

Melody 561

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 561

Chapter 561: My Dearest Person Part 3

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"What did you say?"

She averted her gaze clearly embarrassed still. "I couldn't answer him. It took me by surprise after all."

She didn't answer? But doesn't that mean, it's okay for him to keep on loving her? With the idea of marriage in mind? Kou wonders if she knows the extent to not answering. However since it's Mimi, she's probably had a lot of time to think it through since then.

Atsuroyan will get a real answer sooner or later. If Ryou is the first one to see logic followed by Nakura. Then it'll mirror the same way with them too.

Just like he said to Ran, even now he loves her a great deal. When she looks like this, all defenceless and innocent, he wants to devour her in the same manner as before. Back in high school when their bodies were so close together and he could feel her warmth..

Kou shook his head. 'I need to forget about those times already. Mimi is not the same as she was back then. I haven't brought it up either because I know how she feels about it.'

"I see. That's alright."

"Kou?"

"This is you Mimi, I trust your judgement."

"You really shouldn't. It did catch me of guard, and the reason I didn't answer is mainly because I don't think I can right now. When I first came here I could handle love and care from Yuhi. But now that has changed. I want to be careful with my words. I want to turn Atsuro down properly."

Yu-yu is amazing. How did he do this?

"Mimi say, I have to ask. What would you do if you didn't have any talent?"

"If I didn't have talent?" Sumire trails off. "Let's see, I think that in itself would be fun. I like to sing after all and you remember? I didn't really have any plans on debuting before. I just wanted to sing."

Right he recalled that very well, the redhead Kai kept coming around to the school to visit her after all.

"There's more to life than just talent."

Ah she --

Sumire smiles. "I've told plenty of people this already I'm sure but your life won't be interesting just because you have talent. By getting involved with others and making memories, hope, which is more important than talent, is born. "

'Hope' huh?

"Kou?"

"I was just thinking that it's exactly like you to say something like that Mimi."

"Kou, you don't think so too?"

"Well it depends on the results in the end..."

Sumire shook her head, "Believe in yourself... If you don't have that... it doesn't matter how many talents you have, you still won't be able to hold your head up high."

"And if you have doubts?"

"I don't think belief and doubt are necessarily opposites. If there's no room for doubt, then there's no reason to believe, is there? If you want to believe in someone...you need to overcome doubt first. Belief without doubt...is simply a lie. I'm the same as you Kou, I don't want to doubt anyone but sometimes it's necessary."

"Just like how lies are necessary?"

Sumire nodded. "Everything happens for a reason."

"Then what about what happened between us?"

Kou quickly covered his mouth but Sumire already heard it.

"I see, you've wanted to ask me about that for awhile."

"Uh Mimi forget it, it's the day of your live and-"

Sumire shook her head. "I think it's fine if we talk about this now. Back then I was very lonely and Kou you were the only one who noticed that."

"I should have come up with a better solution."

"I will be truthful with you Kou, you weren't the only one."

Huh?

"I mean you heard right? There were rumours about me fooling around with a design student."

Kou paused. It is not like he didn't suspect those rumours to be true. After all there were times where she didn't meet with him. Moreover there was that time he was in town and caught her going to a hotel with a man with silver hair.

"Mimi, did you tell Yuhi about-"

"How could I tell him about Toh?" Sumire placed her hands over her head. "Ahh, what am I going to do?"

"What's wrong Mimi? Yu-Yu will understand."

"I know he will. But Toh is returning to Japan soon."

Huh? Uh- Kou looked at her with a concerned expression. "I have to ask, did you two end-"

"No."

So this is why she keeps dodging the issue.

"Tell me when he comes back to the country, I will come with you."

Sumire nodded. "Mm thanks I appreciate it." She suddenly hunched down onto the ground. "Urgh I feel sick after all."

"Mimi-" Kou's sentence fell short when a flash of black rushed past him and patted her back.

"Easy there, it's alright. Calm down Sumire, I am right here."

At those words Sumire turned around and wrapped her arms around his neck. "Did you hear that?"

"I heard it, but it's fine. Even if he comes here nothing will change, you love me right?"

"I love you."

Kou's gaze softened at the sight. These two are truly perfect together. For awhile he was concerned but there is no need to. Mimi will be fine if she is with Yu-Yu but he wonders about the other guys who like her. Will they calmly stay put?

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Star Rise Stadium

At the venue Takahashi Yumi was already there but she wasn't practicing, she was talking to a man with platinum blonde coloured hair.

"Soujiro!"

"It seems I arrived too early."

Sumire laughed softly. "You did. There is still a few hours left. Are you going to stay?"

"If you do not mind me watching your rehearsal."

"Of course not! Ah I have to practice for a bit, I'll talk to you later." Sumire tugged on Yumi's sleeve. "You have to help me."

"Right."

With those words said the two quickly followed Takahashi Yumi onto the stage, which left him alone with Makoto Soujiro. For a moment neither of them said anything.

"I was not aware that you were close with her."

"I haven't attended to my duties in awhile. At this rate I am considered an outcast from the elite circle." Kou commented. "But that is fine already, I don't need it anymore."

He doesn't need the wealth of his family, he already has enough money to survive.

"Did you know about her?"

"A little."

'She spoke about it a lot after they did it. She spoke about how much she disliked anything to do with elites.' Kou could clearly remember the lonely expression on her face when she said those words.

He wonders how much this man knows about Sumire. To what extent does he like her? Yu-yu seems to be very concerned about him.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 562

Chapter 562: I Can't Take My Time

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Two more hours are left.

Sumire's gaze fell towards the stadium seats and sighed. She could already hear the people from here. It seems even those who didn't get a ticket are coming here. It should be okay, right? She has improved a lot these last few months. Quite some time has passed since she broke down or trembled whenever she was near a crowd. It should be okay.

She took a deep breath. But even if she repeats this over and over, it doesn't change her fear.

'I came to Tokyo, not just for Yuhi. She already had another plan if he didn't want to see her. I came to Tokyo to be alone.'

For as long as she could remember, she has always strongly believed that a person like herself does not deserve to be around others. She doesn't understand where that thought came from, but there exists something dark in her heart. There is a strong sense of self-loathing.

No matter how happy she becomes, she ends up pulling away first to avoid hurting those who have become dear to her. The cycle repeats over and over. She finds a small bit of happiness, clings to it, and just as she is starting to become hopeful that things will change, something bad happens.

If Ru weren't involved with her, he wouldn't have gotten into the accident. He is alive now; he didn't die. That should have reduced the burden on her shoulders, but that isn't enough. It doesn't change the fact that he got hurt because of her.

People have always disliked her for some reason, so she didn't get along well with her classmates. But she wasn't alone either. A few stayed by her side, but all those people ended up getting hurt because of her.

She recalls that time she caught her best friend, Momoi Futaba, searching for something outside in the rain. Later on, she learned that somebody had tossed her bag outside.

