Melody 211

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 211

Chapter 211: That was a lie If audio player doesn't work, press Stop then Play button again

It is easy to forget about Tsueno Mamoru when she is together with Terashima Yuhi, at least she thought so. But that is a lie. Everywhere she goes, she still remembers the man with the brightest and most idiotic smile.

For the next few days, Yuhi is busy recording and performing in other areas of Japan, so she decides to go to class. It felt weird attending class without him since she came here; they always went together. Quite some time has passed since the last time he left her alone too. So she does not know what to do.

It wasn't until Aika snapped her out of her daze and said something about studying for Yuhi's sake, did she finally pay attention to class.

Today was the day in the week somebody offers to be a model. From what she noticed, only pretty girls or plain girls get picked, who are aesthetically beautiful or easy to draw. Today it was Asami-san's turn.

A text caught her attention.

From: Yuhi - Talk?

She quickly replied. - Class

Y- Sex?

Sumire blinked when she saw those words.

Drunk?

It was a stupid question; of course, they both knew he would end up drunk. Yuhi has to attend one of those pointless celebration parties that large productions do. The movie he finished filming before she came here would finally be on air starting tomorrow. The crew decided to throw a big party.

Y- Very drunk and needy for Sumire.

She rolled her eyes and closed her phone. Her gaze darted toward the teacher. It was Shin, which was perfect for her.

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Her excuse to cut class was rather simple. She has a stomach ace. If anybody wanted details, she said she would give it later. She already planned to ask Sano to fake a doctor's note for her.

He did tell her that he would do her any favors.

The parking lot or makeshift parking lot was full of rich-looking cars. When she saw that Sumire wanted nothing more than to turn away and leave, but when she thought of Yuhi being very drunk, surrounded by girls who would try to take advantage of him. She quickly resolved herself and hurried inside.

The party was being held in a huge warehouse. The moment she entered, large music pounded into her ears. She felt a sticky feeling at her feet and noticed the bottles of alcohol spilled on the floor.

It was easy to find him. She just headed towards the large group of girls.

Yuhi sprawled on the couch, very drunk with a gorgeous girl hugging him tightly.

Her stomach churned; she felt sick. It's not like he is kissing her, but it still upset her seeing this. To her surprise, Yuhi suddenly removed the girl's arm away.

"You're not my wife, go away."

At that comment, her heart sped up.

"Wife?" The girl said angrily.

Some guy with strange hair beer at hand laughs. "He's talking about her, Ibuki Sumire."

Sano blinks, seeing her. "Sumire."

"Thank you."

He lets go of her waist. "You know I didn't pin you to be the type to come to these places."

"I am here for Yuhi."

Sano looks over at the couch, and a small ah passes his lips. "I wonder why people were leaving me alone today."

Sumire sighs deeply. "Do you know how he got like that?"

"If I recall correctly, they had a huge drinking game."

No wonder Yuhi got roped into it, he is too polite to say no. He probably only intended to drink a little, but then it ended up like this. She looked over and took a deep breath.

Sano, however, grabbed her wrist. "You want to go there alone?"

"Why can't I?"

"Those girls have been stuck there this whole time, and they might do something."

"Your point is?"

"Let me help you. As your doctor, do you think I will let you walk into a situation that will lead to your child getting harmed? Remember, it isn't just about you anymore."

Her eyes widened when she heard him say those words. Surprisingly... he is taking this doctor thing seriously. So that's his reaction to children? She thought somebody like Sano would not care for kids.

Sano helps her manoeuver through the crowd, and eventually she arrives near Yuhi.

Yuhi does not spot her immediately. Of course, he didn't, that girl was still trying to cling to him.

Sumire walked over and tapped on the girl's shoulder.

It seemed like other people recognized her already but did not say anything.

"What do you--" She blinks. "Ibuki Sumire?"

At that comment, Yuhi looks over, he was still drunk, but his gaze seemed to light up seeing her. He got up and grabbed her arm. "Hey."

She slaps him.

She doesn't know what it was. It wasn't the alcohol or even the stupid girl clinging to him. But she could smell it around him, the scent of blood.

"Let go."

Yuhi however, did not do that; instead, he pulled her to his arms. "I know you're angry, but let's get out of here first." He mumbled quietly.

She wanted nothing more than to pull away and leave him here. But at the same time, she knew better than to do that. This is clearly set up by somebody so Yuhi could end up drunk, maybe sleep with a few girls - cause a fight or something or anything that would end up sensational news.

The tricks of the entertainment industry do not change at all. It is the same cookie-cutter method used each time.

It was taking forever to get outside because people kept stopping to take a look at her or introduce themselves. Of course, she knew the only reason they took such great interest was because she was Yuhi's girlfriend. But it did not stop her from cursing her so-called fame.

It is indeed a double-edged sword. She misses the days where she could peacefully walk around with nobody giving her strange looks. Nowadays, she has to be in disguise all the time.

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Chapter 212: I don't understand

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

Outside in the parking lot, Yuhi is kissing her neck and running his hands on her sides. She glares at him, but he continues his strange actions. When she felt his hands lifting her shirt, she stepped on his foot.

"Stop being mad already."

"What happened to doing everything together?"

Who on earth did he get into a fight with?

"It happened at the party Sumire. It wasn't one of those fights."

Yeah, she could picture that, but that does not make things easier.

"This is not okay, Yuhi." She interrupted him before he could make up an excuse that she would most likely believe. "I wasn't going to comment about the party thing. I know you're here because of your work. But you should control yourself when you're drinking, stop after a glass or two. You know how these parties are. Two the girls," She shook her head. "They were half-naked Yuhi, even if you weren't sober, surely you saw that?"

"Sorry."

It was only one word, but she understood that Yuhi didn't know what to do either. It wasn't the girls or the alcohol, at least she thought so. But it seemed like that wasn't the case.

A deep sigh crossed her lips and she slumped forward until her head was on his chest. "You have to understand what I am trying to get at here Yuhi."

"I do. My bad." He kisses her forehead softly. "I just wanted to get wasted and forget for a while."

"I don't think this method will help you."

Yuhi nodded. "I agree but it used to work. Get wasted, sleep with random girls, Is that how it was for him before? What a terrible life. She brought her lips to his. "You have me now."

"Right, I have you now, and that's why I am okay these days." He kisses the tip of her forehead again, and this time he mumbled. "What do you want to do? My car is over there."

