

Melody 611

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 611

Chapter 611: Remain the same

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Chapter 611 Remain the same 'I have already casually reclaimed my old belongings that he still had.' But it seems like he still has some of her stuff back in his home in star town. It seems next time she pays a visit home, she will have to grab the remaining stuff.

"You say that, but," Hino paused and sighed. "Well, forget it, as long as nothing uncalled for happens. What kind of grammar books are you looking for? Do you need help?"

"I'm alright, but does this shop do tuning? Since the last concur, I haven't touched my violin, so I am worried about its state."

"Yeah, we do, just bring it over next time, and I'll take care of it."

"Ah, is the master gone for a while?"

"Yeah, for at least two weeks. It is a good thing since I ensured your flexible schedule."

So he didn't make those empty gaps because of her request? Her sweatdropped. He is truly a demon manager.

"Then I'll drop by after school tomorrow."

"I am interested in your playing now that you mentioned it-" Hino trailed off. "You're not the picky type, right? There are a few spare violins you can use."

"My performance fee is quite high."

"It's rare for you to be so confident. Are you that good?"

Sumire laughed. "Ah, if this is a music shop, there is probably a copy. I heard the school sent out copies of the first concur to small shops."

"A copy-" Hino paused and rummaged through the shelves. After a few minutes, he pulled out a familiar CD case with the Tsukuhara high school logo.

"Oh, this brings back memories. I designed that cover."

"She designed it, she said." Hino sighed. "I wonder what other hidden ability you have?"

"That is for you to find out, Mr manager."

"Performance nine Freshman Class Ibuki Sumire and her accompanist 2S Hikari Mizue. Performing a Schubert composition Ave Maria."

Ah, this- Sumire turned her attention back to the TV screen and saw an image of her from around a year ago step onto the stage.

"The theme here was love." Hino paused. "I am just curious; when you sing, it's obvious you sing for Yuhi. is it the same?"

But she was still dating Ru during this time, so isn't the answer obvious? The final selection happened shortly before the accident happened. It was a week before the accident. To think something like that would happen after experiencing something happy.

'You said you would reward me for winning! Then drive me to the concert.'

Sumire clenched her fist as she recalled her words from back then. That's right; it was because Ru promised her a prize for winning the final selection. If she didn't mention it, he would have prepared something for her regardless. Why was she so impatient?

Her thoughts broke off when Hino brushed his hands across her forehead. "Your starting to sweat a lot. Are you sure your okay?"

"I-I'm fine."

That startled her; he suddenly got so close.

Sumire turned her attention back to the screen where her performance was playing. It was a year or so ago, and yet it feels like it has been much longer.

Now that she thought about it, Yuhi visited her before the selection.

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December 2013

"This kind of note. What were you thinking, Yuhi?" Sumire addressed the man in front of her.

Yuhi stood in the rock path that was in the middle of the lake. At the same time, she sat in the grass area. "Perhaps I just wanted to give a letter to a cute girl. Nothing wrong with that?"

"Again, with your lame jokes." Sumire sighed, yet a smile was on her face. "But it's been a while, so I won't thrash you for such an off-handed comment."

Yuhi turned around then and extended his hand out. "Come over, Sumire."

Sumire nodded and took his hand. Soon, she sat down back to back with him on the large stone rock. "I'm surprised we can both fit on here."

"Yeah. Especially considering how fat you are."

She pinches his arm, causing him to let out a small yelp. "Ite. I was kidding."

Sumire stuck her tongue out. "Bleh, that's what you get."

"What are you, a kid?"

Sumire laughs. "That would be nice. But unfortunately, I'm a full fledged adult now."

"That's questionable. Though you've changed a lot, I can still see things that remain the same. The two of us are different now but still the same people as before." Yuhi spoke.

Her eyes widened; that's right. It's exactly like him to notice it. Since it's him, it's normal for him to notice. It probably isn't just those two who can notice things like that now. Surely even those people, surely even those around her, have begun to pay more attention to those matters.

"So what you're saying is we basically remain a kid for the rest of our life."

"Exactly that. We may grow up, change appearance-wise. Our hairstyles, body build, and everything changes. We're taller and become more wise due to the knowledge we've increasingly learned in schools. Yet that knowledge is something that can be used as a double-edged sword. Those who want to use it for good usually end up having the opposite effect for those who want to use it for bad end up using it for good. In that sense, 'Knowledge' can help change people for the better or worse. But even if they do change, there will always be some traits that remain the same."

The more she listened, the more she thought about when she found him reading intently. He always applied the knowledge he learned from books to reality and remained true to himself. He is truly a mysterious person.

"The essence of the soul is it?"

"Yeah. Switching it to the point of reincarnation. No matter how many times the soul goes through that cycle of rebirth. There will always be traits that remain the same " He trails off. "Well, it's not usually noticeable. But it's obvious with you."

Sumire laughs at that comment, "Right back at you." Her gaze softened. " You haven't changed as much as I thought you would. I'm relieved".

"I was under the impression that you'd arrest me or something if you saw me again."

"Well, I can't say I didn't plan on that. But I guess something changed."

That's right. Since Mamoru came back into her life again, everything changed. That person she treasures ever so deeply. A swelling pain appears in her chest, yet she shakes it off. It is okay; there is still time. Ru will be okay; he won't die from an illness.

"Your violin. Give it to me for a second."

Sumire blinks in confusion, yet he was already taking it out of her case before she could respond. "Wait a second."

Rather when did he even take it from her?

She watches as he pulls out one of the strings and replaces it with a new one. It wasn't just a normal string, a pale blue string. A gorgeous shade of blues mixing into one. How beautiful; this was her first time seeing such a pretty string.

Normally people buy white and gold strings. It is unusual to see different colored strings like this. 'What a mysterious color.'

Plus, her gaze landed on the way he was attaching the string; there's something familiar about this sight.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 612

Chapter 612: Blue string

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Chapter 612 Blue string Yuhi looked up, and their gaze briefly met. "I didn't think I would catch you staring."

Sumire felt heat creep onto her face. "I was just thinking that you really are too kind; even now, that hasn't changed."

Even now, there is an aura of kindness around this person. Moreover, she felt her heartbeat increase. The feelings she no longer wants to acknowledge are still there.

"You're the kind one, aren't you?"

T--that's, she looked down. "You know that isn't true."

It isn't true. Because never once has her actions made anyone happy. Even now, she still doesn't understand why they all stay by her side. Why do they all still remain kind to her? Even when she's like this.

"Hey," Yuhi said, breaking her thoughts. "Do you know the meaning of being weak? It's people who always say, "I can't." Those kinds of people don't necessarily mean they "can't," but they just don't."

Her eyes widened when she heard those words. Those words are familiar to her because it is something she had told him before.