Futaba, a model, had brought her work clothes with her to school; she did that to reduce the time getting changed for the first shoot. When they found her bag, the clothes were all torn.

Futaba smiled and said it was fine, but that incident caused a scar on her heart.

A friend from another school experienced harsh treatment from her superiors and got sent on dangerous jobs. Asahi was part of an elite school that trained assassins, so her information was limited. But it turns out somebody else caused that debut that led to her friend's death.

Lastly, a friend of hers who went abroad, Siena, kept receiving harassment messages every single day. It was not just one or two, but over fifty messages a day.

All of this was because they were close to her. If those three pushed her away just like all the others did, they would not have had such a hard time.

It is because of her because she exists. A person like her does not deserve to be around other people; it would be better for her to be alone.

'I have been so happy since I met Yuhi again and came to Tokyo, but after I received that message reminding me of all my sins. I ran away.'

Yes, this was the main reason why she ran away. She indeed found a clue regarding Ru being alive, but that was only half the reason.

Her thoughts broke off when she heard approaching footsteps; she knew who it was even without turning around.

"Only two, that makes me sad."

Masaru chuckled. "If you wanted to see your beloved, you could do so anytime. You know he attends a university in Tokyo, right?"

"Once," Sumire mumbled. "I went to his university once and asked for him. But he wouldn't see me. I waited at the gate for a long time and caught a very bad cold. Yuhi-san was the one who found me and brought me back."

Even under those circumstances, that person did not come out to meet her.

'Ah he must be fed up. The one who had to deal with the most harassment and hate for being around me was Ichinose Arashi.' He is a year older than her and was the student council president in her last school. He was very popular, had good grades, good looking, and rich. Many girls liked him with all those traits, no, not just girls.

"You already understand the reason why. Don't pretend that you don't know."

"I don't have feelings for him. I never did."

"Exactly, but he has always liked you. When Arashiyan learned that the guy you always loved was Terashima, it hit him hard."

"I know."

"You didn't even like him once?"

"I can't lie about that stuff, you know. I didn't like him that way, but I was comfortable around him. I was comfortable seeing such an honest and pure-hearted person, but at the same time, I resented him too. He is completely different from me. He has never experienced any hardship and has lived with a silver spoon in his mouth."

Whenever she talked about her problems with him, she could recall how uncomfortable he was. 'Ah, this person doesn't know what to do. No matter how much I grow to like him.'

"I see." Masaru trailed off. "So I will ask the question that is most likely going on in your boyfriend's mind. Why are you in such a rush?"

"I-I am not rushing." Sumire tried to answer calmly, but it came out more emotional than she intended. She averted her gaze and looked down at the ground.

"You don't have to rush. His soul isn't going to suddenly disappear. I know for you, it's still painful for you to sing. Even though you're getting there step by step now. I understand full well that it's still way too soon. Lady, I don't think-" Masaru trails off and hugs her.

"I'm sorry for making you cry. But I am serious. As your friend, I just want you to take things at your own pace. "

"I can't afford to do that; unlike in the past, I can't take my time. Everyone's still suffering. When I left, my mind was jumbled, and I was like a lifeless doll. I couldn't think straight. All I knew was I couldn't remain here, remain in a place where everything reminded me of Ru I couldn't sing, because then I would remember even at the very end my music was for Yuhi, and never Ru. I know even if I do this, it won't erase my sins.. But I want to ease their pain just a little bit. "

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 563

Chapter 563: That Is My Dream

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If her voice still has such power, she wants to use it if there's still something left that she can do here.

"Sumire."

Her eyes widened when she heard him say her name. Since the first day she met this person, he seldom used her name. Whenever he does, it is usually for something serious.

"I'm not going to lie and say it's okay and that you didn't do anything wrong. However, it's not up to you to decide whether or not they will forgive you. They will decide that. I'll tell you straight, I never once blamed you for leaving. Even if the others don't forgive you, just remember that we in Nanairo feather will always be your friends. We will always be your ally."

Ah this is so stupid.

"If you all wanted to see me that badly you could have just said."

Masaru sighed. "Your very stubborn lady; those guys understand it well. They are respecting your wishes."

"What about you?"

"I have always done whatever I wanted." Masaru trailed off. "Did you really think you could avoid me?"

Sumire sighed. "I actually did."

At those words, Masaru laughed. "I still have a few tricks left up my sleeve. But lady," his gaze turned serious again. "If your feelings are that fickle, maybe you shouldn't perform."

At those words, her eyes widened.

"You know my feelings aren't that fickle! I—" His sentence falls short, seeing the tender smile on his face.

"Remember, what you're aiming for—your dream. I know you are afraid, lady. But ever since we first met, I could sense, no, I could see how much you love music."

"Masaru."

"Do you truly want to stand in my shadow forever? Lady, you praised me a lot for being a talented musician, but after you went to Tokyo. I was the first one who went to see you because I understood something. We only became Nanairo Feather because you were there; you were the one who lit the small flame in ours and made it bigger. "

"I didn't do-"

"No, you did, and you will continue influencing those around you in the same way. You know I was the one who proposed the thing about Quatro Light and Yuhi becoming a group together."

"Eh?"

"Didn't you say it, lady? 'The colors the five of them will create will be beautiful.'"

Sumire looked at him dumbfounded. Wait a minute; he asked the idol world and Yumi-senpai to do something like this because of what she said?

"I only said that one time! Are you crazy? If you make such unreasonable demands from the idol association board, they will ask you to do something unreasonable too. They will use it against you." Sumire scolded.

What on earth is this person doing? No, from the very start, she never understood what was going on in his head.

"My dream is.."

Her dream only came forth because of Yuhi. But even more than that, there are different feelings in his heart right now. Feelings she wants to express for those people who accepted her warmly. For those people who have accepted even the ugliest sides of her.

"I was only able to help you and the others because of the feelings I have for Yuhi. It was because of the admiration and respect I had for him. I was able to take that step because of the words Yumi-senpai said to me in middle school. But you're the one who taught me that singing, acting, and dancing can be fun."

There are three people she holds in high regard. Yuhi, Yumi-senpai and this person.

Even before the incident with Ru, there was a time for her when her beloved music became like poison to her.

'Since when did the thing I love the most become like poison to her?'

She cannot pinpoint when but there was a time when it became too suffocating for her to sing.

"I want a lot of people to watch the performance you taught me. That's my dream. I definitely don't want to give up on it."

"That's why you'll abandon us. "

Right now, there is something more important for her to do; that is why she won't meet with the guys in Nanairo feather. It is cruel of her to do this when they want to see her so badly, but this is important.

"Yes."

Masaru extended his hand out and patted his hair. "Good luck on your stage, lady. I am looking forward to it."

Sumire was about to say something, but he pulled his hand back.

"It's time to switch."

She followed his gaze and saw a woman with violet-colored hair approach them.

"Sumire-chan."

"Yumi-senpai, you came?"

Masaru quickly walked away with his usual smile on his face. 'That guy smiles a lot too. I wonder why he is always so cheerful.'