He looks so needy and desperate for her. Then again, when he called on the phone, it was clear that he was high. "Then let's go there."

Yuhi nodded and led her to the car. The parking lot was dim, and she could hear the sound of the party music from above.

He is kissing her, her head on the seat no sooner did he unlock the door. His hands were all over her, on her neck, stomach, and legs - Yuhi doesn't have three hands. But he sure was moving his two sets of hands since it felt like he was touching her in four or five different places at the same time.

It took her a moment to realize something. "You have a license?"

"Of course I do. I don't ride my bike illegally."

"Well yeah, but..." Sumire looks around. "-this is the first time you brought me to your car."

"So.."

"So, you should do a proper introduction."

Yuhi mumbled how crazy, and he attacked her lips again. Their tongues melted into each other again his warm tongue on hers, his hands on her shirt. The next second they hear a knock at the door. It was Hino; he rolled his eyes.

"Don't leave your bag there."

"Yes, yes, father, anything else?"

"Use protection."

"Were not—" Sumire pauses and bits her lip. It was hard to say her next sentence considering how Yuhi was all over her a few minutes ago. It seems like she needs a lesson on self-control too. She needs to learn to stop Yuhi.

Suddenly Yuhi threw his bag over Hino's shoulder, he threw himself onto her, and Hino dove aside. It all happened too quickly, in the next second, they hear a large explosion in the direction Yuhi threw his bag at. Her eyes widened, realizing.

Did somebody put a bomb in his bag?

Hino stood up and opened the car door. He rubbed his head with one hand and sighs. "So, did you put that there?"

"It isn't one of mine."

"Then somebody else put it. I am guessing they thought Sumire would get your bag for you."

"That does seem like it."

Sumire looks at the two puzzled. "Is this party—"

"A set up by somebody, yeah." Yuhi finished for her. "I thought I would get some information, but instead, it ended up like this."

She thought he was working, doing his normal work. But it turns out he was working hard for her sake again. How many times has this happened already? She needs to get a grip.

Then again, this situation isn't new to her. Back when they worked alongside one another in the delinquent world. Yuhi would work late hours and wake up early. She often questioned when this man slept or if he slept at all. It wasn't until she came here to Tokyo and physically saw him take naps did she think he slept.

"I just don't understand," Sumire mumbled. "Why are they after me, anyway? If it is the thing Ru left behind, I left it behind in Star Town."

Yuhi looks at her and then at Hino, who shrugged.

He dove into the backseat of the car and pulled out some documents. The documents contained pictures of recent deaths/murders that happened in the city in the last few months. "Do you think these victims are connected?"

At that comment, she nodded. "Yes." But as for the actual connection, she would not know until she analyzed it properly herself.

"It is the same with you, you're connected to their enemy leader somehow."

"I don't think—" She is cut off by a large growling sound from her stomach. Sumire tried to put her hand to her stomach to block the noise, but Yuhi had already noticed.

He moved the files from her hands. "When did you last eat?"

Yuhi has not been home for four days, five if she includes today. So it was only normal that he would not know. Lunch? No, that does not seem right. She does remember eating, but that was three days ago - some light porridge when Hino came over to check on her.

She looks over at Hino, who catches her gaze.

"Breakfast two days ago," Hino answered for her.

Yuhi frowns and flicks her forehead. "I told you to eat."

"Then what about you, Yuhi-san?"

"He is eating all the time to the point it annoys people," Hino answered. "Even bringing bags of food to meetings."

She raises her eyebrows to this.

"Well, you told me to eat well." Yuhi nodded.

Uhh, it seems he is taking the words she said to him a bit too serious. Yuhi suddenly pulled out a box from the front seat and passed it to her. "It's just curry, but it should still be fresh."

Sumire opened the box, and immediately a familiar smell hit her. It feels like she has had this before. This is the first time for her, however, to eat Yuhis curry, so it does not make sense for her to feel nostalgic.

Then again, this isn't the first time.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 213

Chapter 213: Plan If audio player doesn't work, press Stop then Play button again

This is not the first time where Yuhi's cooking tasted familiar. But where could she have eaten it before? Her thoughts broke off when Yuhi pulled out a lighter and cigarettes. She raised her eyebrow, and he paused.

"Can I?" He asked.

Sumire sighs. "Go ahead."

He placed a sloppy kiss on her cheek and mumbled the words I love you before he started to smoke.

She stole a glance at Hino, who was on the phone to somebody. A frustrated look appears on his face.

She vaguely hears the words Sano and comes here, when she felt Yuhi grab her hands. He grinned. "I have an idea, why don't I feed you?"

"I'm not a child."

She won't tell him the real reason why she is acting stubborn. A few minutes ago, she decided to maintain some distance around Yuhi. It does neither of them any good behaving like this all the time.

Yuhi raised his eyebrows at her reluctance. "You're right, you're not a child. I wouldn't date a child."

Sumire sends him a harsh glare. What is he doing using her own logic against her? This isn't fair at all. Then again, Terashima Yuhi seems to be able to mess up her normal logic. She took a deep breath and continued eating with her other hand, which Yuhi was not holding hostage.

The curry tasted amazing even though it had gotten slightly cold already.

"This is very good."

"No, you're simply hungry." Yuhi laughs. "Slow down, yeah?"

She dumbly nodded but realized that she was eating even more quickly after he said that to her. Maybe she ought to stop skipping meals. When did food taste this good? Normally whenever she ate anything, it would taste bland to her. She would eat it, but not only would it not make her full, but she usually felt sick afterward.

Yuhi bent down and ate from her hand, and she dropped the spoon.

"Mmm, good."

What is with this person? Why is he so shameless? Then again it is partly her fault for allowing him to get away with it. Her gaze fell on the surroundings and she looks around the car.

This is a sports car, isn't it? It must have been expensive.

"Is that a drink dispenser?" Sumire pointed to the machine attached to the side.

Yuhi nodded. "Mm, you can play around if you want."

She didn't know why she was getting so excited. But this was her first time in a sports car so she could not help but be curious.

"Yuhi, I wondered why you took this car. Could it be you were trying to impress Sumire?"

Yuhi sighs. "Quit exposing me before my real plan occurs."

Sumire tilted her head innocently, and she looks over at him. "Plan?"

His lips curve to a smile, and he kisses her forehead softly. "Plan." He repeated slyly.

