

“Fate of a Cherry Petal” • English adaptation for fun, of “[色は匂へど 散りぬるを](#)”

This song is a Touhou fan-created song that serves as the theme song for an entire fan-created animé (no I am *not* kidding) called “Memories of Phantasm”, and it also serves as one of the series’ de-facto anthems, alongside famous tracks like “[Bad Apple](#)” and “[Necromantic](#)”.

I’d like to make clear that I am *NOT* an actual certified translator—I’m just adapting various translations made by *other* people, and mixing in the song’s context and my personal tastes, to make some English lyrics that can be singable while being as close to the original meaning and context of the song as my amateur just-having-fun self can get.

With that said, doing this adaptation was a toughie. It took 2 months to complete, compared to the previous two which took just a few hours each. That’s because it turns out the lyrics for this song are *DENSE* with meaning. Synthesizing 5 separate translations was taxing. In situations where I didn’t fully understand the meaning, I fudged stuff; and some lines stumped me for a long time, because I struggled to cram in the original meaning in so few syllables without them sounding cheesy.

I doubt this is the best work, which is why I’d *also* like to reiterate that, if you’re someone who understands the original meaning of the song a lot better, or you think my adaptation is cringe, I’d be happy for you to branch off from this or make your own thing.

The lyrics: (NOTE: syllables all line up with original Japanese, except for syllables surrounded by “†”, which should be sung just before the syllable that follows.)

Every cherry petal’s fate is to fall, scattering away
A fading scent all that remains, never had a chance †to† roam

Once, the glorious blooms had taught me their way
Just existing in itself cannot forgive the debt of sin you pay
I simply want you too much, I can’t bring myself to let †you† go
Holding these feelings so tight, sends my heart whirling a sick dance of ecstasy (ecstasy)

Every cherry petal’s fate is to fall, scattering away
There is no time to hesitate, yet I fall back on my old ways
So insecure that I must hold on, yet so frail that I can’t help but let go
Nightmares take hold and grip me light, a pawn in their malicious game

You, the one who has learned what true weakness means
Have forgiven all the ones who chase your doomed path seeking just the same
Then did a blossom unfold, there’s no sight more valiant to †be†hold
Too soon its life fades away, for it’s too late and this dark world will never know

Every cherry petal's fate is to fall, scattering away
All that is mine I give to you, for I'm a fool who thinks you can't leave
Always more kind than you could deserve, yet so cruel that I'll never let you go
This selfish love that won't be weighed, it defies and chooses both

Every petal meets an end where it dies, scattered to the wind
But this big heart can't be held in by these too-short memories
O fleeting life, wilting away, in your flight, stay strong for me as well
Bend to the will, the tender flow, and relentless course of time

References:

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