"Yes. As I thought, your stage keeps getting better and better. You can feel it yourself, can't you?"

"I can." Sumire trails off. She can feel that power inside her growing so strong even though she has not sung in front of the public for so long, she went many months without singing. It feels like her voice has gotten better.

"Yumi-senpai, in your rainbow aura. Did you see it also? What do you want the most?"

"I did, and my deepest fear too. Sumire-chan, what you've always wanted and your deepest fears have combined?"

Sumire laughs softly. "Well, maybe it's because what I want is something selfish. Especially after everything I've done, to have a family, to live peacefully with the one I love would be nice."

She wants happiness, even though a person like her doesn't deserve it. The more she doesn't deserve something, the more she craves it.

"That's not wrong. I also held similar thoughts. Although what I wanted was slightly different. I'm sure every girl dreams of living a happy life with the person they love. "

At those words, Sumire felt heat creep onto her cheeks. This is a bit embarrassing, after all.

"It doesn't suit me, does it? This rose colored happiness." Sumire trails off. "Even now, it's still the same for me. I want to achieve my dreams and go higher than before. But I don't want to do so without Yuhi beside me. "

"You have grown, haven't you, Sumire-chan? I've always thought of you as an idol I couldn't leave alone. "

"Uh because I'm clumsy?"

Yumi chuckled, and she looked away awkwardly. Was she wrong?

"Since you first debuted, you've cried, smiled, and experienced many more things than anyone else."

"That's not true. Many other people have gone through more things than me."

She is nobody special, even now she believes that.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 564

Chapter 564: Rainbow Coloured

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At those words, Yumi shook her head. "That's not true. My journey to become the number one idol was difficult, and I experienced many things. But not like you. You're different. After each experience, you grew stronger. Everything you experience reflects whenever you perform. " Yumi turned to her with a soft smile as her violet-colored orbs went wide at her senpai's words.

"Both smiles and tears are valuable experiences you should use to shine even brighter. You'll be fine."

"But I am still-"

"Your afraid, I know. But I think people will change their minds quickly. Anyone who has watched you since your debut, whether your fans or friends, can tell. They can tell how much effort you put in, which will translate to happiness. That's Sumire-chan, the rainbow-colored idol."

"Rainbow-colored idol?"

Yumi nodded, extended her arm, and pointed to the visible stars from the rooftop stage. "You want to reach it, right? Something far beyond that starry sky?"

"Yes."

"If it's you, that dream is not impossible."

...

After that talk with Yumi-senpai, she had the sudden urge to attack her dear- no search for her dearest. It did not take her long to find him outside in the stadium's grass field. He was fast asleep. She watched him for the next few minutes, played with his hair a little, and kissed him, but he didn't wake up.

He's still sleeping. He looks worn out. Sumire gently caresses his cheeks with her hand. However, quite some time has passed since she came back. When it comes to touching Yuhi, she's still hesitant in doing so; even that action just now took a while.

She hesitates, not because she doesn't love him. But because she's still afraid. Afraid that she will truly forget if she gets swept up in the flow again. Once again, she would forget it, the pain behind her sin.

Yuhi, even though it was her journey of redemption. In the end, it was no good. During her journey, she realized how much she loved Yuhi. How in her life, there's only ever been one person that she could love so much. She's already at this age, yet she's still unable to truly express her affection.

'You know Yuhi. I thought it was fate that they met each other when they did. Out of all the encounters I have with others, the one with you has remained the most important.'

She bends down hesitantly before placing her lips against his. Yuhi. Her Yuhi. He seems so pained whenever he is sleeping. Since getting back, he holds her tightly whenever they sleep together. She's really sorry.

'I thought if I left for a long time, you would move forward and find somebody better. But it was no good for you either, even now-'

Her gaze landed at their intertwined hands. Even now, the two of them can only love each other. If she cannot escape this pain that comes with happiness, then she might as well confront it.

Sumire sensed him stir and turned away from him. A few seconds later, she felt lips on her collar.

"You shouldn't sleep out here; the grass is wet. It just rained this morning."

"Mmm, but it's comfortable."

'He truly is hopeless.'

"This white dress, if it was a bit longer, it would look like a wedding one."

Sumire rolled her eyes at that comment. "Your hidden motives are clear."

"What hidden motives? You'll be my wife in half a year."

Yuhi's wife, huh?

"I understand if you are still uneasy. But you should know by now that my purpose in life is to make you happy."

"What about your happiness?"

"If your happy, I will be too. It's killing two birds with one stone."

Is that how it is?

"I will be within reach. So sing to your heart's content."

"Singing five songs in a row with Yumi-senpai. I have to be honest is a bit frightening. Performing a single song with somebody of her caliber will take a huge toll on me, let alone five."

Initially, she was only supposed to appear for one song. But it received too much attention.

"You'll be fine. You have a break in between after two songs, right? I'll be backstage, and you can recharge."

Sumire shuddered when she felt his lips on her back, his hands on her legs.

"Yuhi."

"Only the birds are watching."

"Oh dummy."

'But he must be uneasy too. Yuhi must know why those people are worried about her concert. They didn't attack on the way here, but they'll do something. This day won't go by peacefully."

"Yuhi, uh--" Sumire laughed. "What are you doing?"

"Pinning you down, keeping you captive."

"I'll be okay; you'll rush to me if something happens, right?"

Sumire extended her hands and caressed his cheeks. "You worry too much."

"Those people are far too dangerous. I know your strong Sumire, but they use such underhanded methods."

"But you won't stop me, will you?"

"Because I understand how you feel about music. I also think the same way. You want to sing again, don't you? You can make any place your stage, but you want to try singing on a large stage and convey your feelings."

"Saying such serious things while pinning me down. It is hard to take you seriously." Sumire jokes.

"Well, you know I like this position." Yuhi quickly got off her, and she sat back up. "I think Masaru and Takahashi have spoken to you already, so there isn't much left for me to say."

"Mm, but I still want to hear it."

"There was a time where I started to hate music; it wasn't just because of that incident with Touma. But there was a time when I felt constrained by the entertainment industry system. Shortly after I debuted, I realized it wasn't all fun and games. I couldn't just sing the songs I wanted to. I couldn't just perform concerts. There were many other things I had to do. I felt burdened by all the restrictions." He trailed off. "That snowy concert where we met. It was around that time."

Sumire blinked, startled at those words. Was it back then? But he managed to perform so well on stage. No, it was one of his best performances, and yet he held such thoughts?

So they truly are alike. But didn't she understand that from the very start? This person has always been her ally. He will never leave her.

"I can't sing that song anymore." Sumire trailed off. "My debut song, superstar of tomorrow. I wrote it with the feelings in mind of our promise that snowy concert. But I only realized that afterwards. I thought I was writing for Ru."

From the very start, her music was all about Yuhi.

