

Thank you all for coming, have an amazing rest of your nights! I love you!

The crowd in front of the stage let out a roaring applause, light sticks waving in the air as the main star of the stage gave her final goodbyes of the tour.

Our wonderful star, Hatsune Miku, was now on the end of her long and strenuous tour as a sponsorship with SEGA. Not to say it was bad, no, it was the most fun Miku had in ages! The company helped, too, as she got to tour with *the* Sonic the Hedgehog!

They both took their leave, leaving the crowd in awe as the near 3-hour-long show finally came to an end. Both Miku and Sonic smiled to each other, tired yet accomplished looks crossing both of their faces as they made their way behind stage.

Sonic: Geez, I'll hand it to 'ya... a whole 10 shows and you don't even look like you broke a sweat!

He lightly slugged Miku in the arm, playfully, leading her to chuckle. The two had become better friends than they expected in such a short time, sharing a lot more in common than they thought.

Miku: Well, it always helps when you're performing with others! Turns out it isn't as hard to keep up with you as I thought!

Before they could talk more, a lot of the backstage employees came out to congratulate them. A mix of various SEGA look-alikes, ranging from Sonic's various species to characters straight out of Yakuza, SEGA went all out on helping this virtual performing world look as accurate as it can.

Miku felt happy here, it's been a while since her last tour... Well, not *that* long. Either way, the feeling she felt while on tours always filled her with a sense of excitement she couldn't get anywhere else. She almost didn't want it to end, getting a tad emotional as she saw the staff behind stage for the last time.

The staff left to handle preparing the closing on the venue, while Miku and Sonic were left alone once again. Miku still seemed a tad down, so Sonic was the one to speak up.

Sonic: Hey, chin up, the shows were a hit! They went by like a breeze too, didn't they? Everyone loved your performance, I know I did!

Miku: O-Oh, thank you! I'm sure they really appreciated yours too, Sonic... you're better at singing than you give yourself credit for...

Sonic: Oh, please, I'm nothing compared to your talent... and that ain't a bad thing! The way the crowd was always calling someone else's name for once was a bit relieving, in all honesty, haha!

Sonic kept chucking to himself, causing Miku to smile ever so slightly.

Miku: ...thank you for performing with me Sonic, I mean it... being able to be in front of an audience means the world to me, and you being there made it all the more fun!

Sonic seemed confused for a second, only before responding back with another chuckle, giving her the classic confident look he's known for.

Sonic: Hey, it's no big deal, we both had a blast! I'm sure we can do it again sometime!

Mike: Oh- I'd love to! I'm sure I'll have the time to!

Her face lit up as she had a bit more casual talk... but after touring for so long, they finally parted ways. Miku made her way to her dressing room as Sonic did the same, both admittedly tired after the whole evening.

Her room was as cozy as the first day she got it, fitting for a temporary home. She stood in front of her dressing mirror as she got a good look at herself. She found the Sonic outfit she got as a part of the collaboration to be sweet. It was rather cozy- different from many others she received for these kinds of things...

It filled her with memories of the times she had during these events... dancing and singing like she usually did. Something about this tour, however, really stuck with her... she couldn't quite put her finger on it!

She sighed as she was ready to change, reaching for the regular outfit from her closet.

Miku: Well, not all tours can last forever, but... I wish I could just get one more performance...

As she said that, she noticed a small gift on her bureau. A red and black gift with a familiar Egg-like face printed on it. She let out a small chuckle, it couldn't be more obviously Eggman themed.

The gift's presentation confused her, Eggman hadn't even been so much as mentioned in the entire tour, so what was a gift themed around him doing in her room? Was it from a fan, from the staff? How did it get here? She loved gifts, but... the origin was just so confusing!

All those concerns, however, wafted away as she lifted the lid of the box. Inside the suspicious gift was a... gem of sorts? A pink and purple gem that glistened in the shining light of her room. It was rather pretty, and Miku was enamored by it.

Miku: Oh... it's so pretty! B-but, I don't know if I deserve something *this* expensive! Who even left this here...

Before she was even able to ponder more, the gem suddenly began to shake. Raw energy was exerted into the room, knocking Miku to the floor... gem still in hand. The lights flickered, things falling to the floor, as Miku's vision became inverted.