Yuhi hands her the violin. "You're not like that at all, Sumire. But I'll admit that you probably are still fragile in more ways than one. Well, that can't be helped. Isn't it human nature to cry?"

It feels like she told him something like this a long time ago.

Far away, huh? Does that mean that even now, there's still distance? She wonders about it, wonders if maybe that's something she ought to change. Or maybe she ought to leave it alone.

She fingers the violin string that Yuhi just put on. He positions himself behind her again.

"This string really is pretty. Where did you get it?"

"That shall remain a secret until you get to Tokyo."

"Eh? What's with that. It sounds suspicious."

"Tokyo is a suspicious place. Especially in the yakuza business. It's not like here, and the people aren't exactly what you'd call nice at times. Though the higher members are nice, those below tend to be filled with greed and jealousy. It's quite a shady society."

As Sumire listens to his warning, she notices his hand moving slightly and yet hesitating somewhat. "So you're saying I won't be ready for it?"

"That'll depend on you, wouldn't it?"

"Eh, how cruel? You're not going to watch over me, Partner."

At that, she placed her hand on top of his; she could hear how surprised he was.

She shuts her eyes. "Yeah. I'd like it again if that would happen. Suppose we can be partners again. Back then, all I thought about was getting stronger. I had to get stronger; otherwise, my weak side would show. For such a long time, that's the only thing that was on my mind. Until I met you, it suddenly became fun and a lot more enjoyable. It was fun for me."

At that comment, he suddenly spun her around so she was now facing him; he leaned forward and brushed his lips against her neck as he whispered his next words ever so quietly. Before she could even respond, though, soon Yuhi was no longer in sight.

She placed her hand on her neck, where his lips were just a few seconds ago. Even now, she could still feel the remains of that cool breath tingling against her. What an idiot. But her gaze lands on the moonlight skies; it really does seem as though she will carry on being surrounded by them.

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Sumire snapped out of her daze when Hino asked. "Did you meet with Yuhi before your performance?"

"You didn't allow him to come to see me?"

"It's more like he had plans with his girlfriend then. I say plans, but I think he was planning on dumping her. He must have gone to you right after."

Sumire recalled his behavior, and her sweat fell. Yuhi-san subtly flirting with her right after a break-up? Then again, she flirted back, so it was her fault too. Back then, she felt troubled about many things, but her main concern, after all, was Ru's condition. She worried about it for so long, and the theme for the final selection bothered her.

As Ru's girlfriend that time, it should have been natural for her to perform for Ru. But when she first saw the theme, the first person's face that came to mind was Yuhi. During that time, he kept releasing songs about her, and as his fan, she listened to it.

The more she listened, the more her desire to see him grew. 'Even now, this person still likes me, then perhaps-' She entertained the thought of running to him. But those thoughts were short-lived when she recalled the sight of Ru on the hospital bed.

How could she possibly leave him alone? How could she abandon him after everything he did for her.

"Yuhi returned to Tokyo shortly after." Hino trailed off. "I was surprised he came alone. After all, he seemed determined to confess."

"He didn't confess, or perhaps-" Sumire thought back to the sensation of his lips that grazed her neck. "I wonder if that was a confession."

Hino sighed. "You two are such a strange couple. Why do I have to listen to this?"

"Does it upset you to listen to it? You told San that I am a cruel woman who openly shares their romantic moments in front of people I like, right?"

At those words, Hino flinched; he looked very troubled. "You know I only said that so he would back away."

"I think you should give up on that already. San is very stubborn. In his mind, he has already decided that he likes me, so he won't change his mind easily."

That's right, just like how he stubbornly insisted that to justify his cheating, just like he decided to break up with her in the cruelest way possible.

Hino slides an envelope onto the counter in front of her. "He told me to pass this onto you. This is the results of the investigation regarding your family's accident."

"Ah he works fast."

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 613

Chapter 613: Meaningless

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

Chapter 613 Meaningless "You said you weren't close with your family, right? So why-"

"Why do I want to investigate such an old case? I don't know. Maybe it's because the police's reaction to it was suspicious. A fire breaking out in large manors isn't unusual, but all the servants being killed alongside the family shows there is more to it. But the police simply reported it as a robbery case and moved on."

She was wandering around the forest for a while, so it was only after Aki took her in did she realize something was amiss.

"So you-"

"It has nothing to do with taking revenge for my family. Even if I do that, it's not like it will bridge the gap between us. What's the point of getting closer after death? It is meaningless. Besides, I do not think they will care for me to investigate the case. Both my mother and father would want me to continue moving on with my life rather than mourn their death."

"That sounds like they care, right?"

"Mm. The thing is, with my family, I am sure they did care for me. No, they certainly did. There were moments when I certainly felt their love for me. Whenever I got sick, they said harsh things, but they

never tossed me aside." Sumire laughed. "Though hearing such cruel words when your sick wasn't pleasant. I thought it was good that they hadn't abandoned me."

"You shouldn't be happy over something so small."

"Most parents think it is enough to give their daughters/son a roof, shelter to live under, and food. They believe that is enough to raise them. But what they don't realize is the vital thing they need to do as parents are to show love and affection to their children. My parents were certainly lacking in that department; they did not know how to communicate with their children."

It wasn't their fault; she was also bad at expressing her feelings. By the time she finally learned how or at least put in the effort to try, it was already too late.

Whenever they listened to her talk, they would have a dissatisfied look on their face and brush aside her words. Sumire already understood the reason for it.

'They are disappointed in me.' They stopped having expectations of her a long time ago. Whenever they go out or attend social gatherings, they only ever bring up her sister; they do not mention her at all.

"On the surface, we looked like a normal, harmonious family. Both my parents had good jobs and spent more time at home than hanging out with their friends. It looked like they both cared for their family a lot since they made sure to come home no matter how busy they became."

But whenever they were at home, they seldom spoke to her. Whenever she greeted her father or asked him how his day went, there was nothing but silence. At some point, she stopped bothering and asking because she felt like an idiot whenever she talked, and he did not reply. It is not like he could not hear her since she said it directly in front of his face.

"I see. I think I can relate a bit since the relationship between my father and me weren't the best. But I didn't have to suffer as much as you. I quickly became independent and left." Hino trailed off. "Did you not think of leaving too?"

"I repeatedly did. I knew that was the only solution, but a part of me could not go. I didn't want to be alone. I knew I could never live by myself. With my current mental state, if I was left alone, I would go crazy; that was why I wanted to surround myself with people even if they only said poisonous words."

The other reason is that part of her probably still held delusions about living like a normal family.

"No matter how bad things were, I don't think they deserve to die like that." Her gaze turned cold as she recalled the bloody sight. "No matter what the reason. I will find the truth, not because I am the last remaining member of the Ibuki family or to even shrink the gap. I want to search for the truth because that is what I want."

As Sumire, there is something she can do.