"I thought I made my mind up. If I achieve my goals, I will tell you my feelings. But I would tell you that it was all in the past and that I want to stay with Ru. But I realized after singing that song that I couldn't do that. I have chased after you for a long time and wanted to sing by your side not just as a fellow musician but as the person you love."

At those words, she watched Yuhi's cheeks color, and she quickly realized what she had just said. But it was already far too late.

"So uh." Yuhi scratched his cheeks. "That confession of yours was quite bold."

"I--I wasn't confessing!" Sumire exclaimed.

This is embarrassing; how did she end up blurting out such things? Even if she did get caught up in the moment, she should know better than to act emotionally like this.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 565

Chapter 565: Smile

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"Did you hear about Aki having a hard time?"

"Why are you mentioning this now?"

"Asuka and that annoying captain of hers dropped me a hint when I dropped by the other day. The reason why you are in such a hurry."

"I-" Sumire trailed off. "No matter what I do, I keep causing people problems. Would it be better if I isolated myself completely? Would it be better if I stopped talking to other people? There was a time where I truly thought this way."

But her feelings have changed, haven't they?

"It is the same with Arashi-san. He doesn't want to see me. It was painful when Futaba told me how he's been living up until now. But at the same time, I thought maybe it was a good thing that he forgot. I may have brought light into his world, but I also brought an unbelievable amount of pain to him."

"That's not true, and you know it." Yuhi hugged her. "I know it's still scary. But you'll be absolutely fine from now on. It may have been a journey of redemption, but I'm sure you learned and figured out many

things you didn't have the luxury to do before. Everyone's feelings and your own they've always been joined as one and connected. "

"I-"

"It's okay; your feelings will surely reach everyone. I'm sure deep down they've always understood. But since they are all slow, the only way for them to truly understand is through music. "

"Then what about your feelings for me, Yuhi-san? Do you truly want to marry me?"

Yuhi grabbed hold of her hand and kissed her fingertips. "You already know the answer. But since you're still being stubborn." He leaned forward and mumbled in her ear. "Look forward to Christmas."

....

A few hours later, it was finally her time to appear. Yumi-senpai already performed a total of ten songs. It shouldn't surprise her too much since she has already seen her perform so many times. But there is something different.

Yumi-senpai is truly amazing.

Yumi-senpai was on the other end; they would enter separately.

It's still scary.

'I am trembling, and my heart is beating so fast.'

This is so pathetic; she is still so weak.

What if she ends up relying on everyone else too much like before? What if this time she ends up causing them unimaginable pain? But even then, she wants to sing. She wants to return to the stage. She wants to be able to once again tell everyone. If she can, then maybe something will change.

The scenery she saw only once, she wants to see again.

Sumire recalled Yumi-senpai, Masaru, and Yuhi's words. The people she looks up to give her such high praise. Normally, when people praise her, she feels suffocated, but something is different when it comes to those three.

'I felt excited. I made them look my way. Can I stand on stage with them and be proud?'

Sumire gradually dragged her feet across to get to the stage. She kept her head low when she heard people whispering.

"Wow, she showed up?"

"Even if she shows, can she sing?"

Oh this song? Her eyes widened when she realized that the background track playing wasn't one of Yumi-senpai's songs but hers.

"Everybody knows what this song is, right? On the count of one, two--"

"Smile." The crowd called out.

It seems she has worried way too many people. Sumire took a deep breath. It is okay now; she can sing. No, she wants to sing.

"If the sky was crying for you

I'll turn into a sea and embrace it

even if we're swallowed by the storm and lose our map

your back is the signpost for me now

like the moon and sun, even when near or far

please be close enough

to capture my light

smile smile

watch me always, watch me forever whenever

smile smile

want to believe, want to feel it forever

smile smile

being able to understand happy mornings and sad nights

I won't forget to smile

I cannot live without you forever." Sumire sang.

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Sumire returned after the third encore song was over. Normally having another MC before the last song is uncommon. But she couldn't dismiss that bad feeling amid 'Shine Line.' Indeed, once she got backstage, she noticed that Soujiro, who had been with Yuhi earlier, was no longer in sight; instead, there was a rather anxious-looking Yuhi.

So the dark clouds she saw from the small roof in the stadium was correct. What are they planning? No, what are they doing outside?

Sumire immediately hugs Yuhi. "Sumire. "

"This is all my fault. I know you don't want me to blame myself. But I'm not that slow anymore. No, I don't think I ever was. It's my fault. However, if I had been more honest, we shared the blame for what happened then. I could have persuaded you. I've made so many mistakes, and yet people have never blamed me. I wonder why I didn't notice it sooner; love has always been right beside me."

"Sumire-Sumire--"

"It's okay. I'm still afraid. But in our short time apart. I didn't just cry. A part of me learned to be stronger. Yuhi, I love you. That's why I'm here right now. "

Yuhi placed a gentle kiss on her forehead. "Leave it to Masaru and the others. I will stay right here."

"If you sneak away-"

"I know."

Sumire hesitated to run to the stage, but it would be bad for her to stop now. Moreover, if she does that, then those people would win. She has to keep singing tonight no matter what.

"Why? I've completely forgotten how to love

meetings will come someday with the beginning of parting

somehow, I have decided upon that idea.

you tied the loose shoelaces of my dirty sneakers

your shy smile suddenly shone in the sunlight."

Ru, being an idol is truly amazing, you know? Even someone as normal as her was able to change.

"It's not that I love for want of love

you gave me the courage to love straight-forward.

the two swear to the journey from now

that no matter what occurs, the two hands will never part."

She made loads of friends, she has created many precious memories and received so much from them.

"It's weird; the everyday landscape begin to seem special

the flowers, birds, and sea, the wind, mountains, sweet sun

when everything shines together."

She's fallen in love several times.

So many people have loved her.

But, there's always been one person—only one person for her.

"I found the last piece to the unsolvable jigsaw puzzle

your broad back protects me, and I'll continue to follow you

for eternity."

Everyone is shining together; their feelings are all connected even now.

These feelings have increased even more since she came to Tokyo.

"Until now, I've taken the longer way around but

I'm finally able to love straight-forward

the two will head to the dream of tomorrow

no matter what occurs."

She's no longer alone. She never really was. Even in that short time, she left. Everyone's feelings, all those emotions were still there.

Yuhi, the same goes for you.. Even though it was painful, he must have understood that if they truly were fated to be together, they would meet one day again.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 566

Chapter 566: Her Dream Is Simple

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

Meanwhile, not too far from the stadium.

Shin was watching a group of hooligans- no, the members of akagumi beating up some men dressed in black.

"Now then, who says you can interfere with our Princess concert?"

'I came over because I was worried, but it seems like there is no need to be concerned. Hamano Atushi and the rest of akagumi have things covered, and Kiragi Asuka leads a group of Hyou4 men to deal with anything supernatural related.'

Still, they are truly bold for them to attack the concert like this. Don't they fear Takahashi Yumi? Even if she is singing on stage with Sumire, she can still do something. That is how frightening that person is.