Everything became smudged and blurry, she couldn't even recognize her room anymore. She felt herself lifted off the ground, spinning her into the air as her vision went dark...

Miku: I- what's- huh-

But before she could say anything, she was gone... leaving an empty and messy dressing room.

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Then she woke up. Slumped against an arcade machine, she rubbed her eyes and adjusted her vision. The stuffy yet calm feeling of an arcade overcame her, a sense of comfort and fear filling her body.

Miku: H-hello? Is anyone there?

Her words were met with the ambience of this abandoned arcade, whirs of machines and the light breeze of air conditioning. She made her way forward in this neon crypt, the appearance feeling more and more calming... but she was still alone and afraid.

...however, in her advancement, she wasn't watching where she was going. She bumped into what she thought was a normal arcade machine, stumbling to the ground and rubbing her lightly-bruised forehead.

It took her by extreme surprise when the supposed broken arcade machine extended its long mechanic arm.

EDACRA: OH, I *SINCERELY* APOLOGIZE. I HOPE I DID NOT *HURT* YOU.

Anxious at first, she sat on the ground in both fear and confusion. However, she was looking for company... so she accepted the hand and was pulled off the ground.

Miku: I-it's OK! I was just... surprised is all! There doesn't seem to be, uh, anyone else here...

EDACRA: YES, THIS ONCE *LIVELY* PLACE IS RATHER *LONELY*. HOWEVER, IT IS NOT *LIFELESS*, OTHERS ARE HERE WHO ARE *JUST LIKE YOU*.

Miku: E-eh? What do you mean, what are we all doing here... and who are you?!

She was trying to keep her cool, but... waking up in a new location is always scary.

EDACRA: I AM *EDACRA*, THE HOST OF THIS ARCADE. I *SUMMON* TALENTED SOULS LIKE YOU TO *PERFORM* IN A... *COMPETITION* OF *SORTS*.

EDACRA: THIS ARCADE USED TO BE *FULL* OF *LIFE*... I WISH TO BRING BACK THAT *LIFE* WITH THE POWER OF *MUSIC*.

Now the machine had her attention, all it took was “competition” and “music”.

Miku: Like... one of those competition shows? Wait- how did I even get here? Am I safe, what'll happen back at the venue?

EDACRA: I PROMISE YOU, I HAVE *NO* BAD *INTENTIONS*. THE PEOPLE BACK *HOME* WON'T EVEN NOTICE YOU'RE *GONE*.

EDACRA: I MERELY WISH TO HOLD A *TOURNAMENT*. ONE TO SHOW THE *FUN* OF MUSIC AND HELP THIS *PLACE*. YOU'LL BE BACK TO WHERE YOU CAME RIGHT *AFTER*, BUT DON'T YOU WANT YOUR *TOUR* TO *CONTINUE*?

That phrase struck a chord in her... her tour didn't have to end yet. If Edacra was telling the truth, this could be fun, couldn't it? Performing with fellow musicians, all to an audience who adores all of their music... It sounds like all the fun she could ever want. So what's stopping her, really?

Miku: Hmmmm... well, if everything will be fine back at the venue... I suppose an encore performance wouldn't hurt!

EDACRA: *EXCELLENT*. I'M SURE THE AUDIENCE WILL *LOVE* YOU. NOW, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE *OTHERS*?

Miku: Of course! It's always nice to know who I'll be up on stage with, ehehe!

The two kept walking on through the halls of the arcade, both making small talk about the plans of her performance. She didn't show it as much, but on the inside... Miku was rushed with emotions. The excitement of performing again, the confusion of her situation, and the mixed opinions she got of Edacra. But, she put her trust in them, and that's what matters for the time being. If others have, why shouldn't she?

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Eggman: WHAT DO YOU *MEAN* THAT BLASTED RUBY ENDED UP IN THE *WRONG* ROOM?! HOW DID YOU IMBECILES MESS THAT UP?!

Orbot: In our defense, your nastiness, those room signs were *very* high up...

Cubot: Yeah- why were we even giving Sonic the ruby anyways? I don't really get that part of the plan...

Eggman: shut up .