

... People left their wrappers in my shoe box again. How annoying ...

I was used to stuff like this happening to me. It was just another thing the other kids did to pick on me. At this point, it didn't bother me anymore.

School continued as it did any other day. At lunch, we were free to do whatever around the school. Though some kids would stick around at their desks, today, everyone seemed to have left... some event or something was happening outside. It's not like I cared though... I wasn't interested in that sort of thing, and it wasn't like I had any friends to go with anyway.

During lunch, I would sit by myself reading whatever book I had brought with me that day, but today, since everyone else was gone "... Maybe I should practice that song grandma taught me..." I gave a look around the classroom, no one. Taking a deep breath in...

"... ♪-♪-♪..."

I sang as I would with grandma, that same song she had been teaching me, the same way she would sing it to me. Every lyric and note, I would sing to what would be seen as perfection.

I sang... just for myself.

When I finished the song, I let out a heavy sigh. Staring out the window, I saw other kids were below playing with one another.

Things were fine the way they were now... they were fine.

"Hey."

A sudden voice startled me, bringing me out of my small daze. I looked in front of my desk, and there stood a girl. She was the girl that transferred here not that long ago. I don't remember her name, but I recognize her appearance.

"Now you hear me! You were singing a bit ago, right?"

Did she hear me? How long ago did she get in here anyway? I didn't hear her come in. I was deaf in my left ear, but I still should have been able to hear the door opening. Was she here the whole time? No, I looked around the whole class before I started.

"... Well, it must have been you, since you're the only person in here. I heard it from the outside, I didn't want to disturb it, so I only came in after you finished. Sorry about that..."

“ ”

“But! Your singing was really good!”

“... Huh..?”

“It was really amazing, like you are a professional or something! I can’t sing well at all, so I’m a bit jealous... but I really think so!” It was then, she gave me such a wide and bright smile... and for some reason, I couldn’t take my eyes off of her. It was strange, like I was hearing something foreign that I couldn’t understand. No one else has ever complimented me before. No one else has ever smiled at me like that. No one else... has been nice to me like that before.

All the other kids would make fun of me for being a loner, they would bully me until they got bored, but the next day the cycle would repeat itself. I was used to being alone, and being treated like a nobody. But... this girl in front of me, on her own decided to come up and talk to me, and compliment my singing. With the kind words she gave me and that radiant beam...



"... Ah..." I could barely get my words out, for some reason, my face felt a little hot, and my chest began to hurt a little "... T... Thanks..." I didn't really ever talk to others, so I didn't know what to say to her. I wasn't used to this at all.

Before I could say anything else, she sprung up "Oh! I have to go, sorry..!" she made her way to the doorway, and before leaving, turned around and said "... I'd like to hear you sing again someday!" with that, she left and closed the door behind her.

I was left to be alone once again, but this time... "What was that... just now..?"

For some reason, I couldn't stop thinking about her.

...

It started off as a small love.

Our first true meeting was back in Elementary School. I had moved from France not that many years ago. I was a stranger to all of the other children, and because of my deaf ear, I knew I was different. So, I would keep to myself.

While everyone else picked on or ignored me, that girl was the first person to approach and talk to me. She complimented my singing. I remember her smile from that moment to this day. This girl showed me a glimpse of her kindness that day... it was a small, seemingly insignificant interaction, but I had developed a small love for her because of it. Maybe it was one of those childish crushes, but from then on, I continued singing with her in mind.

"I'd like to hear you sing again someday." It was because of her that I continued singing.

Although... we didn't interact much after that, and in the upcoming school years, we wouldn't share a class again either. I never saw again her after that, but I kept singing so that one day, my voice could reach her, wherever she was.

In junior high, though we didn't go to the same school, I would rarely, but sometimes see her on the train. She never seemed to notice me, but I would. Even back then, I thought she was cute... but I never built up the courage to ever talk to her, after all, what would I even say to her? It wasn't like we were remotely close.

As I kept singing, my talents would give me rewards, and I would win competitions. Years would pass, and I kept singing until eventually Noe found me and I joined LUMIERE in junior high school. A few more years passed and I'm in my second year of high school.

The rest of LUMIERE had already graduated at this point, so it was just me still in school. LUMIERE was a band that held lives at venues regularly. It was the backstage of one of our lives that a girl ended up lost, and I was the one who found her. She didn't hold any ill intentions and was genuinely lost, so I told her the directions back to the audience area. She thanked me and left, and that should have been the end of it... but the next day, I saw her again. We coincidentally went to the same high school. She apologized to me again for the trouble she caused yesterday. She was so sincere about it, even if it honestly wasn't that big of a deal to me, but then... she said.