Then again, Takahashi Yumi doesn't have to raise her hand. Akagumi and Hyou4 can handle these. It seems Nagawa is controlling the media too. This place is near the venue, and not every reporter can get into the stadium. There should be more people here, but the area is empty. It didn't take him long to realize that Nagawa was pulling some strings.

So that guy can be useful.

Shin thought back to his recent visit to the SF headquarters. Their clothes resemble the inspectors who came by the other day. Is it just his imagination?

His thoughts broke off when he heard footsteps approaching from behind.

"Not going to play with them, Tachibana?"

This person is Tachibana Masaru, a member of the group Nanairo feather and also one of the people Sumire respects when Shin learned that he found it very strange. Out of all the people she chooses to admire, why is it this guy?

"I like to watch them having fun instead."

Shin sighed. "That is just like you." His gaze fell towards the huge screen showing a live broadcast of the concert.

Sumire wore a bright smile on her face as she sang.

"I do think that she has a mysterious charm about her. But the professional world doesn't let you get by on charm alone."

He also became an idol because he liked to sing. But like Yuhi, it did not take him long before he realized how restricting it was. It is not enough to have charisma and talent. She has to have something else.

"Her dream is actually a lot simple. Facing her objective and being able to pursue it head-on despite the complications. That is the lady's strength."

"Even if she can't see beyond that?"

A tender expression appeared on Masaru's face.

"I have faith in her potential. A much bigger dream is waiting just beyond the dream he has now. I think the lady could really make that dream come true. But now, there are parts of me that just want her to remain as she is, even though she can't. It's just that the shine she has - is something I see as beautiful. It's so bright; it's disorienting."

"What about your feelings for her?"

At those words, Masaru laughed. "I never thought I would hear you ask me that Shin-chan."

"Quit acting familiar."

"You say that, but you watched over her well. I have to thank you for that."

Shin sighed deeply. "When you sent me that message earlier this year, I wondered what you wanted me to do. When I saw her transfer papers, I wanted to hit you. You encouraged her to come here, didn't you?"

"Correct. I knew the lady wanted to see Yuhi. I also knew he was sending her secret letters too. So I visited her one night and gave tickets to Tokyo that she could use any time. She was gone by night the next day. It seemed she already made her mind up but wanted a push in the right direction."

So it was something like that.

"Do you feel bad for Tsueno Mamoru?"

"There is no need. I think that guy understood better than anybody, Sumire's dream and the person she loves."

Masaru slaps his back. "You're so serious, Shin-chan. There is a reason why I came to Tokyo. It wasn't just for the lady." He trailed off. "But you could also say it is because of her."

Shin felt a menacing presence at those words, and his body shuddered.

A jet black dot fell from the sky like a single thread. The sky color changed into a normal sunset hue to a pitch red blood color sky. There stood a man with long black colored hair wearing a mask.

Shin became alert, thinking that he was about to chant some sort of incantation. But nothing happened; no, he removed the mask. Shin felt his entire body tremble when he got a look at the man's face.

"Do you recognize me now?" Lucifer said, almost mocking.

"Oh, I do; now I have even more reasons why I want to kill you." Shin gritted his teeth.

When he first started investigating this guy, he felt that the guy looked familiar. But he didn't understand the reason why. But now he did.

'This guy was the one who caused the accident in the establishment.'

This entire time those people have tricked them. It's no wonder Nagawa couldn't say anything about his identity.

"Let me ask you a question, is that your real appearance or are you simply mocking me now?"

"It is my real appearance."

"Since that does not seem to shock you. I shall tell you an interesting fact. How I forcibly took her first time from her then."

Rage flashed through him. His hand fell to the hilt of his sword. "Just what are you implying, Lucifer?"

Lucifer raised his eyebrow. "Didn't you hear me? I'm saying that I was the one who soiled her for the first time. I can remember it; clearly, her anguish cries as she called for the name of the one she was in love with. Ah what ecstasy. How even when I erased her memories and did it with her again, she showed the same reaction."

At those words, Shin couldn't control his emotions, but before he could step forward, Masaru stepped between them.

"Shin-chan, head back to the stadium."

"Huh, but-"

"This guy wanted to separate you, Nagawa Sano, Narasaki Hino, Eli and Yuhi from the lady. Shin-chan, you have one of those keys, don't you?"

Shin's eyes widened when he heard those words. How does Masaru know about the keys? Since Sumire came to Tokyo, he has helped her with her investigation. The investigation Mamoru was leading right before the accident. He finally found a hint, five keys, and a single loc during her disappearance. Those were the items Mamoru was looking for.

Why did he go through such trouble? Shin still didn't know. He searched all over for the keys, and imagine his surprise when he realized where they all were? He has one, and the other four belong to those guys.

This must be the reason why the Black Alice organization kept Nagawa Sano. They knew about the key. No, it's not just Masaru; Sumire must know about it too.

"Don't die," Shin said, clenching his fist as he turned his back and headed in the direction of the stadium.

'Life is the most precious thing in the world, but it's also the cruelest thing. Because it has a time limit itself, every life is unique, and because there is no chance to come back to life, you must treasure your current life.'

Sumire's words appeared in his mind. Even from here, he can hear her sing if he listens carefully.

He won't allow anybody to intervene. At this stage, nobody can take it from her.

When he arrived at the stadium, the crowd was going wild, not with excitement but resentment. Shin glanced up at the large screen and saw several photographs on Mamoru's accident and the day before when Sumire went to Tokyo.

Is this their goal? But then what is with all the attacks outside? No, there is somebody else taking advantage of this moment.

His thoughts broke off when he heard somebody yelling down the phone. It was Nagawa Sano, and beside him was Narasaki Hino.

"I thought I told you-"

"San, quit it. You know the entertainment industry is dirty. You cannot ."

"Damn." Nagawa cursed as he ended the call. "Then let's get her now. I can help her leave."

"I would advise against that." A voice from behind him said. Shin turned around and saw a man with dark-colored hair wearing a lab coat.

Hino sighed. "You have to wait until now to show up."

"It seems we are all together; that is good." Eli clapped his hands. "Nagawa Sano, if you take her away now, she will resent you for eternity."

"But she-"

"Singing is her life. No matter how much people hate her, music will always be on her side."

'Shin, do you believe in it? The power of songs? I do. It may seem odd to say this, but I believe music has tremendous power. That power may differ per person, but the end goal is the same. To convey such beautiful emotions to people and to make them smile.'

"I also think we should wait," Shin mumbled. "Besides, Yuhi is there."

If Yuhi is there, then there is nothing to worry about.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 567

Chapter 567: Surpass

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

It's the final song, the decisive song that will end this concert, and the battle with Yumi-senpai. She was worried about what was happening outside, even more after the skies turned red. But, 'I believe in them.' It seems Yuhi stuck to his promise and stayed put too. If Yuhi is doing that, then she ought to follow his example.

Her thoughts broke off when Yumi-senpai appeared behind her and patted her shoulder.