It seems she won't be able to control this huge lion forever, not that she expected to. Her desires and thoughts are going out of control; she needs to get a grip on reality.

When he offered to go along with her to the Holy Knights headquarters in Tokyo, she didn't refute him. But she instructed that he takes caution.

Yuhi recalls the looks they both received on the way in.

The thing with Ibuki Sumire was she understood him far better than he did himself.

It seems like the people in this group still don't like Sumire. They were curious about him, but their gazes were hostile toward Sumire.

The main reason why they were here today was because Atushi discovered something. Sumire suggested using this place rather than the bar, due to the security.

"Anyhow, the reason I called out to all of you today is obvious! Do you know of the group 'Shadow'? It's under D entertainment records."

... 'Shadow'

'Yuhi'

'....What do you mean by this?'

'That's because you were always neglecting me.'

'Ha, what are you talking about? Didn't I say that when we reached the number one in the U.S. and then us two will.... You...you betrayed me...'

'No, that's not it. I still love you!'

Memories and voices from the past flowed into his head. Yuhi felt his breathing become unsteady.

"Isn't that...." Jae hesitated before saying. "Your old group?

Sumire blinked. ". .Uh, I didn't know that.... Although this may be awkward. But I have something to talk about regarding them?" Despite his current mixed feelings, Yuhi gave a 'nod' for her to proceed. He doesn't want to seem weak; it's fine. They can mention it because it's already all over.

"The thing about SHADOW is their immunity level is incredibly high. It's not unusual to have high immunity since there have always been people out there with high levels. But all of those should have vanished because of that woman. So I did a bit of research and found a certain group in new York city that remained untouched by her songs. That group, though, was quite unusual..."

"Unusual? How so?"

She bites her lip. "They were part of a Yakuza underground drug association. The drugs they handed out classified A.T. The 'A' stands for angel funnily enough, so it seems like a harmless medication when given out to people. But I noticed a trend in the pattern of those people whom it's sold too. Their immunity levels seem to increase too, that's fine. Having immunity isn't wrong, but ..."

"It reversed on them." She suddenly changed her tone.

Sumire looked calm, almost too calm if you ask him. Did she know?

"Yes. As you know, the reverse effects are quite bad, and even now, all these people remain unconscious in a hospital overseas. "

"Are they under suspicion?" Jae asked.

"Unfortunately, there is no concrete evidence. But considering their relation to the group, it would be stranger for them not to know anything. There is a particular member that we must pay attention too. " She tapped the screen of her PDA and revealed a mab with spiky black hair, which he immediately recognized.

"He appears to have also taken the drug several times himself. .. This man Haguchi Morris now serves as the center of the group with that sentence itself you should understand what I'm saying. He is a survivor, despite the heavy drug usage overload he's a survivor."

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 214

Chapter 214: Are we ignoring the world around us? If audio player doesn't work, press Stop then Play button again

The more Sumire explained the more voices appeared in his head.

'Morris you....'

'I can't help it if your girlfriend went to me because you neglected her. I will propose to you when we become number one in the U.S.? Don't make me laugh. You're just making excuses.'

Sumire continues, "It's odd, there should be nobody capable of surviving something like this. "

Jae nodded, agreeing with her. "Unless somebody granted them an external power."

'Even if you leave the group. You still have your barrier wrapped around us. You'll be back.'

"Ah—" Jae exclaimed. "This reminds me of something. Do you all remember what happened a few years ago? There were all those cases we dealt with at the beginning. The men we captured were strange, and they all had eye bags under there eyes."

"Aside effect?" Atushi mumbles.

He felt sick. He doesn't want to hear anymore.

His thoughts broke off when somebody poked his shoulder. His entire body tensed due to the contact. A sweet voice fills his ear. "Yuhi, let's take a coffee break."

Yuhi somehow managed to nod.

"Does anybody else want some coffee?"

The other two passed, and Yuhi is grateful. Sumire led him out of the room.

After walking for a while, they arrived at the floor where the coffee machine was located.

After getting their coffees, they found a discrete corridor with seats where they sat down.

Yuhi did not sit down, though, and he put his cup on the table and leaned against the glass. A gentle hand caresses his face. "Those eyebags don't suit you."

"I could say the same for you."

"Yuhi."

"Ha, I know. Hino already told me to invest in some sleeping pills."

"I will give you mine." Sumire brushed their forehead against each other. "So get some sleep properly tonight."

"You won't be with me?"

Silence loomed on them for a few minutes before he felt the brunette reach her hand over to touch his forehead. " As I thought, you were sweating."

"Sumire."

Sumire took a lilac-colored handkerchief from her pocket. She extended it towards him and wiped his sweat.

"Even though you were the one lecturing me about taking care of myself. Aren't you the one that's exhausted right now? That's no good; you should get some proper rest."

"I'm sorry "

The brunette shook her head. " It's alright. Yuhi, you must have been in pain this entire time. I'm sorry I couldn't be with you."

"Ha. What are you talking about? I'm the one who left you." he trails off, "But, right now, I want to hold you in my arms. Can I?"

"Yes."

Yuhi pulled the girl into his arms and immediately caught her sweet scent. Why does this feel so good? Just holding her in his arms like this, he feels content. It feels like all his problems will wash away.

In the past, getting drunk, getting wasted, and sleeping with random girls helped him. He slept with anything that took their clothes off in front of him. Those bad rumors did not come from anywhere. There was a time when he was exactly like the guy in the rumors, messed up, unsociable, and horrible.

He calmed down slightly after he met Hino. There was still a lot of trial and error, but gradually he got his life together. During that time he decided he wanted to see Sumire, so he went to Star Town. When he arrived there, he only intended to have a look. But Mamoru would not allow that neither would Aki, those two made sure he saw Sumire.

He was still a mess then. But going to Star Town helped him gradually heal. When he learned that Ibuki Sumire would never be his, he ended up resorting to his other coping methods again.

It's not like he expected her to like him back. But Yuhi did not think she would reject him like that.

His gaze fell on the girl who was hugging him tightly. Now though? Now she is here with him. Is he clean and healed now? Yuhi knew he wasn't. There were still many days when he resented to live for a living when so many people died because of him.

But that was a story for another time. It is difficult to drown in his thoughts and sorrows when the girlfriend is touching him. Sumire was casual about it, the way she ran her hands on his shirt and the buckle of his belt. "Needy?" Yuhi mumbled when she looked up.

