," Yuhi mumbled against her ear.

"Uh-right. I see."

Yuhi kissed her lips softly and squeezed her hands. "Are you feeling alright?"

"I will be fine; you're going to watch my back, right?"

"Of course. But," Yuhi brushed his lips against her ear. "I am worried about you."

For a moment, neither of them spoke, and he thought back to something that happened recently.

'Yuhi. I'll give you this. It's the letters she wrote for you during the years you two didn't see each other. She never sent it, though.'

Imagine his surprise when he got all those letters from Atsuro.

The moron.

Yuhi recalled each word on those letters perfectly; he read them over and over again.

Yuhi, how are you feeling today?

Yuhi, have you been eating well lately?

Yuhi, today Kyoyosenpai made me do even more practice drills! I thought my head would combust!

Yuhi, it's lonely here without you.

Yuhi, today it snowed all day, and then I remembered the first time we met. It was a beautiful snowy day. I wonder if it is snowing where you are?

Yuhi, I got a perfect score, and people thought I cheated. But it didn't bother me. It was the first time I put in effort like that for school.

Yuhi, Aki-san is still incredibly grouchy. What did I do to deserve this?!

Yuhi, what did you do today?

Yuhi, how is school going? Are you making friends and getting along with people?

Yuhi, I miss you.

Yuhi, I wish I told you I love you.

That letter was the last straw. Now he understood why Atsuro behaved so hostile towards him. The redhead knew that he was the one that Sumire liked, which was why the redhead never took Sumire's relationship with Mamoru seriously.

Now it made sense why Sumire accepted his confession. Yuhi thought she had doubts because she still had feelings for Mamoru. But it wasn't like that at all.

The reason why she had any doubts at all was him. His thoughts broke off when Sumire suddenly snatched his bag off him. She pointed to the letters sticking out of his bag.

"If you are going to cheat Yuhi-san, you shouldn't have brought the evidence with you."

At those words, his sweat fell. Here she is with her crazy ideas again. Then again, he supposes it is only natural for her to think that way. Yuhi approached her and opened his bag; before he even passed her the letters, he noticed her face turning red.

It seems she can recognize it from a distance. Then again, the girl did use custom-made letter paper.

"H-how did you-" Sumire looked nervously at the letters. She seemed very confused why he would have the letters.

Indeed if she left them with Atsuro, there should be no reason for him to have them.

"Atsuro gave them to me."

Sumire started to curse, and he chuckled, amused at how red her face was getting. Yuhi leaned forward.

"So when were you going to confess how much you loved me?"

"T-this is cheating," Sumire exclaimed.

"I agree there. It isn't fair for me to learn your feelings through letters. You should tell me directly."

Yuhi was about to stop there. He knew it was still difficult for Sumire to admit such things in front of him.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 478

Chapter 478: Fly

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

"By the way, Yuhi-san, why do you have your guitar on you?" Sumire suddenly changed the topic.

"Well, I have practice after this."

It was Kous' idea; he said the best way to increase their bonds is to practice daily. Well, he understood that they have to practice more to harmonize, but a part of him knew what Kou's hidden intentions were. They do get along better and talk more. But there were still some awkward silent occasions.

Making friends isn't easy, moreover with people who like his wife.

"Hmmm." Sumire suddenly took his guitar from his back. "Then, let me borrow it for a sec."

"So she says but already took it."

Sumire laughed. "Follow me for a bit, Yuhi-san."

Yuhi nodded, and the two of them walked for five minutes before approaching a large hill. He immediately understood what she was going to do. This neighborhood is relatively quiet, which is why he chose to stroll around before meeting with her. But he has never seen this area before.

'Another place.' Yuhi had to admit that her ability to find places amazed him. He thought he was good at finding peaceful areas where he could sleep, but Sumire seems to be even better.

It didn't take long before they reached the top of the hill.

Yuhi looked around and saw a bench. Sumire followed his gaze and rolled her eyes.

"No napping! This is a pretty area; you should appreciate the scenery."

"I get that, but lately, I have been busy, so I haven't naped as much. That bench looks very tempting right now."

He wanted to sleep a bit before the practice, but he heard that Sumire would be meeting with those people. Normally he wouldn't mind her going off on her own, but his gaze fell on her leg. Her injuries are taking longer to heal.

Yuhi didn't directly ask her what kind of torture she experienced in that place, but he could imagine it. If it is taking this long even though they are hangouts, then they must have hurt her badly.

Sumire pulled out the guitar from the case and sat down on the bench.

For a moment, Yuhi froze on the spot when he heard a familiar soft and yet powerful singing voice. He watched her strum a few chords on the guitar- accompanied by her beautiful voice, it was a dazzling sight.

"Is this the main song?" Yuhi managed to ask when Sumire stopped singing.