"Take a deep breath, one, two-"

Sumire followed those instructions, and her shoulders relaxed.

"Do you love music? Do you like singing?"

"I do. I have so much love for it that I can't hold back anymore."

"I will put everything into this moment."

The two of them have shared the same feelings towards music from the very start. Yumi-senpai must have noticed that otherwise, she would not have accepted her to be her disciple.

Sumire: Where do you want to go?

Yumi: What do you want to be?

Sumire: Picture it in your mind however you like

Yumi: Think of what's right before you

Sumire: and of what's to come

Yumi: The excitement builds as the view turns colorful

Sumire: Saying, "I can't."

Yumi: is no good

Both: Rather than that, "let's give it a try!"

Her dream started because of Yuhi, but then she met those guys.

..

At Tsukuhara high last year

Sumire couldn't believe they had found her. 'I was careful not to leave any tracks, and this is an abandoned building. How did they know I would come here?'

"Senpai...why?"

"There's nothing wrong, is there? For a while, I've noticed it too." he trailed off, holding up a piece of paper, causing her eyes to widen. " Besides, this is the perfect timing for this too." Arashi wore a tender gaze on his face as he said this.

Nao casually hits him with his spear, " Quit acting cool and hogging the spotlight."

"Right, it's not fair at all." Sei agreed.

"Good grief," Masato said with a deep sigh.

"But our harmony only seems to work well with your songs, lady. "Masaru said with a wink.

Mikaze nodded and smiled. "We saw one of the songs in the pack you gave us a while back and realized that the melody was written for seven The painting and the double centers. We realized what it was you were searching for-" He trailed off. "Lately, you've looked down too; that's why we wanted to do something to cheer you up."

"The only way we can do that is writing the best lyrics for your songs," Masaru added.

Sumire suddenly felt Daiki squeeze her hand and smiled warmly at her.

"Didn't you find your answer?"

...

Right now, she cannot meet with them; to pursue her current goals, she has to abandon them.

Imagination is what leads to my future self

Admiration is what becomes my hopes and dreams

Having a goal is what drives me forward

Along the path to where I'll realize my aspirations

Sumire: Keep running straight ahead,

Yumi: as believing in your own feelings

Both: is where it all starts

Yumi: I want to fly high and try shining bright

Sumire: We're able to do anything

Yumi: so let's start⇒

Sumire: Having even more fun, closer to reality

Yumi: I can't stop myself just thinking about it

It was shortly after Midnight five's first performance. The five got invited to a prestigious music show, and they invited her to watch. It was then where she decided that she would do anything to make sure they achieved their dreams.

..

At Stadium - Tokyo, a few months ago.

She could see five colors, five different colors. It is not a rainbow, nor do these colors blend well together. They are distinct and different from one another. But why does it feel right? What is this? This is the first time she has ever seen such a stage. How often has she watched their stages individually or as Yuhi and just Quatro light?

However, there is something different. Sumire couldn't calm her heartbeat. She quickly left the special guest seats and headed towards the gate. But before she could leave, she glanced up and spotted five people.

"According to my calculations, that was perfect; you also think so, do you not?" Jun said, bending down and placing a kiss on her hand.

"Indeed, next time we can all fall together," Tetsuo said, doing the same with her left hand.

Kou suddenly leaned close and grabbed hold of her arm, ensuring that it was high up before he clasped their hands together. "Yay, we did it !"

"Sumire! We did a great job, eh? What's with that surprised look of yours, stupid." Ran said, flicking her forehead.

She turned to her black-haired boyfriend, who immediately embraced her, causing the crowd to go rather wild.

"W---ait, we're in front of people...."

Rather since Yuhi just joined them, he shouldn't be doing something like this. " No, I want to make it clear. That you are my girl."

Doesn't everybody know that already? What is he trying to do?

"are you guys stupid?" Sumire exclaimed, flustered.

"If we are stupid, what does that make you, my dear?"

Gah- when Yuhi says things like that with a smile on his face, it is hard for her. Moreover, his smile is very dangerous for her heart. Sumire wrapped her arms around his waist, and she felt him intertwining their hands.

"Thank you." She whispered ever so quietly, but she knew the others heard her.

...

Yumi:: The power to make things come true. Yes

Sumire Everyone has it deep inside

Both: Imagination is what opens the door to tomorrow

And soon a new world will come into view

The stronger your feelings, the greater your power

Be brave, and your map will spread out before you

Yumi: One day, I'll become my ideal self

Sumire: All I've got to do is look within me

So many people have given her the strength to sing, to continue even though it is painful and suffocating for her. She is still frightened, but she wants to convey these important feelings.

'I want to continue to sing.'

No matter how many people resent her in the future, no matter how much malice there is in the world. She will never give up singing again. For her, singing is her lifeline; without it, she cannot survive.

The months she went by without singing were so very painful. But she no longer has to do that.

She will sing and make sure it reaches everybody, even those who resent her.

Imagination is what brings forth a new reality

So let's fantasize as much as we can

The bigger the picture, the greater the possibilities

So let's dream up something beyond imagination

Yumi: Even if it seems impossible.

Sumire: I don't want to just give up

Let's make a miracle of our own

The board behind them changed the moment the song ended, showing a large picture of Yumi-senpai and her. Then a small bar gauge gradually fills. Her eyes widened when she noticed that Yumi-senpai's had stopped, and hers kept going.

Sumire walks over to the mic, "To all of my fans who have supported me. I'm grateful beyond words. Thank you very much!"

She felt so overwhelmed and quickly passed on the mic to the purple-haired woman.

"I am glad that I decided to be an idol. In all my years on stage, I've had the same wish. I wished that my singing and dancing could bring to as many people's hearts as possible. So many people have come all the way here to watch our concert, who have smiled at our singing and dancing. That is my greatest happiness. I have now done my idol activities on the greatest stage, with my greatest rivals, with the greatest passion."

Yumi-senpai, really for everything you've done.. She can't be anything more than grateful.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 568

Chapter 568: A Constellation Of Hope

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

Sumire took the mic being passed to her by the announcer and took a deep breath. "I mentioned it during my debut that there were three people who inspired me to continue this path. It's only because I've been chasing her this far that I was able to climb this high. I thank her from the bottom of my heart. Today I beat her, however-"

Yumi winked. "This is far from over. While you continue to evolve Sumire-chan, I will do the same. You lit the fire in my heart, and it is burning so strongly. In two years, challenge me again on that stage, and we will decide who the true top idol is."

Her eyes widened when she heard those words, and Sumire laughed. "You always seem to get the last words in. I am no match for you there." Sumire trailed off. "I will be right on your trail and head to the top at the speed of light."

...

An hour later -

A relieved sigh escaped her lips as she slumped down on the pillar in the lounge area. 'Those reporters are so weird! They were shooting death glares during the pre-conference.' Human hearts are truly hard to comprehend. She indeed sang with even the haters in mind. But she didn't think she would get through to them.