"Needy." She repeated.

He likes that she does not beat around the bush. Yuhi lowered his face and gave her a light kiss. "At home." He mumbles.

"Should we go then?"

Yuhi chuckled. "I don't think Jae and Atushi will appreciate that."

She pulls a face, a face that clearly says that she did not care. "You know, sometimes I think of looking for my brother. I heard I had one; they had him right after they left me." Yuhi mumbled. "But then the mere thought of it exhausted me."

It is exhausting.

Before he got his life together, everything was empty. He didn't know how it happened or when it was. But at some point, the things in his life that meant something no longer did. At some point, it felt like his voice had turned to lead, he was singing, but at the same time, he wasn't.

Sumire nodded. "It's exhausting having to explain. Why do we have to explain ourselves? Explaining makes it look like we did something wrong."

"Sumire.."

"I get it, Yuhi." She mumbled softly. "After being betrayed so many times. Adding another person into your life is exhausting. You don't want to deal with the same pattern happening all over again."

"Even if I do have other relatives. I would rather people think I was dead."

He was a dead man a long time ago in their eyes, so there is no use telling them he was alive.

There were many days in the past where he wished he would not wake up. He wished he no longer had to deal with the pain of being alive.

"Do you think I am lovable?" Sumire suddenly mumbled.

"Why are you asking?"

Why would she ask that when she knows he loves her so much?

"Sometimes, I feel we are only together because we are the same. Are we just seeking comfort and ignoring the world around us?"

His eyes widened when he heard her words. It's not like he never thought that before, because he did. This was the reason why he started to date other girls despite liking her for so long. There was a time Yuhi thought it was all fake, the feelings he had for Ibuki Sumire.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 215

Chapter 215: The only way I can cope

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

That was why he declared that to Touko before about proposing after reaching number one. It felt like such a long time ago now. After meeting her again, Yuhi confirmed that his feelings for Sumire were real.

He squeezed her hands. "Don't think that way. I love you so much."

Her gaze softened, and she nods. "I know, sorry." She trails off and laughs. "Even though I am like this, a complete mess and paranoid all the time. Yuhi, you never once judged me, nor did you leave no matter how tiring it got. You remained by my side. If you didn't do that, I would no longer be here."

Yuhi immediately understood what she meant by those words. It seems like Sumire attempted it before, ways to end her life, ways to escape this pain.

"You saved me."

He saved her? It's ironic that is what he wants to say to her. He still has moments like this where he feels weak and messed up, but it isn't like before. It isn't like before where everything seemed empty.

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When they returned, the other two were no longer there. Yuhi picks up the note on the table and sighs. "Have fun."

Sumire laughs. "Well, maybe we can have some fun here."

He raised his eyebrow at her suggestion but shook his head. "At home." When they get back, they can do all sorts of things. "Let's start reading. I will read the ones on the high shelves. You can take the middle."

He doesn't want her using a ladder or crouching down.

Sumire nods and immediately walked to the shelves. For the next few minutes, nobody could hear any other sound than the flickering of books—the slight movement whenever they picked a book out of the shelf.

"Yuhi-san, if you get tired of me. Please let me know."

"That's my line." He mumbled. "Im not exactly the best guy, and you will probably see more scenes like what you did earlier."

"If I ask you to stop, will you?"

"I want to. But its the only way I can cope."

Its the only way he can cope with how messed up he is.

Sumire nods. "I see," She trails off and sighs. "You know I have a cynical view of the world and don't trust people, correct?"

"Yeah."

"I've always thought that I want that to change. Its already too late for me but I wanted somebody to prove that I am wrong. I wanted them to show me that there is still something in this world for me; there are still people who will believe. Most people start off nice. I met so many who insist they want to help me, who want to befriend me. But after so long, it happens all over again, the same pattern as before. Just when I think I am getting close to another person, one incident leads to the end of that friendship. It just takes one mistake for everything to go wrong for things to disappear."

Yuhi was glad that he had his back turned from her. He does not want to see that sorrowful look on her face right now.

But she saved him. Even though Sumire is going through a lot more than him, she saved him. She saves him over and over again.

"Sometimes, I wish that those nightmares consume me for good, so I no longer have to wake up and go back. I no longer have to cause the people I care for pain and suffering. It is difficult dealing with somebody who has such a twisted view of life; most people don't understand it. They say they will try, but then they leave when it gets too tiring or troublesome." Sumire picks up a book from the shelf.

Yuhi immediately recognized the cover. Dazais no longer human.

"Many famous authors of the past ended their lives. Did their literature consume them? Did their art become too heavy for them to bear? It isn't like that. Those people loved to write; for them, it was the only way they could communicate. It was the only way they could be free."

He wanted to stop her and say something, but then he hears her faint footsteps. She walks towards the large windows. "When Aika lectured Sano not too long, she said that shit would get old eventually. That is what most people think whenever I end up paranoid. These people have their own lives and will focus on it. I understand that very well, their comments and harsh words are only a passing thing. But for people like us who no longer have faith in the world, who has given everything up, those words sting."

Yuhi walked over to her and intended to hug her, but she moved away. Sumire turns to him, and he sees it, something even worse in her eyes. Something darker than what he saw in his.

"It is easy for them to tell us to stop and just get over it. Let's be practical and move on with our lives. Hah," She laughs. "They can say that so easily and act all rational because they don't live in pain and fear every single day. They don't get sad and depressed randomly out of nowhere. For those people, it is that easy."

It is that easy, huh? Yuhi understood those feelings very well. Everything Sumire is saying he understood it. After all, he was like her, and yet what is this? Her sorrows and pain, it is a lot deeper than his. Yuhi thought he understood that already, he thought he was the only one who understood her. But looking into her eyes now, he is starting to see that is not the case here.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 216

Chapter 216: Constantly thinking of her If audio player doesn't work, press Stop then Play button again

There is more to the woman called Ibuki Sumire than meets the eye. He knew from the moment they met that she differed from all the others.

When he first kissed Ibuki Sumire, it was hungry, wanting, and desperate. Yuhi initially wanted to give her a sweet and romantic kiss. But he did not want to scare her away. He did not want her to know how much he loved her and did not want her to confirm his feelings before he understood.

Nowadays whenever he kisses her, it was the sort of kiss he would give to somebody he loves. To the girl, he wants to spend the rest of his life with.

.....

