

Love and Passion Among the Flowers

After the physical intensity with Knuckles, Grudge descends toward the gentler valleys at the foot of the floating island. Here, the air does not vibrate with ancestral energy, but with the scent of petals and the calm sound of a stream. Amy Rose is sitting on a picnic blanket, intent on carefully arranging some colorful cards on a small wooden table.

Amy looked up and, seeing Grudge's imposing gray silhouette arrive, waved her hand enthusiastically, her iconic red dress shining under the sun.

"Grudge! You're finally here!" Amy exclaimed with a radiant smile. "Knuckles sent me a message... he says you've become 'part of the mountain' or something like that. But honestly, you just look like someone who needs some rest and a good cup of tea."

She pointed to the empty seat across from her. Grudge sat down, feeling a bit out of place with his quills amidst such delicacy.

"Sonic told me you're a very deep person," Amy continued, returning to her cards. "I was just consulting my Tarot. You know, many think they're just games, but I believe they help us reflect on ourselves. And speaking of reflection... How is your music coming along? Last time we met, you mentioned that new piano composition. I hope the battles haven't taken away the time for your symphonies!"

Amy moved the "Lovers" card and sighed, looking toward the horizon where she knew Sonic was running.

Grudge, with a touch of sweetness, greeted Amy and said: "Hello Amy! It's been a while. When I am in moments of serenity, I play the piano and immerse myself in the fascinating world of music. I think it's truly relaxing; it's like transmitting a part of yourself without necessarily having to utter a word—it draws out your soul..."

The gray hedgehog saw Amy observing the "Lovers" card with particular attention and said: "I understand from how you look at that card, and from those events where you tried with Sonic—which I observed from afar (with a hint of embarrassment in saying so) during my mission to find Silver in the past before meeting you all—that your love is truly immense, but it seems that sometimes Sonic is blind to it..."

Grudge then continued: "In reality, I believe Sonic reciprocates your love as well, but I think he is shy about showing it in front of others and perhaps he isn't ready yet. Maybe Sonic isn't used to stopping for a moment... Though from what I saw regarding that grueling battle where Sonic faced Sage and saw you in that 'pixel' form, there seemed to be a particularly intimate moment more than ever when it was just the two of you!"

Amy listened to Grudge's words with almost magical attention, as if every syllable were a note from the symphony he spoke of. When Grudge mentioned observing her from afar during his search for Silver, Amy blushed slightly—not out of annoyance, but out of surprise at discovering how much dedication Grudge had put into understanding their world before becoming a part of it.

Amy smiled tenderly when Grudge described the piano as a way to transmit the soul without words. "It's exactly like that!" she exclaimed. "Your music is like your balance: it doesn't need to shout to be heard."

But when Grudge touched upon the delicate subject of Sonic and mentioned the moment with Sage on Starfall Islands, Amy's gaze became dreamy and a bit melancholic.

"You saw that too, Grudge?" she whispered, tracing the edge of the Lovers card with her fingers. "Yes... in that moment, amidst those pixels and digital chaos, I felt that he really wanted to stop. It's true, Sonic is... well, he's Sonic. He runs away from serious conversations faster than he runs from Eggman."

Amy chuckled, pouring some tea into Grudge's cup.

"It heartens me so much to hear this from you. You, who live through music and vibrations, can see beneath the surface. If an observant guy like you says he isn't blind, but just 'not ready,' then maybe my melody isn't as out of tune as I thought."

"Just like your piano, Grudge... maybe love needs its times of adagio and crescendo. I can't force the rhythm of his race; I can only make sure I'm there when he decides to slow down."

Then, Amy became joyful again, reshuffling the cards: "Anyway, I hope that after all this peace among the flowers, you've found the inspiration for a gentler movement."

The moment among the flowers took on a melancholic shade, as Grudge's wisdom clashed with the emptiness he felt in his own heart.

Grudge replied to Amy with a sincere smile, letting his gaze wander over the colorful expanses surrounding them.

"You know, you're right! This floral setting has actually inspired a new musical piece in me... and of course, I always try to keep all my compositions alive to remember them!"

However, as he spoke those words, Grudge's smile didn't quite reach his eyes. Inside him, a feeling of deep longing began to take hold. Observing Amy's dedication to Sonic, Grudge felt a pang of sadness: despite his strength and balance, he felt the lack of someone to share those same episodes of love with. He wished for a female creature who could be his complementary melody, but unfortunately, he had not yet found her.

Amy, with her keen sensitivity, noticed that brief veil of shadow on her friend's face. She gently placed her hand on his, pausing the reshuffling of the cards for a moment.

"Grudge... your music is beautiful because it is full of space for someone else," she said softly. "I don't know what the cards hold, but I know that a heart capable of composing such symphonies won't stay alone forever. Perhaps your 'missing note' is just waiting for the right moment to enter the stage, just like you did with us."

Grudge nodded, grateful for those words, and rose slowly. He had learned a lot on this journey among his friends: Sonic had given him the drive, Tails the clarity, Knuckles the solidity, and Amy the hope.