Music is truly amazing; it has the power to change people's hearts. It was the same back at the festival when she painted that picture. She wants to continue using the things she loves to make people smile.

Her thoughts broke off when somebody pressed a cold drink against her cheek. Sumire looked up and saw Yuhi. No, what stood out to her was the scar on his cheek and the cuts on his hands.

"You ran away way too quickly." Yuhi laughed. "But that is like you; you're not going to suddenly adjust to the reporters being nice."

"Yuhi-san," Sumire said sharply. "You broke our promise."

"Only towards the end. You know they planted a bomb in the stadium, right?"

"-a bomb?" Sumire looked at him in disbelief. But Yuhi is not the type of person to lie to her. "I see a bomb, so whatever they were doing outside was only a distraction."

Those people are truly ruthless. But it seems Asuka and Atushi handled everything.

"Sumire." Yuhi suddenly said in a serious tone. "There is something I want to ask you."

"Yes?"

"Shin told me something strange. Lucifer appeared, and he said he took your first time."

Eh? Sumire blinked, puzzled at those words. What did Yuhi just say? "How could he say that? It's true my first time wasn't with Ru; it wasn't with Ren or even Kou or Atsuro. But it wasn't him."

Sumire quickly covered her mouth when she realized something.

Yuhi's eyes twitched, annoyed. "Oh? If it wasn't them, then I wonder who it was."

'I can't tell Yuhi it was Toh. After all, I didn't have feelings for him. How could I tell him I was just fooling around? It had nothing to do with me being lonely.'

But for Lucifer to make that claim, does he know Toh? Toh was a spy from an organization that disliked her. Toh got closer to her in order to step all over her.

"That designer?"

Sumire flinched when she heard his tone. Uh-oh, maybe she shouldn't have listed out all the guys like that. But really, if anybody else overheard this, they would surely misunderstand. There are no reporters around, right? She did make sure, but who knows. Those guys are like snakes lurking around.

"Yuhi, you know Toh and me. It's not what your thinking. I wasn't serious. I knew he was a spy."

The only reason she slept with him was because she wanted to catch him out. 'Two can play that game.'

"If I think about it now, it was very petty of me to do that. But at that time, I was having a hard time as a member of the Holy Knights. I had strength, but that was all. I was no good at other work. So I wanted to prove myself. I admit it wasn't the best choice, but I didn't want to lose my place there."

'Even though I was not attached to anyone there. I didn't want to be alone.'

Sumire waited for his response, but Yuhi didn't reply right away. Seconds turned into minutes quickly. Uh-oh, is he seriously mad this time? Ever since she came here, Yuhi has not gotten seriously angry at her even once.

It surprised her how calmly he reacted to everything. Sure there were times when he became emotional. But he has never truly gotten angry at her. She always found his unusual behavior; how is it possible for him not to resent her a little for her careless behavior?

Is it because he does not truly care for her? There was a time when she thought that, but those thoughts quickly vanished. How could she possibly have such thoughts when he treats her well?

Even though he has a busy schedule and seldom has time to attend class, ever since she transferred, Yuhi has attended school more frequently. They walk home together and go shopping.

He is the first person to fly to her side and help her whenever she is sick. He stays by her side the entire time she is sick and is careful not to disturb her when he has to do some work.

'He is too good to me.'

No, that simple sentence cannot describe Terashima Yuhi's treatment towards her. This is more than good treatment. He treats her like some type of goddess and practically does everything for her. Sometimes she thinks it is a bit too excessive, but at the same time, it warms her heart.

'I can tell he is only looking at me.' Those eyes, which to others normally appear cold and distant, only brighten when she is around.

Her thoughts broke off when she felt a gentle pair of lips on her forehead.. "I already know that."

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 569

Chapter 569: Don't Be So Good To Me

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

It was just four words that anybody could say, yet it sent a wave of happiness across her heart. She extended her hands out, indicating she wanted a hug, and he happily obliged. The moment she was in his arms, a content sigh passed her lips.

"Yuhi-san, stop being so good to me."

"Hmm? I wondered what you were thinking about so seriously, but I think you already understand why I'm so nice to you."

Right, because of his feelings towards her. She has had plenty of chances to see how he behaves in front of other people. In front of others, Yuhi is very cold-hearted; whenever others talk to him, he would have that stiff look on his face and mumble one-word sentences.

Is it because he understands that all those people who approach him have ulterior motives?

It is only normal for the people around them not to be sincere in this business. No matter how many times she glorifies her dreams, she understands full well how shady and corrupted the Entertainment industry could be.

It is sad, but it is not enough to just like singing. Hence why she chose to become an idol rather than a singer. Idols have bad images, and many harsh critics say idols are not singers.

Indeed, idols certainly focus more on their appearances rather than honing their music skills. But she wants to change that, which is why she made a vow with her close friends to infiltrate the idol industry and change it.

She made that decision, but why did Yuhi also enter this field? He debuted as a singer. Why did he suddenly become an idol halfway? She was curious but knew it wasn't an easy topic to ask.

"So hey," Yuhi suddenly mumbled. "I know you're more open about this stuff, but you don't mind hugging me in public?"

Sure enough, the moment he said those words, Sumire finally took a look at her surroundings and realized that the lounge area was no longer empty. The receptionists returned to the desk, and people exited the rooms.

Her cheeks colored when she realized that they had been there for a while now. Sumire hits Yuhi's chest. "Why did you just tell me?"

"Hm? I just noticed." Yuhi said innocently.

He is definitely lying!

Sumire pulled away from his hold with puffed cheeks as she looked away.

Yuhi only laughed and circled her until he stood in front of her again. He wiped the corner of her eyes casually with his sleeve.

"Where should we go for dinner?"

Sumire was about to reply when something came to mind. "The bar. The party."

It took her a moment to realize why the others hadn't come to see her live. It was because of the party; they must have spent that time setting up.

"We need to go!" Sumire briefly glanced at the time.

Because the reporters chased her at the end and she could not escape, quite some time had passed. The others would surely be waiting for her. She recalled how excited they were when Yuhi said that she could go.

....

However, during the entire journey to the bar, Yuhi was sulking how it wasn't fair that he couldn't hog her to himself. Sumire facepalmed. Didn't they already discuss this? Why is he sulking about it now?

It would indeed be nice if they spent time together. It was Christmas eve, and many couples on the main street walked together.

The bright and beautiful illuminated decorations made her happy. She could hear merry chatter and Christmas music from the shops on both sides.

Occasionally she would stop and ask Yuhi if they could have a look at the stalls.

Sumire's gaze fell on the various ornaments when she suddenly felt something brush across her hair. Yuhi placed a gorgeous purple scitica flower hairpin across her hair. With a gentle gaze in his eyes, he mumbled.

"This suits you."

She could only avert her gaze at his direct words. He is truly acting weird tonight. Did he notice that she sang for him? If he did, he would have mentioned it by now. Moreover, she tried her best to conceal it.