"Sumire, you know you-" Hino's sentence fell short when they heard the door chime sound. "The timing is perfect as usual. Hey Sumire, I think your husband is stalking you."

"Like hell. I just wanted to get my guitar fixed-" Yuhi's gaze darted towards her. "What happened to going home?"

Sumire laughed. "I wanted to do some shopping. I need new clothes."

"Uh." Yuhi awkwardly scratched his face. "Maybe I should stop tearing your clothes."

"Right, your the guilty culprit." Sumire left the counter and ran to his arms. "As punishment, mister, you have to go shopping with me. Unfortunately, I have no knowledge of good bouquets in this area."

"I have that knowledge?"

"You do due to all your affairs and many women."

Yuhi leaned forward and kissed her. "Do I still need to have an affair when I have you?"

"Hooligan," Sumire mumbled. Why did he kiss her out of nowhere like that? He is a kissing monster.

"Let's go shopping and then go home together."

"Mm okay."

At the airport, a woman with caramel-colored hair and silver-colored eyes was dragging her luggage around. She scanned the area and sighed. 'It seems like he didn't come after all.' Then again, her flight was scheduled earlier than it should be. This also explains why there are no fans in the area. The fans and reporters think she is arriving a few days later.

Now then, before people realize she is here. She can relax for a while.

'When you get back to Japan, have a doctor look at your condition.'

Cassie placed her hand on her throat. Right, she ought to visit the hospital.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 614

Chapter 614: The return of the childhood friend

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Chapter 614 The return of the childhood friend Nagawa General hospital - Three hours later-

After researching, this seemed to be the best hospital to go to. She has heard of the Nagawa family chain of hospitals even when she was abroad. Hospitals like this are good at maintaining artist confidentiality. Even if they discover who you are, they will not pry.

The hospital was close to the airport, and she managed to get in during a good time when it was not that busy. They conducted some tests, and they told her to wait here until the doctor called for her.

Cassie closed her eyes. It's not like she wanted to rush coming back. But it was stifling to stay abroad any longer. One of the main reasons why she traveled was so she could reach the top of the music scene over there. For awhile, it looked like it was going very well.

However, that person appeared, and afterwards, everything went downhill. She started to lose confidence in herself. No matter how hard she practiced, she could not beat that woman. After losing several times, the faith the public had in her shifted. Before long, she was getting bullied by other artists too.

The Japanese media have no idea about this, however. All they can see is she was successful abroad. Though if they truly looked into her situation abroad, they would find out easily. It seems her manager pulled some strings.

'I am grateful, but it wouldn't matter to her even if people here found out.' A part of her is already thinking of giving up her career in the entertainment industry.

She didn't realize the mental toll it took on her body.

"Did you hear that Miss Hasegawa Cassie is returning soon?"

"No way! I am a huge fan."

"Why do they call her miss?"

"How can you not know? Her mother comes from a prestigious family. She is rumored to be part of the English royalty. Her father is also of noble blood. The Hasegawa family held the duke title back in old Japan."

"Ah, so she is half-blood! That explains why she is so pretty."

Cassie sighed when she heard those words. Right, that is what people think of her. Because she is mixed blood, it is normal for her to be pretty, smart, and have a good voice. But do they realize how hard she worked to get to where she is today?

She clenched her fist tightly. But when she was abroad, people kept saying, 'It is a shame that your blood is not completely English. We would consider you if you did not have that dirty spec.'

They called her Japanese blood dirty, and the artists who bullied her emphasized this blood a lot.

Although she sat far away from the girls, Cassie felt self-conscious.

But being a celebrity for many years has led to her being cautious, so she still wore her huge glasses.

However, that didn't stop somebody from calling out to her. "Cas?"

Cassie felt her heartbeat increase when she heard that voice. How could it be? So fast? When he declined to pick her up from the airport, Cassie respected his choice.

After all, her manager also warned her regarding the rumors. 'A rumor with Terashima Yuhi isn't bad, it would benefit you both, and there will be no complaints. But his girlfriend Ibuki Sumire is not easy to handle.'

Her manager made it sound like Ibuki was some kind of monster, but she didn't think so. She saw the photos and articles of the two. Yuhi looked very happy, and she knew the reason very well. Ibuki must be the girl Yuhi has liked all this time.

Sure enough, when she turned her head, she spotted a familiar man with black hair.

"Yuhi."

"I thought it was you. I thought you were joking when you said you were coming early."

"Oh please, you're the only one I told, and you thought I was kidding?"

"I guess I'm just used to being tricked."

"Are you unwell? It's rare for you to visit the hospital."

"No, I just came to fetch some medicine. My girlfriend's doctor makes it himself, so I can't grab it over the counter."

So that's the reason why.

"Miss Cassie, Dr. Nagawa is ready for you."

Cassie was about to part ways with Yuhi when she noticed him following her. Is he concerned? She quickly realized that was not the case when she felt the doctor look over at Yuhi with a troubled expression.

"If she is unwell, she ought to come herself."

"It's because she was using so much energy when we were shopping together earlier. Her fever rose again."

"Then I'll give her some extra."

Cassie watched the exchange with great interest. This doctor looks familiar; where has she seen him before?

Her gaze fell on his name badge. 'Nagawa Sano.'

Now she knows where she has seen him before. Awhile ago, there was something on the news regarding a Nagawa Sano being the ex of a famous idol. Could it be, the famous idol is Ibuki?

The entertainment section regarding Asian idols is very small abroad. Even if they report news, they tend to omit names because, it is a waste of space according to the foreign reporters.

"By the way, she wants to say thank you for that information you gave her. She will treat you to a meal when she is free."

Cassie watched as Nagawa Sano's expression changed to a warm one. "I see."

Now that she is here, she wants to read that article again. She remembers it very well because she found the story interesting.

"Give her these, and." Sano placed a small box in Yuhi's hand. "These herbal flowers will help her sleep better at night."

Yuhi sighed deeply. "Giving my girlfriend flowers? Only you would do that."

"Let's focus on your friend." Sano turned his attention back to her. "Take a seat, miss."

Cassie did so, and Sano pulled up something on his monitor. Oh, those must be her ex-ray scans.

"Miss, it seems like your putting a lot of strain on your body lately, especially your voice."

"You do sound a bit hoarse," Yuhi commented. "Are you practicing too much?"

"Ah n-no."

'I can't let Yuhi know how bad my situation is.' This was one of the reasons why she initially refrained from returning. Yuhi is a kind person. If he realizes how much injustice she suffered, he will do whatever he can to protect her. However, if he does that, then the public will misunderstand. Cassie knew the media had information regarding what happened back then, even before the recent rumors.

Yuhi seems to be very happy right now. She cannot do something to destroy his happiness.

"I guess I have overdone it."

"There seems to be a letter from Dr. Lawrence. Did you know he referred you to me?"

"Oh no. He just told me to see a doctor when I return."