It was difficult for him to focus when all he could think of was Ibuki Sumire. She is constantly in his mind anyway, but today she was taking over him completely. She was not allowing him any space to think of anything else.

After they left the library, they returned to his place, cooked dinner, watched movies, and then fell asleep in each other's arms. Something was comforting about it; they didn't kiss or touch as they did in the car. They simply held each other, and that was enough for him.

It was enough that she was in his arms.

Today he was in the studio recording his new album. But he kept making mistakes over and over. Hino looked like he wanted to snap, but he has yet to do so.

Yuhi was waiting for him to get angry. If Hino got mad at him, then maybe it would snap him out of this strange mood or daze. He did not know.

A text from the lovely lady occupying his thoughts caught his attention.

From: Sumire

I think you need a break.

From: Yuhi

A break?

From: Sumire

Yes, lunch with me. But at my workplace cafeteria, the food here is excellent.

Yuhi laughs when he saw her reply. The coffee in the place Sumire is working at now is terrible, and the food is bland. He looks over at Hino, who was taking his anger out onto somebody else.

From: Yuhi

Hino won't disturb us; he is occupied.

He knew that even if he went to lunch, Hino would not bother him.

From: Sumire

I will be there in fifteen minutes.

This is one of the things he likes about her. She does not try to please him by pretending to be sweet on text messages; she does not hide her mood. If she is angry, she is angry. If something upsets her - she will make sure to tell him.

What bothered her now? She is working with Sano today. Yuhi looks over at the building across the road from the window. Whenever she works with Sano, he makes sure he is working somewhere nearby.

That man is on his best behavior lately, but he does not trust Sano at all. He knew if Sano wanted to take Sumire away by force, he could easily do so. Normally he would ask Shin to stay with her, but with Atsuro's return, that guy will be busy.

From: Yuhi Are you wearing something pretty? From: Sumire From: Yuhi

So what's the occasion?

From: Sumire

Lunch date with a man called Terashima Yuhi.

His lips curve to a smile. Sumire always knows how to make him feel better. The gloomy atmosphere around him from a few minutes ago seems to have vanished.

"Yuhi, take a break."

"Huh? Now?"

"You have a visitor."

At that comment, he turned and looked over at the doorway. It was Shin with some documents in his hands. Yuhi puts the sheet music in his hands down onto the table. He strolled over to the door and closed it.

"For Sumire?"

"You can read it too but yes for her. I can't exactly meet with her with Atsuro around."

Yuhi raises his eyebrows at this. "You don't have to act so cautiously. Your friends with Sumire, just because Atsuro is here, doesn't mean you have to stop speaking to her."

"I understand, but you should know how he is." Shin sighs. "When it comes to her, he is.."

Yuhi stops him from finishing his sentence. "I know. But Sumire is going through a harsh time right now. Atsuro making a fuss over his feelings toward her and the unresolved things from back then will not help."

"Back then, huh? Yuhi, do you...know what happened with those two?" Shin trails of. "I mean, do you know about that?"

"That?"

Shin looks away. "I don't think I should be the one telling you this."

"At least give a hint."

At that comment, Shin looked around and took his phone out. He hears a beep sound, and Yuhi glances down.

He frowned when he saw the message. "Is that for real?"

"Take it as you will. But there is no doubt that something like that must have happened; I caught them that way several times."

It can't be; he could tell when he touched her. He could tell that she was still new to all of this. Yuhi sighs. It isn't an easy subject he could mention to her. There is no doubt that it was something traumatizing.

From: Sumire

Five minutes.

Geez, she is too eager.

"Sumire?"

Yuhi nodded. "Let's discuss this another time."

•••••

When he arrived at the cafeteria, he could tell Sumire was pissed off from the way she folded her arms across her chest. From the creases between her eyes.

She wore a white off-shoulder dress that made her look more sophisticated and mature than usual. High boots, black tights. Surrounded by the plain cafeteria walls, she looked like even more of a goddess.

Other people, mainly guys, kept looking over and whistling. Indeed she was gorgeous, but she looked angry, but there was sadness in her eyes.

"Hi." Yuhi took her hand. "Are you my lunch date?" He starts off playful, hoping he could male her smile.

She turned to him with a tearful look, but it was only for a split second. Her ice queen face appeared right as he was about to say another word.

"Im your wife," Sumire answered.

Ah, so she is his wife now? He would smile like an idiot if she didn't look so sad and miserable. Yuhi wrapped his arms around her shoulders. "Come with me somewhere for a bit."

She nods and follows him out of the cafeteria.

Yuhi found a quiet spot in the hallways and pulls her into his arms. "What's wrong?"

"Sano."

"Sano?" Yuhi repeated. He never saw her look like this before.

So distraught and so miserable. What did that man do?

Sumire then explains how the meeting today ended up. "All his exes were there, at least the ones he cheated on me with today. I ignored it and did my part in the meeting. But it felt like they were deliberately edging me on so I could get angry."

"Did you?"

"I did. It was stupid of me to get mad, but now Sano probably thinks I care or something aaahh. I regret it so much."

At that comment, he sighs deeply. "Well I did tell you it was a bad idea to work on anything with him. If you want to invest in a business," He plays with her hands. "You could invest in mine."

"Yuhis business?"

"Mmm." His lips curve to a smile when he felt her hands on the button of his clothes. "Have a look later?"

Sumire nods, then she wraps her arms around his neck. "Did you forget something?"

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 217

Chapter 217: Make me forge If audio player doesn't work, press Stop then Play button again

Yuhi bent down and kissed her lips. "What did I forget?"

"Me, you left me behind."

He lowered his lips again and kept kissing her. Her lips are very addicting. But Yuhi knew better than to get passionate with her right now. She seems so very sad right now. He understood what happened from what she said just now. But it bothered him that Sumire reacted that way. Sano did that deliberately just to see her reaction, it seemed like it worked.

Yuhi felt her undo the button slowly and he grabbed her hand. "At home."

"I just want to look."

"You know I don't mind that, but right now you're angry."

Sumire looks away. "I behaved so stupidly, and I feel so humiliated right now."

Yuhi moved his hand away from hers and brushed his fingers on the knob of her anklebone. "It was stupid. But your human Sumire, you have every right to feel those emotions. People will say a lot things and judge you. There will be those who won't listen no matter how many times you explain."

"I know the world is a shitty place."

"But there will be those who will listen, those who will stand by your side no matter what happens."