It would be bad for the media to get hold of her true feelings for Yuhi. Since they started dating there, have been many speculations regarding their relationship. Speculations huh? Sumire laughed when she thought of those far-fetched rumors.

Some said she was his mistress, his plaything, and they met when she was selling herself at the bar. It seemed the general public knew about her visiting bars and entering despite being underage. There were other stories, but all of them portrayed her as some kind of seductress.

Sumire sighed deeply. As if she could seduce Yuhi - look at him. Even if he is handsome, just holding his hand makes her nervous.

Yuhi quickly paid for the hairpin, and the two continued walking hand in hand down the busy street.

He is truly unusual; she thought she better understood him now that she is his official girlfriend. But there are still many things that she does not know about him.

"By the way, did you notice that a reporter has been following us since we left the stadium?"

A reporter? Sumire casually scanned her surroundings and made it look like she was looking at the shops. She spotted a man wearing a grey cap and dark-colored clothes. There was a large camera dangling around his neck. At a glance, he seemed like a normal person. But Sumire could tell.

She clung to Yuhi's arm and sighed. "It's Christmas eve."

These people do not have families to return to and spend the holidays with?

Then again, she cannot judge their circumstances. This person probably wants a picture. Hmmm, what could she do? Yuhi suddenly wrapped his waist around her and frowned.

"Don't do something stupid." Yuhi quickly advised her. "Did you know your manager has people following you? Those people will take care of him."

Sumire blinked when she heard Yuhi's words. Her manager has people following her for what? Moreover, it was not Hino's style to keep her safely guarded.

Something must have happened for him to take such precautions, but what could it be?

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 570

Chapter 570: They Have Made A Move

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

After walking for a few minutes, they eventually arrived at the residential areas near the bar. Underneath the street light in the middle of the street, she spotted a familiar bike parked.

Isn't that Shin's bike? Sure enough, when they got closer, she confirmed it was Shin's. However, recalling that the reporter was following them, she could not run over.

Yuhi, however, pushed her forward. "Go. I will deal with it."

Sumire turned to him with suspicion and then sighed. "I suppose I shall leave this to you."

'Sometimes, I do not want him to get involved with this anymore. The ugliness and dirtiness of the underworld are far too much sometimes. However, it is because of people like that reporter that I was unable to find peace.'

What murderer? Because they repeatedly said such things after Ru's death, she started to believe it. It took quite some time, but she gradually overcame those words after she settled her emotions.

Her thoughts broke off when Yuhi suddenly grabbed hold of her hand. "I forgot to do something."

Before she could even ask him what it was that he forgot, she felt his hands on her cheeks, and in the next second, he was kissing her deeply.

'Stupid hooligan.' Sumire cursed in her head. He should at least warn her before giving her such a passionate kiss. Although it was the middle of the night, this was still a residential area. Many people were walking nearby.

Sure enough, it did not take long before she heard the sound of people whispering. Sumire hit Yuhi's chest with her hands, indicating for him to let her go, but not only did he not do that, he deepened the kiss instead.

After kissing for a good few minutes, he eventually let go and wiped his lips. "Well, I hope the reporter took a nice photo."

"Hooligan," Sumire mumbled. Even without looking at a mirror, she knew how red her face was right now.

Yuhi chuckled before pressing a light kiss on her forehead. "Yes, yes, I know. Get going; Shin is looking this way and sighing."

"You're so cruel to your rivals."

"If I wanted to be cruel, there are other things I can do."

Sumire immediately sensed his suggestive sounding tone and quickly bolted away from him. It did not take long before she reached Shin's motorbike.

"I thought I was going to have to wait forever."

Sumire coughed lightly, realizing what he was implying. "Don't be stupid. Yuhi won't attack me in the middle of the street."

"Actually, he could."

Her cheeks colored again, understanding that Shin was right. Several of Yuhi's attempts appeared in her head. She shouldn't underestimate that beast-

Her thoughts broke off when Shin extended his hand out and passed her an envelope. "You should prepare yourself; those people have made a move."

Those people? Sumire immediately took out the first stack of documents from the envelope.

"Dark entertainment?"

"It seems they took over a small entertainment company, and with the Black Alice organization funding, it has now expanded. They have already actively recruited new artists and will start activities next month."

Start activities next month? This timing clearly shows they are trying to go against her. With her being in Tokyo, it was difficult for her to get her company's support. Moreover, she does not want to trouble them over this matter.

'It is okay if you take a rest.'

A rest, huh? If she debuted again under a different company, they would treat her as a new artist. But that situation would be far better than her coming back with her old status and having that new company plot something using those new artists.

Trying to suppress her, think again?

"Shin, Jupiter records president, was trying to recruit me, right?"

Shin's eyes widened when he realized what she was suggesting. "Wait, Sumire, if you join the company, you will be with Atsuro-"

Indeed it was the main reason why she refused before.

"I cannot join Yuhi's company."

She knew what others would say if she joined Yuhi's company. "I do not want to make things even harder for him."

At those words, Shin sighed. "I won't let you do this."

"Shin-"

He held up another document and her eyes widened when she saw what it was. It was a contract inviting her to join Yuhi's company. Hino had already signed it.

"I figured you would do this when you saw this information, so I asked ahead of time. It seemed he already prepared the contract for you a long time ago."

Sumire blinked when she heard those words and confirmed it by looking at the time stamp on the contract. That guy didn't mention it at all. So he was already planning to be her manager?

"Debut under Yuhi's company as a new artist. Actually, you're technically still considered a new artist despite having so much experience. You only had one debut single and only did activities for like two months before your long break. You are still new. So it's actually easy to switch companies."

"Mm, but this is temporary." Sumire trailed off; her gaze fell on the moon. "I cannot betray Star records just because I want to be with Yuhi."

She has made many fond memories with the people there. Moreover, when she needed help the most. The president extended his hand out to help her. However, he poached her in a rather shameless manner.

"I see. It seems they are truly willing to do anything to take you down. However, is it not a waste for them to start an entertainment company? There are many ways they can get to you. Your underworld activities have reduced, but you are still very active. Why do they feel the need to take you down using a normal method?"

"Is it not obvious why?" Sumire trailed off as Shin shook his head. "It is because they can see how much music means to me. They can see how much I love it. If they tried to attack me using normal means, they would lose."

She was confident that with her strength, nobody could beat her.

Shin immediately understood. "So they want to target your dream and break you down emotionally?"

"When I am emotionally vulnerable, it would be easier for them to get to me." Sumire frowned. "What I don't understand is why they didn't get to me when I was locked away in Ru's home."

That was the time when she was the most vulnerable. If the enemy truly wanted to get their hands on her, why did they not use that time?

Aki tried to get people to guard the house back then, but she sent them all away, so there was no protection. Even the reporters would drop by, and she would hear them talking outside.

At first, she ignored it, but then she could no longer stand the noise, so she blocked all the windows.. She made sure there was no sound left.