"I'll be supporting you from here on out, Re-o-do-san."

She had the same smile as that girl from all those years ago. That smile I never forgot... this girl in front of me... it was then I realized was that same girl from elementary school. Why didn't I notice earlier? She had changed, in a way where she seemed to have become more mellow than when we were in elementary school. It's obvious she would with age, but... She had grown into a wonderful lady. At the same time, however, she looked almost the same, she was just as cute as she was back then. Her kindness and daintiness... and that bright smile of her's... was all the same too.

Although it seemed like she didn't remember me just as I did, I was fine with that. It was a long time ago after all, and what she did for me was probably just one of her many acts of kindness. However, to me, it was everything. And here she is, that same girl, in front of me again. Sometimes I wondered if it was fate's doing that brought us together like this.

From then on we interacted more and more. I got to see more of her sweetness, her shyness, her cuteness, everything. That small crush that was harbored in my heart all those years ago, meeting her again, before I knew it, had grown into deep love. The more I interacted with her the harder I fell for her.

Eventually, we came into our third and final year of high school. We still spent time together even if we weren't in the same class, but months of our third year would pass, and I soon knew that if I didn't tell her how I felt, I would lose her again. I didn't want that, not when I loved her so much.

I then thought of a perfect date to ask her out. While I had the general idea of what to do, I wanted to just tell her my feelings as they came to me rather than reciting something I had thought of and practiced prior. I loved her so much, so it wasn't that hard.

That day went on perfectly as I planned. Somehow, I remember the words I told her to this day, "Yua, I like you. I've liked you this entire time... ever since I've met you... and the more we spent time together I fell for you... I've never felt this way before. How cute you are, how kind you are, I like everything about you. I... want you to be my girlfriend. As a vocalist, I'll have to keep it a secret, but I won't let it get in the way of the two of us. I want to be with you more... I want to make you happy, I want to show you how much you mean to me and how much I care about you... That's how I feel, and what I wanted to tell you."

Of course, she didn't know, but when I said the entire time, I really meant ever since we first met in elementary school. At that point, I was known as LUMIERE's prince. It wasn't something I wanted or chose to become, but for her, like an adorable and beautiful princess in my eyes, I would be happily her prince.

Her reaction I also remember so clearly. I didn't expect her to cry because of it. I've seen her cry before, but this time... it ended up being cries of joy because of how happy she was. She asked me if I was sure I liked her... she didn't know I liked her ever since I was a child.

When I got to hug her for the first time, she was incredibly soft and warm, and she fit perfectly into my arms. It was hard to let go, after I've been wanting to touch her like this for a long time, hug her, kiss her... the two of us were finally dating.

Eventually, LUMIERE joined Climax Records. I started interacting with a lot more people after joining, whether it be staff, the other bands, or even our fans, Minettes, but in the end my girlfriend, Yua, was the only one I wanted to be sweet to. Above anyone else, I loved her the most, after all. She continued supporting my activities as a vocalist, even during the times we couldn't see each other. There were times I really couldn't see her or even contact her, those times being whenever that shitty panda brought us out to different places for our survival wars. Though, even on those, she was supporting me back home.

I would often confide in her about my problems and troubles at work, and she would support me every time, whether it be helping me solve my issues or simply listening to me. From times I would fight with my band members, to times I was struggling to create or sing a song. No matter what, she was always there for me, Yua was kind to me no matter what. Even when I eventually told her about my deaf left ear, Yua continued to love me as if nothing was different. I seriously love her so much, I really do think I would be nothing without her.

She was like the light that shone upon my world. She is... my everything.

...

“Reo-kun...”

Thinking about everything, made me realize my feelings for Yua had never changed, instead, they had grown even stronger and stronger. I seriously loved this girl so much to the point it hurt, to the point I couldn't live on if she wasn't by my side.

“Reo-kun?”

It was like... we were meant to be together.

“Reo-kun.”

Perhaps it was just me that thought this, but either way being together with her now-

“Reo-kun!”

“Ah.”

Turning my head, Yua was beside me shaking my arm a little. She gave a worried expression “... Are you alright?”