"I see. This is a detailed prescription and letter, however. If you don't mind me being in charge of you, I can develop a treatment plan right away."

"If you could do that." Yuhi quickly answered. "Don't worry, Cas, he is the best doctor around here. Whatever is wrong, he will help."

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 615

Chapter 615: I hope you can find your happiness

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

Chapter 615 I hope you can find your happiness 'Whatever is wrong, huh?' Cassie noticed that he avoided looking at the medical reports even though it was visible. Even now, he is being considerate of her. This person does not change; she has noticed how unusually kind he is ever since they were kids.

It is strange because, at first glance, people assumed he was a gloomy child. As they grew older, that gloominess turned to 'he looks cool.' But none of these identities suited Yuhi at all.

"Then should I put you down in the guardian's contact information Terashima?"

"Guardian, huh. I think it's better to put Hino down."

"Hino, huh? This morning, he came by and asked me to write down his name for Sumire."

"Well, he is only concerned. As her manager, he has the right to do that." Yuhi scanned the bottles. "You didn't put anything weird in these this time, right? Last time Sumire caught a cold."

"Like I said, it's temporary. She was more energetic when she recovered, right? It's supposed to strengthen her vitality. But tell her to come herself next time; she is due another check-up."

"Alright."

Cassie felt the tension in the air increase and spoke up. "I have been getting frequent headaches. Is there any medication I can use to slow it down? I will be quite busy for a while."

"Right, I'll prescribe you some."

Cassie thought Yuhi would leave, but after she finished speaking with the doctor, she found him waiting outside the hospital by the gate.

"I'll take you home. Where are you staying?"

"Ah, then--"

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Rose Apartments

Three years have passed since she last came here. 'I did tell the butler to clear it out just in case I came back. But he must have come recently; there isn't a single dust in sight.' Although she is uncomfortable with her lineage, she can still use the Hasegawa family resources as she pleases.

Since she suddenly returned, she didn't want to return to the manor. She bought this place back when she was rebelling against her parents.

But this place--

'Cas, your beautiful.'

Cassie frantically shook her head. She cannot think about that now. Her thoughts broke off when she heard Yuhi slump on the couch.

"Are you tired?"

"I may not look like it, but I have a thirty-eight-degree fever."

Thirty- "Why did you drive? Ah, quick, get some rest."

If the head butler dropped by, he should have prepared everything. She can grab a meal from the fridge and then give him some medicine.

"Sorry about this when you just got back. I just need to lie down for a few minutes and head back. I can't leave her alone when she is sick and not feeling well."

Cassie sighed deeply. "You're still as careless as ever. Why don't you call Hino over? At least he can take care of you."

At those words, a troubled look appeared on Yuhi's face. "It's enough for Hino to be tortured being her manager. How could I ask him to take care of her too?"

Despite his vague sounding words, Cassie immediately understood. "I see, so he found somebody else to like. That is a relief."

Three years ago, the last words he told her. Hino surely intended those words as a confession. But Hino likes Yuhi's girlfriend- is this not similar to the situation three years ago? Why does that person have to suffer so much?

But from the sounds of it, Hino does not resent Yuhi.

"So, what is she like?" Cassie did not want to look like she was prying. But she felt a bit self-conscious. After all the last time they were here, that thing happened between them. Of course, there is no chance of that occurring now.

Back then, Yuhi only slept with her because he could no longer take his loneliness. He had many other problems then, too, like the entertainment board, they kept pressuring Yuhi regarding the songs he sings. They disliked Yuhi writing his own songs. 'It's good to do that when your new, but most artists use ghostwriters after a few years. Your job is to sing, not write songs.'

They wanted him to focus on singing, pleasing the fans, and controlling his music. Sometimes Yuhi would write songs that weren't popular or in trend, and the sales numbers would go lower.

"Sumire? She is amazing. If you ask me what I like about her, it would be everything. I would never be able to narrow it down to one thing."

Cassie's eyes widened when she saw how enthusiastic he was. W-what is this sudden burst of energy? Moreover, those child-like-looking sparkling eyes.

"I mean, I am not just saying this out of nowhere. I really do like everything about her."

"Uh." Cassie trailed off. "Is there anything specific?"

"How she does her utmost for anyone in need. She is a very caring person. She can't leave anybody who needs help alone. Even if involving herself in their problems causes further issues for her how she is brave, bold but cute and very silly. Whenever I tease her, her expressions are very funny. But one of the most important things is how she could like somebody like me."

Oh, so Yuhi truly- 'I see, I did think so before.' He ended up in that state because he missed Ibuki so much. But she never understood why Yuhi refrained from seeing her for so long.

"What about you?"

"Huh?"

"Did you find anybody?"

Cassie felt a sharp pain spread across her heart when he said those words. 'As I thought, I probably do like Yuhi.' She went abroad to escape and distance herself, but the reality is she could not get rid of those feelings.

She did try to date others, but due to her status there, it made any relationship difficult.

"Sorry if that was a strange question." Yuhi quickly apologized. "I just thought it would be nice if you and Hino could find your respective partners and be happy."

He truly is a kind person. Cassie took a deep breath and laughed weakly. "Unfortunately, even when I did, the relationship didn't last long. I was very busy over there."

'-busy getting bullied. But I plan to hide that from him for as long as I can. I don't want him to sympathize and take revenge for me.' If Yuhi does either of those things, the media will misunderstand.

"Then, I hope while you are here, you can find happiness."

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 616

Chapter 616: Hostile

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

Chapter 616 Hostile Yuhi fell asleep after saying those words; she left the room and quickly located some food in the kitchen. The butler made soup, and there was some bread in the fridge too. This should be enough; he needs to eat and then digest medicine.

Medicine huh? Cassie recalled the medication she got from the hospital. He told her it was something newly developed recently but, 'If the headaches get worse, I do not think normal medicine will help you.'

Despite that vague wording, Cassie understood. It seems that doctor knows about evolved humans. He probably doesn't know she is one, but if Dr. Lawrence sent him a letter, it wouldn't be long till he finds out.

It does not seem right to let somebody she just met know about her being an evolved human. But, the words no longer being able to sing remained in her head. If she is no longer able to sing, then she will truly lose everything.

Cassie opened the medicine case. A purple-colored tablet, it looks suspicious. But Yuhi said that Nagawa Sano is a trustworthy doctor who seems to make medicine for his girlfriend too. It should be safe; it's not like she has anything to lose if she takes it now. She filled up a glass of water and quickly drank it.

She waited for a few minutes, but she didn't feel anything different. It seems to be like normal headache medicine; there is no immediate effect. At least it doesn't seem to be anything dangerous.

Cassie placed everything onto the tray and quickly carried it upstairs. Yuhi was still sleeping soundly, but sweat clung to his face and neck.