She is quiet for a moment before asking.

"Like you?"

"Like me, but I am one of a kind Princess."

"Yuhi, I would really like it if we just stop talking. If you kissed me non stop. I want it to go away, all this pain."

"Yeah."

The reason why Sumire is having a hard time is because she understood it. She cant get herself wasted, go to parties, and behave unreasonably. She is smarter than that; she understood how pointless those coping methods are.

The only way for her to deal with the pain is to rely on somebody. It is a good thing he is here for her; otherwise she would use unspeakable coping methods. Methods such as self-harm, Sumire hides it well, but he saw those scars.

How much pain and grief did she suffer - he hears the sound of his belt being unbuckled. "Sumire?"

"I need to forget, please, Yuhi."

He bit his lip. This was not the way he wanted to do this with her. But how could he push her away when she is in so much pain? He squeezed her hands. "Let's go somewhere."

•••

He doesn't bother with a shower or anything else. Sumire was the one leading him to the bed the moment they got inside. He pushes her down, and her head hits the pillow. Yuhi brought his lips to the strap of her dress removes it.

Sumire wrapped her arms around his neck and started crying. Yuhi kisses her temple softly. "Ssh."

"Yuhi."

"I know." He knew, of course, he did. She was in so much pain right now and did not know what to do. She no longer understood what to do with herself.

His hand crept up her back as he undid the last strap. Sumire immediately covers her face, and Yuhi kisses her fingertips softly. "Ssh."

"I'm sorry I am such a mess."

He spends the next few minutes kissing and touching her all over.

"Yuhi,, I think I am nervous."

He raises his eyebrows and chuckles. "Well we could stop if you want?" It was killing him to stop, but he does not want her to feel pressured.

Sumire slowly nodded, and he pulls away. Yuhi could not help but sigh. He did think it was too, good to be true, but still, maybe he should have just gone through with it. He wrapped the blanket around her.

"Sorry, your mad right?"

"Well, not mad, just frustrated."

"If you want to—"

He shook his head. "I have been debating with rational me since before we even got here. Debating whether it is is okay for me to do this. I know your upset, and you need somebody. That is what I am here for. I would rather you pick me then end up somebody else prey. But, I don't want you to think I am taking advantage of this situation."

Sumire laughs softly. "Well, I did think that."

"That's why--"

She shook her head. "Sorry, Yuhi. I'm still not calm, could you come here?"

Yuhi reluctantly laid down beside her. He was reluctant because he could not help but think about what almost happened a few minutes ago. He understood that she meant well, but it frustrated him.

He pulled her arms around her and buried his lips on her neck. "Do you still like Sano?"

Sumire responded by kissing his forehead. "I like Yuhi."

"Yeah, sorry for asking." But her reaction to Sano and those other women bother him a lot.

Back when Sano first came here, he said something about Sumire one day returning to him. At that time, Yuhi questioned the man for being so confident.

Now he understood why he behaved that way. Indeed if this continues, one day, Sumire would end up falling to Sano's trap again. He needs to make sure that doesn't happen. Yuhi cups her face, and she laughs softly. "This feels silly."

"You think?"

Sumire nodded. "Yes, I do, but it isn't bad being like this with you."

He kisses her lips softly. "Princess, the world called to ask for you back."

She rolled her eyes and giggled. "Im right here."

Yuhi squeezed her hands under the sheets. "Coming to a place like this, though, usually it involves preparation. I didn't check if the paparazzi were following us."

"Well, we are in a relationship."

"Yeah, but your underage." It always bothered Yuhi that she was underage. Look how beautiful she looks, how is it possible that she is underage?

He plays with her hair. "You know this worked out well for me."

"It did?"

"Now I have an excuse not to return to the recording."

Sumire sighs. "I feel bad for Hino."

"Don't be, he understands."

Hino understood Sumire's situation, but at the same time, the man was frustrated. Hino knew he has to be there for Sumire, but at the same time, he wanted to pull him away from her. If it were any old girl, then Hino would not have made an exception. He would give her the same speech about girls being the enemy and all.

His thoughts broke off when he felt a pair of gentle and warm lips pressed against his. Yuhi wraps his arms around her waist and allows Sumire to continue kissing him.

Sumire is a good kisser. At first, he thought she was somewhat sloppy, but it did not take him long to realize she was merely shy.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 218

Chapter 218: I am here for you

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

She kisses very well and knows that kissing does not just involve their tongues mashing against each other. It consists of a bit of touching. He lifts her shirt and touches her. There was something different about the way she was kissing him now. He seemed hungry and almost desperate.

When she eventually pulled away, he simply stared at her. Sumire was blushing madly and seemed almost nervous.

Yuhi found that cute considering how she was feverishly kissing him just moments ago. "Was that my surprise?"

Sumire kept her head low.

"Re-match?"

"I am going to sleep." Sumire turned away from him.

Is she sulking? Yuhi brought his face to her neck and placed some gentle kisses there. "So, hey, about Sano."

"Yes?"

"I thought you should just reject him straight up. The only reason he behaves that way is--"

Sumire turned around and brushed her fingers across his lips. "Don't."

".."

"I know what you are trying to say, Yuhi. But for now, let's leave this matter alone. There are so many things going on right now."

"Sorry." He apologizes and kisses her forehead. "My bad, I was jealous. It was stupid."

"Thank you so much." She mumbled softly. "You know if it weren't for you, I would have done something reckless by now. You already saw what I tried to do on the first day I came here. Going to a place like that. Before you came, I almost started a fight."

He raises his eyebrows. "A fight?"

Sumire laughs. "Yes, I saw a group of girls from my home town who did not like me. I almost walked up to them to cause problems. I am glad I didn't do that now; it would have caused a lot of problems."

"I wouldn't mind saving you from a brawl."

"It depends, would you save the enemy? They are the ones who will need saving."

Yuhi sweat fell. "Well, that's true."

"It is nice being here with you and everybody else. It makes me feel like a normal girl."

"You are a normal girl."

She shook her head. "We both know that isn't true. Even if I wasn't a mess, I don't think I can be normal with this cynical view on life. You see, I can't trust people. Just like how they gave up on me, I gave up on them too. No matter how close I am with someone, I cannot help but think there is something wrong. When something bad happens, I will naturally assume that they no longer like or want to be with me. I naturally assume that there is nobody who will stick by my side."