Crap, I was too deep into my thoughts. I ignored her by accident, and now she's worried... “Sorry, I'm fine. I was just thinking about something. I didn't mean to concern you.” I gave her hand a soft squeeze. I wish I could have given her a hug or a kiss instead, but we were in the middle of a busy store right now.

Although Yua seemed a bit uncertain about my response, she gave a small smile “I see... So then...” letting go of my hand, she grabbed two of the cat plushies off the shelf and turned towards me “Which do you think is cuter?”

I studied them both, a black and a pink stuffed cat. In a way, kind of resembled her and I with the colours of our hair. She liked getting things of those two colours. They were both pretty cute, but “This one.” I instead poked her cheek.

She stared back at me, and I watched as her cheeks became a soft pink. So cute, seriously... I couldn't help but smile. Teasing her like this always gave me the best expressions.

“T-Thank you... but I-I was talking about these.”

“Haha, I know. They’re both cute... why not both?”

“I like them both, but I shouldn’t... I have to refrain from spending too much...”

“Then, why don’t I buy both of them for you?”

“... Reo-kun, you can’t just buy everything I want for me.”

“Why not?”

“Because... I feel bad.”

That was her usual reason for not wanting me to get her things. She was truly the kindest and cutest girl in existence, worrying about little things like this “It’s fine. I wouldn’t offer to buy them for you if I wasn’t serious? Come on, let’s get them both.” she was still looking a little guilty “... Then, you buy one, and I buy the other. That way you get the two of them without me buying both. Does that sound better?”

Yua still looked unsure, but she eventually gave a nod and put the cats into the shopping basket I was holding “...Thank you.”

“You’re very welcome. They’ll be cute on your desk.”

“... Mm.”

She finally smiled again. I offered my hand to her again before she took it and we continued our shopping.

Even moments with her like this I cherished... As long as I was spending time with her, I was happy. Our time together is nothing but happiness...

I thought about it for a long time. About how I would do it in a heartbeat, how happy the two of us would be like that, but realistically, I didn’t know when was a good time to actually do it. I wasn’t scared about her saying no... but rather she wasn’t ready for it. I didn’t ever want to make her uncomfortable.

But... after deeply thinking about everything we had been through together, I felt like, perhaps, now was finally the time.

I thought about every detail meticulously. Everything has to go perfectly...

Our shopping continued without a hitch, I could feel my resolve strengthening. For some reason, I wanted to be closer to her more than ever.

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When we got home after having dinner, setting down all the bags I was carry, I immediately hugged Yua after not being able to for the entire day.

“Ah...”

In the corner of my eye I could see her cheeks turn pink. Cute... so cute. Her reactions were always the cutest, I seriously didn't want to let go... but eventually I did. After all... there were things the both of us had to do.

Yua and I reviewed all the items we bought today. Besides groceries for tomorrow, she bought a new skirt, a little bit of decor for our home... and the two cat plushies we bought together. I didn't really buy anything for myself, seeing her happy was more than enough.

I checked my phone which was off the entire day, only to see Noe had blown up the Line group chat. Geez, this guy talks so much... but now was not the time to reply to him “If you don't mind, I'm going to go shower first. You want to deal with all the things you got, right?”

“Mm, that's fine with me.”

Like this, she would shower after me, which gave me ample time to prepare everything. Perfectly... everything needed to be perfect.

I wanted this moment to be something intimate between the two of us, I didn't want to share a moment like this with anyone else, without the eyes of the public, and with me completely as myself. It is why the comfort of our bedroom was perfect. Though, I did wonder if this would be good enough for her.

We did go on a little shopping date earlier today, by my own suggestion, maybe if we went later in the day it would have been a good opportunity... No, I shouldn't doubt myself, I know Yua well... I know everything about her. I'm sure she will be happy with this.

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I finished cleaning up and setting up our room before she arrived. I somehow managed to hide the flowers I got for her yesterday in my at-home studio and set the vase they were in on the nightstand. There was just enough space for it. Red, pink, and white roses... still in good condition. We didn't normally keep flowers around the house, but I got them just for this occasion. Yua liked flowers, so I'm sure she wouldn't mind them.

And of course... I got the most important piece with me, one for her, and a matching one for myself.

When I made sure everything was perfect, I sat down on the bed and finally texted Noe back. He was talking about wanting to go out and eat tomorrow after work, but I didn't feel like it, not when I could be with Yua instead. Speaking of...