'How did he get into this state again?' It was a stupid question. Yuhi has a bad habit of overworking himself and not resting. But because he does all of this subtly, the people around him do not notice.

She proceeded to wake him up only to hear the sound of somebody slamming the door. She turned around and saw a furious-looking Hino.

"Hino- uh-" Cassie saw his dark expression. Uh oh, he is mad.

Hino, however, didn't get angry at her right there; he took one look at Yuhi and then seemed to examine the bed. Her cheeks colored, realizing why and she coughed. "Nothing happened."

Despite that, Hino seemed to do a quick scan of the room before telling her to follow him out.

"I can't believe you brought him here."

"It was a coincidence-"

Hino slammed his fist against the wall. "I am warning you, Cassie. If you drag Yuhi into some pointless scandal again, I will personally take you down. Yuhi is happy right now. If you dare interfere again, you will pay the price."

'It was a coincidence that we met in the hospital.' But it was her fault for accepting his offer to drop her off. She accepted because she was afraid if they stayed around any longer, people would notice them.

But that was an excuse, wasn't it?

How could she have brought him to the place where they did it before? Indeed, it makes sense that he is angry.

"I'm sorry."

What else can she say? Before Hino could say anything, they heard the sound of his phone.

"I found him; it's like what you say he has a high fever. I'll bring him right back; you're not well yourself, so stay put until I get back."

Is he on the phone with Ibuki?

"Wait, you're already here? Hold on-" Hino's words fell short when Yuhi snatched the phone off him.

"I'll come to you; just wait."

"Hey, Yuhi, your still-"

"It's fine; it sounds like she cried." Yuhi slipped his coat on and fixed his hair with his fingers. "I don't look bad, right? Do you think she will notice?"

"She already knows." Hino sighed, "Forget it, just go to her quickly."

Yuhi nodded and took one last glance at her; he mumbled thanks before rushing off.

After a few minutes, she peeked at the window and saw Yuhi running towards Ibuki.

The girl took one look at him before she cried, and Yuhi laughed as he wiped her tears.

So that girl is Ibuki Sumire? Despite the girl wearing a cloak, she could still see the girl's brown hair and violet-colored eyes. What a unique color.

Cassie was about to close the blinds when she felt a sharp gaze look her way. Did she look at me just now?

"I will warn you in advance. Sumire seems to be wary of you."

"Eh? But-"

"It's your manager's fault for not handling the rumors correctly."

Oh right, the way her manager handled the rumors made it seem ambitious.

Cassie sighed. "I'm sorry, I will handle it."

She had a lot going on before she left, so she simply left it to her manager to deal with everything. Her thoughts broke off when Hino took a step forward; she sensed the tense atmosphere and backed away.

"You're going to handle it how?"

"I'll talk to my manager and then contact the reporters myself. I'll even hold a press conference."

At those words, Hino burst into laughter and his gaze darkened.

"You still don't understand how this industry works after so many years? Your manager is the type of person who will take advantage of the rumors further and make it worse."

"That's not true; she isn't that type of person."

"No, she is. I am sure there have been suspicious incidents over the years, but she has dodged every single one. In this recent case with Yuhi, she probably said she has stopped them to the best of her ability but to be wary of Sumire."

Ah- Cassie clenched her fist. That is exactly what she said, but how would Hino know that?

Hino sighed deeply. "How can you be so gullible even now? Contacting reporters? Press conference? If you do those things and personally address the issue, then they can twist it. The more you highlight it, the more people will assume something is going on. They may even say that Sumire threatened you to clarify the matter."

"E-even if I don't mention her?"

"You can't not mention her since they are only doing this to bother her." Hino reached over and flicked her forehead. "I'll apologize for being so aggressive, but your actions frustrate me."

"No, I apologize for coming back so suddenly."

'I can't let him know that the bullying was becoming too extreme.'

"Well, you had a lot going on, so it's normal."

Huh?

"I mean the fact that you endured that many years of bullying-"

"Wait, wait- how do you know about that?"

"You don't know? Your manager has tried to contact Yuhi several times in the last few years, sending messages like please help Cas."

Her manager has? Cassie looked at him confused, and Hino flicked her forehead again.

"How many years since you debuted? Are you serious? Your manager has been trying to set you and Yuhi as a couple ever since Yuhi became successful internationally."

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 617

Chapter 617: No room to intervene

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

Chapter 617 No room to intervene For a moment, Cassie is startled, but she thought about Martha's concern when the bully increased.

"Maria has always been concerned about my well-being. She was the one who rushed to get me back here."

"Idiot, I was the one who asked your manager to bring you back."

Hino was? But doesn't Hino resent her due to what happened three years ago? 'I have always had guilty feelings towards him since his confession.' That was why whenever she visited, she only ever came to see Yuhi.

"The rumors came at a bad time, but I initially intended for you to return. I am sorry it took so long, though. Somebody was interfering abroad and intentionally making it difficult for you."

Intentionally? Who could it be? Did she anger anybody in particular?

Many people dislike her, but would somebody go so far as to sabotage her?

"I'll arrange a new manager for you eventually. But for now, tell me whenever she says anything."

"Okay." Cassie watched as he loosened his tie and noticed the beads of sweat from his neck. He probably ran here. Hino has not changed at all. He will still do anything for Yuhi's sake. "Ibuki is very pretty."

Even though the girl only wore a simple nightgown and her hair was messy, there was something beautiful about that.

"Yeah, she is."

Cassie could not help but stare at his warm-hearted expression. Hino truly does like Ibuki Sumire; it feels strange. But maybe this is why he can talk to her properly? No, even back then, she did not suspect his feelings for her because he acted so normal.

But the situation is different now. Whenever Hino mentions Ibuki, his expression is gentle. She wonders if others have noticed it too. It's strange; both Yuhi and Hino act so differently when it concerns Ibuki Sumire.

Their behavior change is because of their feelings?

"She can also be scary, so you have to watch out."

Cassie's sweat fell. "You don't have to worry. Even if I still like Yuhi-" She quickly covered her mouth, but it was already too late.

Hino did not seem surprised. "I figured it was like that. You didn't even complain to Yuhi once, even though he called you often."

Hino knows everything; he probably knows that there were times when she deliberately ignored Yuhi's call.

"But you should know, right? Sumire is the girl Yuhi has always liked. Sumire went through something bad, and it took Yuhi a lot of effort to convince her to start dating. Now that they can finally be happy, I don't want a third party to appear now."

That third party would be her. Hino can be very cruel when he wants to.

Something bad? Cassie recalled something her manager told me.

'The reason Ibuki has been on hiatus is due to that unfortunate accident that killed her boyfriend. They say she is the one who asked him to drive her there, and the police speculate that she did it deliberately. That type of woman will only destroy Terashimsan's hard work. I am so fortunate that he has good people like you around him, so he won't stray from the right path like her.'