Sumire laughed softly. "Not just the sidetrack." She trailed off. "I am thinking of a more rock approach for the main song, but I wonder if it is okay. I went for a more pop approach for my debut single, and the mainstream audience liked it more."

What luxurious worries, normal people would worry about being able to hit all the notes in the song, not what genre to sing. This girl is truly amazing; she can sing anything without much effort.

Yuhi pointed to the guitar in her hands. "Give me that, and show me the score."

Sumire nodded and pulled out some papers from her bag. He joined her on the bench for a few minutes before nodding. "Alright, I understand the song; now sing."

Sumire laughed awkwardly. "Yuhi-san, you only looked for five minutes."

"What, do you doubt me?!"

"No, if it is you, I am sure you mastered it perfectly. But it would be better if I play."

He thought she would like it if she could focus on singing, but it seems like she is determined to show him today. Yuhi passed her the guitar, and Sumire took a deep breath before she sang.

"Gazing at this blue sky deeply makes me want to fly freely.

I want to change freely like the cloud.

We all find our own way.

Going on this journey ourselves

These are all my dreams."

If the previous song shocked him before, then this one blew his mind. How come she has gotten better? It only took Yuhi a moment to realize something. She must have secretly practiced even without him there.

At first, he thought it was a whim her practicing in the abandoned music room. She must miss singing, it is hard for her not to sing. So even if she does not sing in front of an audience, it was enough. But who would have thought that she secretly practiced like this?

"My tears won't be running

My smile won't be practicing

My freedom belongs to this world.

Break my shackles and let me be

Find my long-lost heart."

She could easily sing this song as a ballad, too, especially with the lyrics. But this rock version suits her perfectly. Sumire can sing anything, and yet rock songs suit her better.

To think she managed to write a song like this, excellent music and even perfect lyrics to go with it. Sumire is a very emotional person, so it is easy for her to come up with lyrics. All she has to do is

Takashi Yumi was right. If it is her- his thoughts broke off when he saw something. It looked like there were white wings on her back.

"This is my courage.

Just fight, no flight.

Fly, fly, high.

To the mountain in the sky.

Even if there is no chance, there is still a dream.

So I can fly, fly high.

To the rainbow in the sky.

Even if there are no wings, there is still the sky."

Of course, Yuhi knew he just imagined things, and yet right at that moment, it felt like he could see it.

This girl always talks about being worthy to stand on stage beside him, but she probably doesn't realize that she is much better. There is no use comparing them, but Yuhi felt defeated the moment he heard her sing his songs in the karaoke bar that snowy night.

He already long admitted his defeat.

"It will probably sound better with an electric guitar, but," His lips curve to a smile as he extended his hand out and patted her hair. "You worked hard, didn't you?"

Sumire's gaze softened. "Mm, that's right. It isn't easy to secretly practice, though, since all of you worry about me too much."

"But you managed?"

"I sang whenever I could, even if it was only for a few seconds. Each second amounted to this."

Second, she says, she really is something. Sumire isn't a genius, and she wasn't born a good singer. She worked very hard to reach this level because-

"It was worth it since I love to sing." Sumire finished off the sentence in his mind with a beaming and yet childish-looking smile.

Yuhi froze again as he felt an arrow shoot through his heart. He placed his hands on his face. What is she doing acting all cute for? She must be doing that deliberately.

"The reason I love to sing so much is without a doubt you, Terashima Yuhi. You are somebody I admire and aspire to be like."

Right, the respect thing. While he doesn't mind her being his fan, sometimes it creates a wall between them.

"At first, I thought that way, but something has changed now."

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 479

Chapter 479: Confrontation

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

Yuhi raised his eyebrow when he heard those words.

What does she mean that something has changed? Yuhi was going to ask her for an explanation when she suddenly exclaimed. "Ah, we are way past the meeting time. Yuhi-san, let's go!"

"Hey, don't run, your still-" Yuhi's sentence fell short when he saw that the girl had lost her balance.

Geez, she is far too clumsy. Yuhi rushed over and immediately broke her fall. For a moment, their gaze met and he felt electrocuted. How many times has this happened already? But every single time it happens, he ends up feeling this way.

Yuhi wondered what she felt every time they ended up this way.

But since they were on the steps, he also fell down, which led to him on the ground with Sumire on top of him.

"Did you gain some weight? You're too heavy."

"S-" Sumire paused mid-sentence, realizing what he said. "Hey!!" Despite her anger, she quickly got off him.

Yuhi stood up too and turned to Sumire immediately. He brushed the dirt away from the edge of her clothes and bent down when he saw something. Her shoelace had come undone, so even if she didn't have a bad leg, she would have fallen anyway.

He slowly fixed it, carefully tying a knot that wasn't too tight but not too loose that she would fall again.

"Say Yuhi."

"What is it?"

"Why are you so good to me?"