I heard a knock on the door, and a meek voice from behind "Reo-kun?"

"Come in." I responded.

Yua opened the door, and after laying her eyes upon me, noticed the vase of roses I had gotten for her sitting on the nightstand "Roses? Did you get these, Reo-kun?"

"Mm. They're for you."

"For me?" she stared at them again before sitting down next to me and letting out a small smile "They're really lovely, but what for? You've never got me flowers before."

"That's true, but... I simply felt like it, just this once. Isn't it nice to get flowers?" Sometimes LUMIERE would get flowers at lives, but it's true I never really got flowers for Yua, as she told me she didn't mind not getting them, and that she never really had a place to put any flowers anyway. It would probably be considered strange to have never given your girlfriend flowers before... but we were fine without. I would always give her other kinds of gifts she liked anyways.

Yua seemed happy with my surprise though, as she smiled a little brighter "Mm... it's nice experiencing receiving flowers for the first time"

I was glad about her positive reaction "Maybe when these flowers wilt, we should get some artificial ones to keep in the vase."

"That sounds good. Oh, but maybe before then, I can try making pressed flower petals..."

She was truly endearing. This small conversation between the two of us only strengthened my resolve. I took a deep breath in, before taking one of her hands into mine “Yua... I have something really important I want to talk to you about.”

“..?” Yua paused and her eyes widened a little as she tilted her head a little like a curious animal.

She was always so cute when she did that, but I had to keep my composure. Still, I couldn’t help but feel a little nervous. It was strange of me to feel this way. The last time I felt this nervous... was back in high school when I asked her to be my girlfriend. As she took her seat beside me, I asked “... You... do love me, right?”

She simply blinked and responded “... Of course I do. I love you the most in the world, Reo-kun.” her smile was warm as always.

“... I see. Thank you.” I didn’t doubt her love for me in the slightest, but I still wanted to hear it from her. Her words reassured me, and gave me a little more confidence for what I was going to tell her. I *had* to tell her “... You know, lately, I have been thinking about things. Like how much I love you, how happy you make me, how I want you to always be by my side... well, I always think about you, but lately even more so. I’ve liked you ever since we were children together back in elementary, and we have been together for so long as well...”

I noticed her cheeks already starting to become pink. Seriously, I wanted to hug and kiss her with how cute she was, but I refrained and continued “... You mean a lot to me. The whole world... no, the whole universe. Without you, I’m nothing... even if I somehow lost everything else, I just need you by my side. I have thought like this for a long time. Of course, LUMIERE and all our Minettes are important, but neither could compare to how much you mean to me.” We exchanged eye contact “Yua, I want you to close your eyes.”

“... Eh..?”

“Just for a brief moment.”

She didn’t ask any further and simply did it. While I kept her hand on top of one of mine, I got up and kneeled in front of her. Then, with my other hand, I took out the box I had prepared, placed it on top of her palm and opened it. With that, everything was set.

“You can open your eyes now.”

Yua opened her eyes and stared at me before her eyes slowly drifted to our hands. She let out a small gasp upon seeing the ring. It was a rose gold coloured ring with a small embedded pink jewel within it. We had once gone together to pick out matching rings, and this one along with its match was one she liked, though it was too expensive for what we wanted. I hadn't forgotten about it, and when I went back for them, I found them to be perfect for this moment.

Her eyes then laid back onto me.

I strengthened my resolve and looked at her straight in the eyes "... There is no one else I would rather spend the rest of my life with. I swear to always make you happy. I love you until the end of time, and I'll tell you love you until my last breath. I know I told you "Let's get married" before, but, I'm serious this time. So... I'll ask you again."

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"Yua... will you marry me?"

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I said it. I actually asked her. I felt a wave of emotion overwhelm me. Relief, anticipation, a mixture of feelings as I waited for her response.

The entire time, she was staring at me speechless. I wanted to hold her so badly, but I had to wait for her to speak. I could feel my hands start to become shaky, but I tried to hold them still. I was getting nervous again waiting for her response. No, calm down. I stared intently at the girl sitting in front of me. I could see tears were swelling within her eyes. She was crying. Did... I say something wrong? No, that's not it. She was the type to cry whenever her emotions became overwhelming, not just with sadness. Seeing her reaction, I had a feeling I knew her answer before she responded.

Yua looked down to wipe her eyes before looking back up at me, and with a weak voice "... Yes..."

"..?"