The more Cassie thought about those words, the more she noticed something was wrong. Unfortunate accident? Stray from the right path? Those words, it's like Martha was mocking Ibuki. Oh, is this what Hino was trying to tell her?

There is probably more evidence if she retraces her conversation with her manager over the last few years. When she was abroad, she focused on her status there, and then the bullying happened. A lot was going on.

"I don't intend to interfere. But, I am interested in her singing."

For the first time since he barged inside, Hino smiled. "Yeah, anyone would. If you like, next time she has a performance, I will tell you. Oh, but keep yourself hidden since she really doesn't like you."

"The reason for that- does she know?"

"I intended to tell her, but she actually figured it all out on her own. That girl is too sharp, and she is obsessed with Yuhi, so-"

Cassie recalled the sight from a few minutes ago, and her cheeks colored. "are they always so affectionate in public?"

"Disgustingly so. Though Sumire is probably the one who attacked him today."

Her sweat fell. Is that supposed to be normal? "I think she is interesting. It would be nice to have a conversation with her, but I don't think that is possible right now."

Besides, the main reason why she finds Ibuki Sumire interesting is not because she is the girl Yuhi likes. The main reason is because of that person's words.

'If you go to Japan, you will meet her. That person is far more talented and skilled than I am.'

"By the way, you met Sano, right?"

His information network is so scary; he truly does know everything.

"I dis"

"Because the media intend to harass Sumire. Let me update you on a few things. Sano likes Sumire a lot, and the media will most likely use it for as long as possible."

"Are you implying they will ask me my opinion?"

"Yes. Unfortunately, it's not a question you can skip over. If you don't answer, people will think you are hiding something. If you answer directly, people will think you are taking advantage of Sano's feelings for Sumire to get with Yuhi."

Cassie sighed when she heard Hino's explanation. The entertainment industry truly gives her a headache as somebody who entered the industry because they love to sing and dance, she does not know how to deal with the drama.

Even though she entered the industry at a young age, she still couldn't adapt to this culture.

"I'll consult with you if they ask."

"You are still technically a member of the company even though you went off and joined our international sub-branch." Hino trailed off. "I am too busy managing Sumire, but just call me if you want advice on anything."

"Ah your numb-"

"It hasn't changed, and yours hasn't either. Get some rest, Cassie."

With those words, she watched as Hino disappeared down the stairwell. Cassie retreated back inside her room and slumped on the couch where Yuhi was moments ago. Yuhi's scent still lingered in the air.

But the image of his smiling face when he talked about Ibuki and the kiss she just saw flashed through her mind. There was no room for her to intervene from the very beginning, so she needed to get rid of these feelings.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 618

Chapter 618: Awkward meeting

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

Chapter 618 Awkward meeting It was a coincidence that she ended up in the same cafe as Yuhi-san, the childhood friend, and Hino. When she saw her dear, she wanted to attack him, but when he saw her happily chatting with that carefree smile on his face. Sumire found herself hiding behind a pot of plants.

Sumire sighed deeply. What on earth is she doing? 'I have already monopolized Yuhi-san for three days.' After she picked him up from his friend's place, she ensured that he stayed home. It was difficult at first; that guy is a workaholic. Fortunately, she made up a good enough excuse to make him stay.

'I didn't have to lie. I still wasn't well myself. All I had to do was say I didn't want to be alone.' Yuhi can be guilable at times. Or maybe he is just a fool? Sumire thought she was doing a good job hiding, but it did not take long before Hino found her.

"Instead of sneaking around, just show your face." Hino sighed. He didn't wait for her response and dragged her over to where Yuhi was.

"Wait a minute, Hino--" Her sentence fell short when she felt somebody stare at her.

"Sumire?" Yuhi said surprised.

Geh. "Uh, hello." She said awkwardly, trying to avoid his gaze.

Yuhi's eyes brightened, and he hugged her tightly. "I was just going to call you."

Was he?

"I ran into her coincidentally, but I figured this would be the best time to introduce you."

A coincidence, right? Those things do happen.

"Sit with us?"

"Mmm."

Maybe it was due to the impact of the hug, but she decided to join them. The original seating arrangement had the childhood friend beside Yuhi. But the girl moved away once she saw her. It seems this woman already knows about her. They did make eye contact three days ago, so she must know how hostile she is.

Her thoughts broke off when Yuhi placed a plate in front of her and started to place some food on top.

"Yuhi-san, I can't eat this-" She trailed off once she saw his bright smile.

Sumire felt her cheeks turn red. W-well, if he is looking at her like that, then she supposes she can eat.

After taking a bite, her eyes brightened.

"Is it good?"

"Mm, it's delicious!" Sumire extended her fork out. "Yuhi-san, you too."

Yuhi took a bite, but he didn't stop there; the cream from the bun dripped down her arm. Yuhi didn't hesitate to lick the cream away.

Hino hit Yuhi across the head, causing him to drop her arm. "You two, do that stuff at home!"

Yuhi looked at him with an innocent expression. "Did I do something wrong? I was just helping her not waste food. You are the one who told me it is bad table manners to waste food. Right Sumire?"

He only licked the cream away and yet his tongue. Yuhi has a long tongue; whenever he licks her, she always ends up feeling strange.

Her cheeks felt hotter than before as she thought of what had happened a few minutes ago.

Hino's eyes twitched, annoyed. "You, stop attacking so love-struck. You're going to enlarge his ego."

"B-b-but my dear is too handsome."

Sumire wrapped her arms around his neck. "Stop seducing me in public."

"So, is it okay to do it at home?"

There must be something wrong with her. All the words leaving Yuhi-san's lips sound so seductive. Ah, maybe she should just attack him. Her thoughts broke off when Yuhi leaned down and kissed her.

It was a brief kiss, but it was enough for her to feel embarrassed.

"Let's continue at home, yeah?"

"Alright."

Hino coughed, and Sumire drew back. O-h right, Hino and the childhood friend are still there.

The childhood friend, Sumire, glances over at the girl and immediately frowns. Why is she so pretty! This is unfair. Why does Yuhi-san have to have somebody like this around him? Even though she only has him, he has so many others who could give him more love and care. She ought to be happy that he has so many people who care for him.

'I want him all to myself, though.'

These dark and disgusting thoughts. It's no wonder the media keep saying Yuhi is better off with another woman.

"Um, Miss Ibuki, I'm Yuhi and Hino's childhood friend. My name is-"

"I know who you are, Miss Hasegawa cassie."

"Uh, right."

'I feel so irritated.' It's not like there is anything bad about this girl. She is just a normal person. But maybe it is because she is so normal that she feels more irritated.

Her thoughts broke off when she saw that Yuhi had sliced his cake in half. Isn't that his favourite? Does he not want to eat the rest of it? Unless he watched as Hasegawa finished eating her cake when Yuhi slid the plate casually over.