Yuhi bit his lip when he heared her say those words. "Sumire, you know I won't--" He stops himself from saying that he would never leave her. No matter what she does, he will always stick by her side.

But those words will mean nothing to her now. Yuhi could tell even without looking at her eyes, and they were empty. He holds her tightly, and Sumire laughs. "What's wrong?"

"I love you."

It wasn't surprising, but right at that moment, he did not know what to do.

Sumire needs all the love and affection she can get for now after feeling so neglected and alone. Yuhi knew he didn't have to kiss or do anything to her to make her feel happy. Right now, these words are enough for her.

He lowered his face and licked her tears away. "Salty."

"Stupid."

"I could say the same right back at you. Ssh Sumire, I am here for you."

"I know, and I know I am behaving stupid and strange. But Yuhi, you don't say anything about it..."

He chuckled softly. "Do you want me to say something?"

Sumire nods. "Sometimes, I do. Sometimes I wish you didn't understand all the time. You know I---I like you so much, Yuhi. But sometimes I think this is all a dream. How is it possible for me to be so happy right now--" He cuts her off by slipping a piece of chocolate in her mouth.

"Hotel freebie." He trailed off. "Tasty?"

"Mmm, tasty."

"So, do you want to stay here, or should we go back home?"

Sumire buries her face in his arms. "Stay, there's a bed here and a shower."

Yuhi kisses her lips. "You prefer the bed?"

"Uh-huh," She trails of. "Yuhi, take this off." She points to his shirt, which he slipped back on earlier. "It's too hot here."

Yuhi rolls his eyes. "Needy?"

"Needy." She repeated. He felt her eyes dart towards his chest. "I would like to get a better look."

"Alright." Yuhi slowly removed his shirt and noticed Sumire looking him up and down. Hungry and passionate, looking eyes, and yet her face was redder than he ever saw before.

She hesitantly extended her hand out and ran her fingers on his chest. Each movement of her fingers slowly drove him crazy.

"Sumire, what do you want to do?"

"Just touch."

Yuhi frowns when he hears her words. If she is going to be bold, she ought to see it through to the very end. Then again, this isn't a bad thing either. After a few minutes, Sumire removed her hands, and then she looks down at the ground. "Will you hug me?"

"Yeah." He picked up the shirt, but she immediately stopped him. "Like this?"

"Yes."

It seems he will have to rethink whether she is innocent or not.

.....

When he woke up and did not find her beside him anymore, Yuhi immediately understood. He ran his hands through his hair and walked over to the bathroom. Shower, food, and then he will find Sumire.

He stepped into the bathroom and slid open the shower door only to find a figure hunched up by the toilet seat. He looked over and saw a murky liquid and frowned. Did she feel sick when she was on her way out?

Sumire dressed to go out.

Yuhi scooped the girl up in his arms, only to notice a trace of blood against her lips. His eyes widened, horrified, and he felt his palms turn sweaty. He looked over at the ground and noticed it at last—a trail of blood.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 219

Chapter 219: What do I do with these feelings? If audio player doesn't work, press Stop then Play button again

As a doctor, Sano thought he already dealt with everything. He thought he adjusted to seeing people's distraught faces. But nothing beats the look on Terashima Yuhi's face right now. He thought he already saw everything, but this was something else.

"She will be fine after an examination."

".."

"Terashima, look, she isn't dead." Sano had to say it. He knew it wasn't the right time. He almost thought she was dead too when he saw all that blood.

He was about to leave when a man with bright red hair rushed past. "Sumire?"

"Examination."

The redhead clicked his tongue annoyed. "Why bring her to a hospital? You know I'm back.. I know your jealous and all that. But think about her life first."

"What about the child?" Yuhi suddenly questioned.

Sano sighs. "The child is healthier than she is." He glances over at the redhead, man. Why does this person seem familiar? It feels like he has met-- red hair?

"Atsuro, you go and take a look."

"Of course, I will."

Kusaji Atsuro? Recognition filled his eyes, and Sano sighs. It seems like these guys appear before Sumire one after another. He ought to hurry up before that man shows up.

"I will lead you to her."

Sano didn't want any of them near Sumire. But not only did he feel bad for Terashima, but he knew Kusaji Atsuro's reputation. He is a genius doctor. If it's him, then he should know what happened to her.

The examination is already finished when he brings them to her room. Sumire is sitting up while the nurse took her temperature. "You still have a high fever. Unfortunately, I don't know what the cause for the blood was."

"Do I have to stay?"

"Overnight for safety, we will run a few more tests later on."

"Okay."

"Is there anybody you would like to call?"

"Yuhi." Sumire trails off and laughs softly. "Um, my boyfriend. Is there a phone I could use?"

"I believe he is the young gentleman who carried you here. I believe he is still around--" The nurse did not get a chance to say anything since Yuhi rushed past.

"Sumire."

The girl laughs softly. "Oh, your still here. Uh, sorry. I probably caused you problems."

Sano looks over at Kusaji Atsuro, who remained silent the whole time. He wonders what this man is thinking watching this scene. He dismisses the nurse and walks over.

"How are you feeling?"

Sumire's gaze turned hostile. "This is your fault."

"Wait, did you eat.."

"I was hungry."

Sano clicked his tongue, annoyed. Even though he warned her not to eat anything? Then again, she is pregnant, so she must get food cravings. How silly of him not to prepare something for her beforehand.

"Thankfully, my little one is okay."

He looks towards Kusaji Atsuro. "Go ahead."

The silent redhead strolled over, and then he hears a slapping sound. A red mark appeared on Sumire's face. Despite Terashima's protection, Kusaji Atsuro managed to hit her.

The girl sighs. "This is what I don't like about you. Do you think violence will solve anything?"

Atsuro did not say a word.

"Since you're here, make yourself useful." She extended her arm out.

Sano watched as Kusaji sat on the stool and pulled some bottles and a syringe out of his bag.

So, this is how she is now. Since she made that business proposal, Sano silently observes her see what she will do. He observes her so he could learn more about the present her. The Ibuki Sumire now is a lot more interesting than the one in the past.

Sano wondered what had changed. Or could it be she was like this before? Whenever he looks back at the past, at the memories they shared, he can't remember anymore.

"If you want to continue that business deal, get rid of those girls."

He only brought them along to please the executives, but now he understood that it was a mistake.

Sano intended to test her but he decided against it. So when she reacted that way it surprised him.

"Very well, then I also have some conditions. When we are at my workplace, listen to me."