“Ah...” she cleared her throat. after taking a deep breath in, despite the tears in her eyes, with a bright and warm smile “Yes... I will be more than happy to.” her tears started to build again, and this time, they couldn’t stop “... S-Sorry... I... I’m... I’m so emotional right now... I’m so happy...” her voice cracked, but through her tears, she smiled at me with such joy and tenderness.

“... Yua...” I put the ring aside before sitting beside her and pulling her into a tight embrace. I couldn’t wait any longer, not even to put on the rings I had gotten for the both of us. She held onto me as she cried. Seeing her like this, it almost made me tear up a little too. Lifting up her face, I gazed at her lovingly, the face of the girl I loved so much.

I felt over the moon, I’m now engaged to the girl I loved for all those years... that girl from elementary school who reached out to me when no one else did.

It started off as a small love... and that love has turned into an eternal promise.

Wiping away her tears, I kissed her. I couldn’t tell how many times I kissed her, or for how long. It didn’t really matter. Right now, I wanted to be with her, to feel her more than anything.

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Her desk located in the corner of our bedroom has really come together. She has placed the vase onto it, I’ve got to say it fit well with the other items and trinkets she has. Little stuffed animals, books, a stand with all the jewelry I have given her, a multi-photo frame with a bunch of photos from different dates we went to... the second button from my school blazer I gave to her on our high school graduation... it was quite a bit of stuff, yet she would still occasionally add things to it.

It was her private area, yet she also dedicated it to both of us. Seeing it in the morning always made me feel happy, no matter how many times I’ve seen it before.

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“Say, Ouji, I couldn’t help but notice...” After rehearsing a song, Simba pointed at my hand placed on top of the microphone “Your hand... there’s a rather fancy ring on your ring finger.”

“Oh... this?” I thought about whether I should tell them or not, but there wasn’t really a point in hiding it “... I’m... engaged.”

Simba nodded understandingly “Oooh... gotcha. Eh?”

“Eh?”

“Ehhh??”

Before I knew it, everyone was staring at me jaw dropped.

Noe was the first to break his shocked expression “Reo... you proposed to your girlfriend?! When was this?! Why didn’t you tell us?!”

He began to shake me, but I pushed him away “Stop that. It was only last night.” I didn’t tell anyone, really. There was no need to right now anyways. Going on my phone and tweeting like it was any other day... I was used to not talking about things that happened between her and I, not to the audience, not even to these guys.

“Last night... how did you do it? Was it somewhere fancy? Or maybe somewhere picturesque? What did you tell her?”

“Shut up. I don’t have to tell you anything.”

Thomas then walked up to me and put a hand on my shoulder “Reo, congratulations. I can’t believe you’ve grown so fast.”

“Haah?” What was this guy saying?

“Our prince and princess is finally going to become a king and queen, huh? So, are you going to have a ceremony?”

We all looked towards Simba, who suddenly came upon asking about a ceremony.

Noe looked at me, almost expectantly “Aah, if you’re going to have a ceremony, then you’ll have to invite us, right?!”

“And that would also mean having to see your girl-... fiancée too, right?” Thomas added.

“T... That’s...” it was true we were planning on having a ceremony inviting a few people we knew, including... the rest of LUMIERE and the other bands. It’d be strange if they weren’t invited. Yua said she wanted a small ceremony too, and I agreed. After all, this sort of thing

with the person I love so dearly would be a one-in-a-lifetime opportunity. And... to see Yua in a wedding dress... I couldn't help but feel happy simply imagining it. A wedding ceremony would be nice... but that would also mean there wasn't much I could do to hide her away from the eyes of others. Of course, I thought of this. I knew eventually I would have to introduce her to those guys eventually... "It won't be more than what's necessary. Ask or do anything more to her and I'll seriously kill you."

"Right, right, no one is going to be laying hands on a taken woman." Simba nodded.

I still didn't trust any other guy interacting with Yua, but with the two of us getting married, it couldn't be helped.

At the same time, I don't want to reveal this information to Minettes for Yua's sake, at least not any time soon, meaning I'll probably take my ring off during lives. I have always kept her a secret, so nothing much about that would change.

Noe nudged Simba with a smile "I can't believe after so long Reo's finally going to introduce us to his girlfriend! I wonder what she's like... I've only ever had a glance at her before."

The other three began to talk amongst themselves. The sudden topic of interest was me being engaged "Oi, whatever happened to practice?!"