"I've eaten enough."

"T-thank you, Yuhi."

Sumire's gaze dimmed as she watched the two. They must know each other's likes and dislikes very well since they are childhood friends. He even gave her his food.

"Oh, that reminds me, Yuhi, did you receive an invitation to that music festival?"

"Yeah, I received two invites. To perform solo and one as a group."

"That's great! I'm looking forward to sharing the same stage as you again."

A music festival, huh?

"Uh what about you Ibuki-san?"

Sumire flinched at those words. How could she possibly receive an invite for something prestigious? Perhaps if it was a year ago, she would be qualified for such events by now. But due to the incident, no, she wouldn't even qualify for the opening due to her running away.

Hino has a lot of connections, and he could probably land her a spot if she asked. But if she does that, it would go against her beliefs. She wants to earn a spot in that festival with her own ability.

But admitting that she can't even land a spot in that festival in front of this woman-

"She just started her activities again recently. I want to ease her back into the role before taking on anything major." Hino interjected.

Ah, he truly is a professional manager. That answer doesn't necessarily highlight the incident, but it reminds her that she isn't doing major jobs yet because she just returned. Normally when artists return from a break, they don't do any large jobs for a while.

"I see. It's a shame."

"If you're not joining, maybe I shouldn't, too," Yuhi mumbled.

Eh?

"I mean, performing as a group is fine. But I don't see why I have to sing solo too. If I'm going to have a second slot, I would rather sing with you."

This man is crazy; how could he possibly turn down an opportunity to sing solo? During large festivals like this, the main events are usually the solo performances. Then again, with Yuhi-san's status, he doesn't gain anything from participating. He is most likely doing the other performance to help the other guys.

But Sumire tugged on his sleeves. "Yuhi, you won't sing?"

Even if she doesn't participate, she wants to hear him sing.

During group performances, lines are distributed evenly. Yuhi is the group's center, but he makes sure that everybody gets equal parts. 'I want to hear him sing more.'

Yuhi's gaze softened as he looked at her. "Do you want me to?"

"Mmm."

"Then," Yuhi brushed his forehead against hers. "-I'll sing my new song for you."

Did he write a new song for her? It shouldn't surprise her already, but she feels happy.

Still, why is he getting so affectionate with her in public? It is rare for him to do this. Unless Sumire scanned the cafe briefly and saw some reporters, she immediately understood. So Yuhi lied to her. They didn't meet up coincidentally, but this is a setup scene so the media can take a picture.

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 619

Chapter 619: I want it all to go away

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

Chapter 619 I want it all to go away So it's a setup. Hino is here because he is Yuhi's guardian; it looks like he is giving his blessings to these two being a couple.

So this is why Yuhi-san acted all affectionate when he saw her. He wants to change the contents of the report. But she does not like this method at all.

"Sumire?" A familiar voice called out to her.

Her thoughts broke off once she saw a man with blonde colored hair. Ah, "San."

"Sumire." Sano's gaze brightened. "I didn't think I would see you here. Are you taking a break from work today?"

"Mmm, what about you?"

"I had a conference nearby; it's time for lunch, so I was going to get something to eat."

"It's good you remember to eat your meals."

"That's because I promised you."

Look at his flustered face. It is truly easy for her to use Sano. Sumire quickly stood up and clung to Sano's arm. "Then as a reward for keeping that promise. Why don't we go on a walk?"

She heard the sound of shuttering at a closer range. If they want her to act like a cruel woman, then so be it. Do they want to get a picture of Yuhi and his childhood friend? Then do so, but she won't look like a loser.

"W-we can go together?" Sano asked nervously.

"Mm, let's go."

Sumire heard Yuhi protest, but she cut him off and continued to walk away with Sano. Even though

Yuhi-san said, he would handle this situation on his own. She does not like this method. The ones who called those reporters and set this situation up is most likely the company.

Yuhi-san said earlier that he was going to call her over. It's easy to see what he was planning. By calling her over and acting affectionate, it would show that they have a better relationship with one another.

"Sumire..uh.." Sumire realized why Sano was flustered. So her chest is touching his arm a little; why is he acting like this? Sano has had countless relationships before. Something like this should not phase him.

"Sorry about that, San."

"I--I don't mind. So you're free right now?"

"I suppose."

"C--can I treat you to a meal?"

"Sure."

'Ah, look at that happy expression. Unfortunately, I have no energy to deal with Sano right now. I'll cut the meal short and say I have somewhere to be.'

Looking at him, he truly looks like a man in love. How exhausting to think he would have this type of expression on his face. This man swore he loved her no matter the age difference. Also, the same one who cruelly broke her heart and called her a psychobitch. The same man who cheated on her and justified his cheating.

It made her sick whenever she thought back to it. 'I don't necessarily have to string him along anymore.' She already had somebody infiltrate D entertainment. Eli's information will surely be better than Sano's in terms of information quality.

This guy is useless for information. His connections, however, will keep the pesky media at bay for a while. So perhaps she can still use him for awhile longer.

Her thoughts broke off when somebody grabbed her arm. It was Yuhi; she looked at him, surprised for a moment. But she quickly regained her composure.

'He came after me?'

"Sumire, are you really going to go?"

"What do you think?" Sumire said coldly. "Isn't it fine for me to go? I don't want to continue destroying the harmonious atmosphere between you and your childhood friend."

Ah, what on earth is she doing? Why is she behaving so strangely?

"Sumire, don't misunderstand-- we--"

Yuhi-san looks so desperate right now. He is trying to search for the right words, but he is failing. Of course, he will fail. Her current behaviour does not make any sense right now.

Sumire harshly yanked her arm away.

'If I'm going to become second eventually. It's better to make him hate me.'

"I think you can go back. If you leave her waiting too long, she may hate you."

Wrong, she doesn't want it to be like this.

What on earth is she doing?

Oh, her vision is becoming blurry again. "I shouldn't have come here." She could barely say those words before she felt her entire body lose balance. But before she could hit the ground, somebody caught her.

"Why do you make a ruckus wherever you go?"

"Soujiro!"

How rare to see him in a place like this. Soujiro scanned the cafe and exhaled deeply.

"My dear, your imagination is as wild as ever."

Hey, is he making fun of her! It's true when they were younger; her imagination was one of her strongest points. But he doesn't have to bring it up now.

"Do not worry; there is nothing between them. If there is, I will tear him limb by limb."

Her sweat fell when she saw the dark aura surrounding Soujiro. She wanted to say something else but felt a wincing pain in her chest. Oh, it's this strange sensation again. This sharp pain is similar to somebody piercing a blade through her chest.

It hurts so much; she just wants to close her eyes for a short while.

If she closes her eyes, then perhaps the pain will go away.

...

