

Location: Nozomu's hotel room

The night after the final show at Aguarica, Nozomu suddenly awoke in their room.

Their terminal showed that it was already past midnight. But even though it was late, the glittering, dazzling lights of the city sifting through the curtains seemed to invite them to sit up on their bed.

"I woke up so late in the night... It's an awkward time to go back to sleep. Maybe I'll take one final stroll around the hotel."

Location: Aguarica hotel lounge



"Nozomu? What a surprise, why are you here this late at night?"



"Oh, as for me, I was still feeling high after the show, and I couldn't sleep well. So I decided to walk around the hotel for a bit."

"It's the same for me, what a coincidence! By the way, I can smell something nice..."



"Yeah, what a coincidence. But I'm glad I ran into you, because I wanted to speak to you before we part ways."



"Ah, you can smell this? I was burning some essential oils in my room, so maybe some of it was stuck on me..."



"I can give you some before you leave if you like it. You can try smelling it up close."

Lilac moved closer towards Nozomu.



"I actually made this oil myself, I like the scent of it too..."



"Ah!? I-I'm sorry!"

Lilac just realized that the two of them were so close that they could feel each other's breath. He pulled back in a hurry, with flushed cheeks.

A) "I-I'm sorry too!"

B) "Oh, I know this scent!"



"I-I'm glad to hear it! I'll bring you something I think you'll like later."

C) "I'd rather you didn't pull away..."



"I—ack—uh!? I'm, ah, happy to hear that. Honestly, after I pulled back, I also felt a little sad..."

The two made eye contact and shared an awkward smile. Before long, though, Lilac broke the silence, seemingly reminded of something.



"Actually, Nozomu. Since you're already awake, would you mind joining me?"



"Before I go home, I wanted to have a look at the stage for the last time."

Nozomu nodded, and the two started walking towards the rooftop.

Location: Rooftop water stage, nighttime



"It's so... quiet, now. This place was so full of life, it almost didn't seem real."

Lilac and Nozomu had arrived at the now-empty rooftop. Gazing at the water stage, Lilac's expression turned fond.



"It's strange to think... the first time I stood on the stage, I was just so anxious about everything, but now I can only remember how fun it all was."

"So much has really happened here... at first you weren't even sure you could hold a smile, but what do you think now?"



"Yeah... I do believe I can smile a little better now. At least, that's what I think."



"Oh, I wasn't really thinking about, like, the smile on my face. I meant to say—"



"I feel a little happier... as 'Lilac', I guess. Happier in my own skin, you can say."

Lilac smiled warmly as he remembered the past few days.



"For the longest time, I'd always been putting myself in my brother's shadow—always looking for his footsteps to guide me. Whenever I'm faced with any trouble, I can't help but to think of him."



"I would try to imagine what my brother would've done, or what he would've said to me."



"I suppose that's not entirely a bad thing to do. I know that in my heart, I will never stop thinking of him as my pillar of strength."



"But I think I had taken it to a fault. I was afraid to express what the person called 'Lilac' himself honestly wants, afraid of showing me as I am. That might be why I tried to hide 'Lilac', the hero, from the eyes of so many people too."

"I understand he was someone you really look up to... Nevertheless, I'm glad I got to see who 'Lilac' is more clearly now."



"I have you to thank, Nozomu. It's you who were able to observe my new form."



"I know I can't just change myself so easily, but from now on, bit by bit—"



"I want to take on more jobs that expose myself to more people, like this one."

Lilac looked deep into Nozomu's eyes as he continued.



"Um, Nozomu... if you don't mind, could you transform me into that form again?"



"There's something I want to show you on this stage, one last time."

"Oh, sure thing. I'm looking forward to it, then! Transform!"

Lilac was transformed into his new hero form.



"Thank you. Just wearing this suit somehow makes my heart rise."



"I feel as if I've shed all my burdens, but more importantly, in this I feel you're able to see all of 'Lilac'... all of me."

"Lilac... no matter what, I'll always see you for who you are."



"Nozomu... Thank you very much. For being my Observer."

Lilac gave a sheepish smile, and carefully ran a hand over his Parallel Weapon.



"This umbrella Parallel Weapon... reminded me of memories I had long forgotten."



"Of how I used to hate the rain, of how I came to love the rain... and of a promise that could never be fulfilled anymore."



"But this helped me remember all of it. And it was those very memories that gave me the power to create new memories on this stage."

For a moment, a downcast look passed over Lilac's face, but it disappeared just as quickly. Then he raised his head, smiling once more.



"This place gave me a lot of new things to remember. Roudin and everyone in Aguarica. Kalaski, Akashi, and the other heroes too. They were all shining so brightly—"



"So even though this job will be over soon, and we'll all go our separate ways, I will always hold it close to my heart. I won't just find my strength forward from the past, but from the present, too."

"It's not just you, Lilac, I've gained a lot of memories here, too. And I'm sure everyone else has as well."



"Nozomu... I see."



"If everyone gained memories they can treasure too, then that would make me... very happy."

Lilac's smile as he said so was easy and tender.



"U-um, Nozomu, there's actually something else I wanted to ask from you... it's a bit of a personal request."



"I'm sure it's going to sound childish, so I'm kind of embarrassed to say it, but would you mind humoring me?"



"It's nothing difficult. Since there's nobody but the two of us here—"



"I want to lie down on the stage and feel the rain that I love, together with you."

"That's alright! The air is warm, so it'll cool us just right. It'll make for a nice memory!"



"Thank you! Let's go, then, Nozomu!"

With that said, Lilac opened his Parallel Weapon, and water droplets began to shower onto the stage.

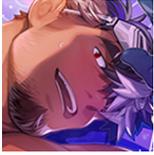
Then under the falling rain, with a wide grin on his face, Lilac took off his raincoat.

"W-wait a sec! Lilac!? Why are you—!?"

Lilac had stripped his coat, leaving only what's under it.



"I just want to feel the rain on my skin... so I can remember this moment clearly."



"Everything we talked about, everything we felt together, and this happiness you've given me... I want to remember all of it."

At that moment, Lilac pulled Nozomu into his arms.



"Nozomu... I want to fill myself with memories of you. And also..."

His voice was deep and soothing, whispering softly in Nozomu's ear.



"Let me fill you with memories of me. Memories you'll never forget."

On that empty stage, underneath the night's slow rain, two shadows gently merged into one.