Yuhi blinked when he heard her question. What is she doing saying such things again? She isn't trying to embarrass him, is she? Yuhi knew she often liked to tease him about his feelings, and the answer he would give to this question is his feelings.

But that doesn't seem to be the case in this instance. From the corner of his eye, he could see a tint of red on her cheeks.

Normally he wouldn't have a hard time answering her, but he suddenly felt an intense gaze on them. Yuhi stood up and pulled Sumire behind him. He quickly scanned the area but didn't find anybody.

Was it just his imagination? But just now, it felt like somebody was watching them.

"Yuhi?" Sumire called out.

"We should go quickly."

Yuhi didn't fail to see the disappointed look on her face, but right now, he felt uneasy, so he couldn't answer her. If he actually answered that question and it leads to her letting her guard down- Yuhi shook his head. He needs to focus on the task at hand.

....

The place Sumire brought him to was in the suburbs of the small district they were in. Here the worse crimes took place, and the living conditions weren't great. The lake water was a murky green/grey color, and there was a foul stench in the air.

This isn't good for her health. The meeting place just had to be in this place. Yuhi called out to her. "Sumire, are you okay?"

Sumire laughed at his concern. "Im fine. This isn't the first time."

Indeed being part of the underworld means they don't have the luxury to see nice things. While there are many rich people in this industry, they earn their riches through underhanded means, so the money is considered dirty. There are equally as many who are poor.

They approached a building that looked like it was on the verge of falling apart. It was an old club from the broken sign at the front. It looked like the group they were meeting already occupied the place.

Once they saw Sumire, they immediately made way for her.

"Is that really her?"

"I met her once before."

"No kidding, I thought she was still too frightened to go around in public."

"Ha right, we shouldn't get close to her. We value our lives."

"Didn't she always talk about righteousness and act like a saint? But she got an innocent civilians killed."

Yuhi frowned when he heard their words. Before he could say anything, though, a gunshot sound appeared. The person who said that last part was now on the ground was dead.

"Please forgive us for such discourteous behavior." A bulky-looking man appeared apologetic as he looked at Sumire.

Sumire didn't say anything and simply strolled inside. Yuhi didn't leave her side for a second. Quite some time has passed since he has last seen people behave like this towards Sumire. People fear her, and at the same time, they respect her. Yuhi glanced back at the man who just shot their subordinate. He was sending warning glares towards the others that spoke out.

People do crazy things when they are around somebody they respect. Even more so, in this society, hierarchy is very important. The strong will stand on top, and the weak, in order to survive they have to listen; otherwise, they will get stepped on.

It is the same no matter where anybody goes, huh? But he supposes that is normal already.

The moment they reached a large room. Sumire turned to him. "Yuhi-san, stop me if I do something stupid, okay?"

Yuhi frowned at her words. What is she planning to do? He didn't get a chance to ask since somebody leads them inside. In the center of the room sat on a large pale red velvet couch was a man with spiky blonde hair, wearing a red and black colored suit. He wore large rings on his fingers and several piercings.

Despite his gaudy look, Yuhi could tell that he was strong.

There are people like him who are strong but have made stupid decisions, leading to this situation.

"I haven't seen you in so long, Miss Sumire; please take a seat."

The man seemed courteous at a glance, but Yuhi could sense the hidden mockery behind his tone. Yuhi sighed quietly. This man is courting death.

There is a reason why Sumire prohibited such things, and yet he went ahead and broke the rule. There are rules that are made to be broken, yes, but breaking a rule Sumire made well, he would never do it.

Sometimes people forget how scary she can get.

"It seems the passing of time has made you stupider. I thought you were a smarter person Mr. Rick." Sumire commented. "But it seems I was wrong about you."

"No, I believe you were right. Let us not beat around the bush; both of us are very busy people."

"Indeed, then I will tell you directly. Move your toys away from my turf, and our partnership will continue."

At those words, Rick burst into laughter. "You mentioned the partnership, but," his gaze dimmed. "Were you not the first person to turn their backs on us?"

".."

"We had nothing to do with that accident! How could you raid our bases like that and take out so many people?" Rick bellowed.

It took Yuhi a moment to understand his anger. Now that he thought about it, there was a time when she first came to Tokyo. A time where she often disappeared. They weren't dating then, so he didn't think it was proper for him to inquire about it. But now he understood.

She must have been investigating all the gangs in the area, and it leads to this.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 480

Chapter 480: Choose

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

"If you were completely clean, then I wouldn't have gone so far. The case Ru investigated before the accident; your group was part of it."

At those words, Rick looked away. "It's not what you're thinking. I didn't approve that drug."

"But you admit your group distributed it? You admit that you didn't do anything to stop it despite finding out." Sumire trailed off. "That is equally just as bad."