Makoto Family Mansion

When she woke up in a grand-looking room that looked like it would belong to a castle from the past. Sumire immediately knew where she was. This is the room she stayed in the last time she was here. Sumire placed her hand on her chest. The pain seems to have stopped? How odd; normally, she would have to suffer for at least half a day.

Oh, she is thirsty; she wants some water. Sumire glanced around and saw a jug and a cup by her bedside.

Did Soujiro prepare this? He is as thoughtful as ever.

Sumire quickly poured herself a glass of water. To think she ended up in that condition. It is a good thing Hino was there. He is probably trying to fix the situation. Her fainting was not in the plan.

But that reporter would surely write something like 'Ibuki stumbling onto her boyfriend's date, and faking sick.' It's true her behavior back in the cafe wasn't good when Sano showed up. But before then, Yuhi-san was treating her so kindly.

That kindness was fake; it's the first time Yuhi-san has pretended to be kind in front of her, even if it is part of the plan, her heartaches.

Forget it; she ought to see what happened. Did Yuhi-san take that person home? Surely he didn't stay here. Sumire quickly stood up and proceeded to open the door, but the door opened when she was about to turn the handle.

She thought it was Soujiro and was about to thank him, but the person standing in front of her was Yuhi.

"Um- this is a surprise."

"A surprise?"

"I thought you brought Miss Hasegawa home." Sumire trailed off when she saw the dark gaze in his eyes. Gah, he looks so scary! Is he going to scold her for fainting? The last time she fainted, he was quite upset because she fainted due to lacking of eating.

This time she didn't do it deliberately! But how can she explain when he looks so frightening?

ETERNAL MELODY Chapter 620

Chapter 620: Sincere

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

Chapter 620 Sincere Before she could hear his reply, she unconsciously took a step back. He has her trapped against the door in seconds.

He stared at her only for a moment before he bit and sucked on her bottom lip, and eventually, he pried her mouth open. Oh, this fool, what is he doing?

After kissing for a few minutes, he drew back.

"Yuhi-san."

"Please don't be mad anymore."

"Mmm, is it a bribe?"

Yuhi responded to that by kissing her more. Yuhi, was he that upset that she was angry? His shoulders are trembling. So, what happened in the cafe just now? Was that not an act? Maybe it's because he seemed more cheerful than usual, and that's why she misunderstood?

No, that entire situation was still uncalled for. Even if they hired the media to take pictures and set up a fake scenario, it would have been nice if he had consulted with her first. Maybe she is being petty about nothing, but she truly- Sumire felt Yuhi's hands on his shirt and frowned.

She lightly hit his stomach and pulled away.

"S--sorry uh--"

Hmph. If Yuhi thinks he can bribe her, then he is wrong. "Explain to me why you were acting so oddly in the cafe and your plan."

She wants to know if he was pretending to be kind.

"Listen, Sumire. I think you misunderstand something. From the very moment we met, I have always been sincere towards you."

"The moment we met?"

"Since the time we were kids that you don't remember, since that snowy day, since the first time I joined the holy knights. Since you came to Tokyo since we started dating--"

If he puts it that way, they have had many first encounters with each other. This isn't the time to think about it, but she finds it quite romantic.

Her thoughts broke off when Yuhi caressed her cheek.

"From the moment we met, I have already decided to give you all my heart."

"Then that means I have at least one ally. Thank you."

"Is that all?" He suddenly leaned forward again.

"Y--yuhi.."

"I told you previously. I can't hold back when I am around you anymore. You dressed up so prettily today."

Oh, so that's why he behaved this way? She did think he was being a bit too needy. Moreover, there was his reaction in the cafe too.

Her gaze softened, and she chuckled.

"Hey, it's not funny."

"If Yuhi-san wants to continue. We ought to do so in the privacy of our own residence."

Yuhi, however, grabbed hold of her wrist. "Before we go, I think you should drink my blood directly."

Could it be? Is that the reason why the pain stopped, to drink Yuhi-san's blood in a bedroom? Uh, she suddenly feels embarrassed. Even though they were kissing passionately just now, this is a bit too much. Yuhi had already unbuttoned his shirt, exposing his neck.

D-does she really have to do this now? Yuhi wrapped his arms around her waist and drew her closer. Ah, forget it! She might as well just go ahead. Sumire leaned forward and brushed her lips against his neck. No matter how many times she does this, it feels strange.

After a few minutes, she drew back, and Yuhi placed a soft kiss on her forehead. "You don't have to feel embarrassed every single time."

"That is easy for you to say; at least I don't have strange thoughts."

"Hm? Are you truly saying that? Then maybe you need a reminder of the last time."

Sumire's cheeks reddened more when she understood the meaning behind his words. "If you tease me anymore, I will get angry again."

It was just a joke, but a gloomy aura appeared around Yuhi again. Uh, why is he like this recently? Yuhi was not the type who would express his emotions easily in the past. She wonders what changed?

She took a deep breath and slumped her head in his chest.

"My unease has been growing recently. But I am not truly angry at you. I am just throwing a tantrum."

Yuhi caressed her hair. "Is it hard after all? Returning to the entertainment industry?"

"Yes."

She thought she prepared for it. She thought she was prepared to face all the hostile and judging stares. But, it seems that was not the case. She is still afraid of people.

It is a good thing that Hino became her manager. Even though he does not know how to handle her breakdowns, at the very least, he notices whenever she is uncomfortable and finds a quiet place for her to calm down.

"It's hard, Sumire, but ,remember that you will always have at least one person on your side no matter what happens."

"One person?"

"Mm, can you guess who?"

He is so silly, but she is truly only at ease when she is around him. If it was not for this person, she would have let her nightmares consumed her a long time ago.

..

Soujiro sent her a servant to fetch them, but Yuhi tried to do something after that emotional moment. Naturally, the servant was loyal to Soujiro and informed him, leading to this awkward situation. It seems like Yuhi must have sent Miss Hasegawa home; no, she probably stayed in the cafe with Hino.

"Goodness me. Even if you two are to get married soon, at least have some decency when you are in another person's home." Soujiro commented.

H-hey, she said something similar. Yuhi-san is an idiot; he always gets her in trouble. But he most likely did that stuff to calm her down. There was a time in the past when she felt so lonely and could no longer take it.

She still had a degree of self-control when she dated Sano, but she almost sealed her heart after the breakup. That was why when she met Toh, it naturally progressed into that type of relationship.

'I already told Yuhi-san about Toh, but he still doesn't know how much she fooled around.' Since it happened before they dated, she has no obligation to explain it to him, but it still feels weird not telling him.

'Couples share everything.'

'It is a sign of mutual trust.'

A sign of mutual trust, huh? She said to Soujiro once that if she didn't trust Yuhi, she wouldn't be able to trust anybody else ever again. Yuhi probably has no idea that he received her trust long ago. Then again, it is only normal for him not to have noticed with her unusual behavior.