He warned her about the food, he did tell her if she wanted anything tell him.

Sumire slowly nodded.

"Second, you have to let me answer Yuhis calls."

At that comment Terashima looks over. "Is that why you could only text me?"

He had a good reason for that.

Sano wondered what had changed. Or could it be she was like this before? Whenever he looks back at the past, he can't remember at the memories they shared anymore.

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At that comment, Terashima looks over. "Is that why you could only text me?"

He had a good reason for that. But it seems like she won't listen to him right now.

"Third, and this should be the first thing. Our personal affairs have nothing to do with the business. So if you do try something funny again--" She trails off, and suddenly, a burst of coughs escaped her lips.

Yuhi pats her back; worry flashed through his eyes. Right at that moment, Atsuro injected something into the girl's arm.

"Warn me!" Sumire exclaimed.

"Then don't cough like that out of nowhere."

Sano sighs as he watches the two. Sometimes he can't tell if Sumire has grown-up or not. Sometimes she has her moments where she behaves like a child, and yet his gaze fell towards her body. Even in the hospital nightgown for patients, she looks gorgeous.

He felt a piercing gaze and realized Terashima was glaring at him.

This one is a problem. Sano thought he could get to Sumire. He thought it would be easy to have her under his control again. But it turns out that isn't the case here. She loves Terashima Yuhi, and it left a bitter taste in his mouth.

He would not openly show his jealousy, but there was no doubt he was jealous whenever he saw them together.

If, by chance, he does not get her back, what does he do with these feelings?

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 220

Chapter 220: I want you

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

Yuhi knew Sumire was annoyed when she slammed the bathroom door shut and said she would shower alone.

It took him all his strength not to go in there after her.

For the past few hours since Sano and Atsuro left, Yuhi couldn't help but cling to her. He would not let her go even for a moment. When she finally slipped away, she said something along the lines of personal space.

He gets it, and he was annoying.

Yuhi traced the girl's sketchpad, thinking. Sumire draws and paints very well. He wants to take her to France and study there. But she has a career here. A job that barely took off before that accident happened.

His thoughts broke off when Sumire re-emerged from the bathroom. Her hair wet and towel in hand. "So, do I have the honors of drying your hair?"

Sumire sighed and walked over to him. She looked bothered by something from the creases on her eyebrows.

He took the towel and sat her down on the bed. "You know, you should just tell me when I get too clingy."

"Well, about getting clingy, normally I won't mind. But I've been feeling sick and terrible since earlier."

"You did cough out blood. Are you sure that was normal food poisoning?"

Sumire nodded. "It seems so, and they did another test."

So it came out as blood because she was pregnant? He does not get the science to all of this. Then again, science was never his thing. Yuhi felt her gaze on him, and he chuckles. "Need something?"

"Still needy. I think my hormones are going crazy lately. How is it possible to want you all the time, but when it comes to doing it, I stop you."

That is his question. "You want me?"

"All the time. Like there is something in my head just telling me to pounce on you."

This is the first time he is hearing what is going on in that pretty head of hers. But then again, he never asks her about her feelings for him. Yuhi plays with the idea that she is madly in love with him like he is with her.

Her amethyst colored eyes meet his, and he felt his heartbeat increase. Sumire extended her hand out and caressed his cheeks. "When Im eighteen, I can do whatever I want with these strange feelings. I can't wait any longer; waiting is killing me."

So dramatic, and yet he felt the same way about her. He wants to learn more things about her from now on.

"There are other ways."

Sumire tilts her head innocently. "Other ways?"

"Other ways, I could show you if you would like."

Yuhi knew he was talking crazy. What things will he show her? Is he out of his mind? But he couldn't miss how her lips curve to a shy sort of smile as she covers her mouth.

"I guess I have to rely on you there Yuhi-san, I don't know what other things you have in mind. But I will need your guidance; that's for sure."

"Mm, maybe I am."

This girl is impossible. Yuhi sighs deeply. "I think you understand by now, Sumire, but I am very serious about you."

"Dating with the purpose of marriage in mind, right?"

"Yes."

Sumire nods. "You see, Yuhi, I don't mind that at all. But I just have a few things I need to settle first."

A few things, huh? "Why did you send Atsuro away, surely you wanted to speak to him?

Yuhi recalls what Shin told him and clenched his fist. Is the main reason why Sumire is avoiding Atsuro not because of Mamoru's situation but

"Look at that face. I guess somebody told you already."

".."

"It was nothing." She sighs deeply. "Well, I suppose it was something. There was a time where I could no longer take it when I was at the very bottom of hell. I just wanted the pain to go away. I missed Ru so much."

So it was something that happened recently? "Did you two..."

"At the start, it was only a bit of fooling around. Honestly, I couldn't tell at first. My emotions and everything around me seemed dead. But after a while, I realized what he wanted from me, and I just went along with it because it was too painful."

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".."
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"Does it bother you that I slept with him?"

Yuhi shook his head. "No, I just--"

It was hard to picture. He knew Atsuro liked Sumire, other guys like her too. But he never saw them as a threat. Why would he recognize them as a threat? Sumire made it clear that she had a cynical view towards love. She made it clear unless it was Mamoru; she did not intend to get close to anybody.

Atsuro has stronger feelings than he thought. Or does he only want her for that?

"I can't criticize you. I told you the story regarding my last girlfriend, didn't I?"

"Mmm."

"It was something like that too."

Still to think Sumire was in a sexual relationship with Kusaji Atsuro. No wonder she behaves that way towards him. He felt her defensiveness towards him was strange, but he did not say anything about it.

Sumire leaned forward. "But I have never felt this way towards Atsuro before, not even with Ru."

"Sumire.."

"Do you trust me, Yuhi?" She mumbled softly.

Of course, he trusts her. No matter what she does, he will believe her.

"I do, so don't hurt yourself like that again," Yuhi whispered as he took her hand in his. "Was it worth it? Sleeping with somebody you have no feelings for?"

"It wasn't worth it at all. I understood that. When I wanted to stop it, he stopped, but it was awkward. I didn't know how to face him after everything." Sumire trails off. "We stopped, but he kept getting close and overstepping some boundaries. It was a hassle. I was worried people would notice."

That man probably thought that nobody else other than him saw Sumire like this. He probably didn't see Mamoru as competition, since it only happened once. As a guy, Yuhi could understand what he thought.