It happened very quickly. There was a subordinate near Rick who had been standing close. Yuhi simply thought he was the personal bodyguard, so he didn't think much of it. That was until he realized that the man was staring at Sumire with a dark gaze.

When Sumire first told him about coming here, he canceled his prior plans. Normally she would have lectured him for canceling his work because of him. But she didn't this time; she agreed right away.

Yuhi thought there would be something special about today's deal. But there was no such thing.

The reason she invited him along was for this purpose, to watch her back. He pulled out a gun and looked towards the violent man.

Yuhi didn't hesitate to shoot the man who attacked Sumire.

The weight of a gun is heavy, even a small one like the one in his hands. The weight of the materials and the weight of the price one pays every time they use it.

It doesn't take long for an amateur to end a person's life. A person doesn't have to have the experience to use a gun.

Yuhi's gaze fell on the man on the ground and sighed deeply. He already knew without checking that the person was dead. Yuhi turned to the head guy.

"If you can't control your people, don't expect us to do the same."

It was a bluff, of course. He and Sumire came here themselves; they didn't bring anybody else with them.

"It seems you are modest. You don't have to call your people in." The man was wiping his face with a handkerchief.

It took him a moment to realize why he was behaving this way. Yuhi thought it was because Rick was frightened that he killed his subordinate, but it wasn't. Sumire stood directly behind Rick with a blade at his neck.

A dagger made out of blood, anybody who looked at it would get scared. Yorick probably thinks Sumire has peculiar hobbies. It is normal to think that way in this situation, but Sumire isn't using her victim's blood but her own.

'I wonder if there is a way she can summon those weapons without her blood.' Yuhi sighed in defeat. If only they both didn't end up with such unusual abilities.

"I see, but," her gaze darkened. "It was your men who attacked us. Don't you think we should get something more out of this?"

"S--something more?"

A devilish smile appeared on Sumire's face. "Move your business elsewhere, away from Tokyo and Star Town."

Rick looked frightened at those words. "Y--you know about--"

"Of course I do. Do you think I won't hear what is happening over there just because I am in Tokyo? Please, do you think my position is just a lacy decoration?"

Each word of hers contained venom, and he felt the temperature in the room drop.

Yuhi turned to the frightened Rick. "Do you really have time to ponder on other options? Answer her now; it's either yes or no." Yuhi pointed the gun towards him. "Choose."

He didn't say much, but it was enough for the poor man to break down at last.

After Sumire forced him to sign a contract with his own blood as a signature, they left the building.

How did she do that?

Yuhi recalled the needle she pulled out of her bag several minutes ago. 'She can be very scary when she wants to be. While I acknowledge her scary side, it is a bit impressive considering how she normally is.'

The dangerous aura had yet to leave her, so Yuhi leaned down and kissed her lips.

Sumire blushed and pushed him away with her hands. "Stop."

"I can't; you're too pretty."

"Are you really saying that now, idiot?"

Yuhi knew that whenever she showed her frightening side, she would put up a wall between them.

"If I am?" Yuhi cupped her cheeks. "You don't have to look away; you know I accept everything about you."

"But sometimes that is suffocating."

"I am aware, but it is better than to leave you be. If I do, you will have crazy thoughts again."

"Yuhi, you know I--"

Yuhi shook his head. "There is no need to explain, I understand. Besides, both of us have seen enough blood to last a few decades. You're not the only one who has done terrible things, Sumire."

She pulled his hands away from her face and walked a few steps ahead.

"Do you ever ask yourself why we both got involved in the underworld? Even if we got dragged into it, we could have walked away during the early stages. It's not like we both had good positions earlier on. We were both hunting dogs, both tools. If we wanted to leave, nobody would have missed us."

Indeed, it is exactly like what she says. They could have left much sooner. But the reason he didn't walk away from it all, huh?

"Working by your side, I realized I was worth so much more. I wasn't a hunting dog but an actual detective."

Working alongside her in an underground organization, strangely enough he felt like a professional detective rather than a delinquent.

Sumire paused for a moment before she mumbled. "So you went back?"

"I wanted to work with you again, like that. Sure the line of work we engage in is dodgy and may ruin our careers if people find out. But somebody has to do the dirty work to maintain peace. Others look down on this line of work but I find it a meaningful way to contribute to society."

Sumire sighed. "Only you would think of it that way, Yuhi-san."

"So, what is your reason?"

"I wanted to stop feeling so powerless and carve proof of my existence. Even if I had to resort to turning to the ugly side of society." Sumire whispered.

'It's not like I didn't know that. I worked as her partner for a while; it didn't take long before he understood her way of thinking.'

This is the first time she has admitted it, though.

"Although my family and I didn't get along well, they still shielded me from the darkest parts of society. Because of that, I believed they did care, even if they communicated wrongly."

"Do you miss them?"

It was a stupid question. During the times Sumire spoke about her family, she would get this look on her face.