

Chapter 1 - To meet you early

(Disclaimer: this is just a fanfic. These people aren't dating
irl prob, so please don't harass them. Also, this is a FANFIC, it's for fun.)

“Move it, pendejo,”

A white haired girl spat these words at me as she pushed me forward into the person in front of me. We were in a large room of recruits side by side, joining the Royal Nation's newest platoon. I was clueless and unaware of what had happened. Her eyes glared at me with disgust and annoyance. Her face with that cocky grin. I spotted the dog tag around her neck. “Emi Erebet,” I stared at her for a moment. My instant thought was “Who is this bitch.” Then realization hit. The name Emi sounded so familiar. No, it couldn't be.

“Emi,” I mutter to myself. I felt as if I was in a daze.

“What? I'm not apologizing to you, pendejo,” She grumbles, staring at me with her sharp gaze.

That voice... smooth yet steady, wrapping around my heart. Her piercing gaze, framed by long, silvery-gray hair that fell in soft, wavy curls, was impossible to look away from. What a breathtaking, dashing figure—one that seemed to pull me in without a word. There was no doubt in my mind that it was her.

“Do you recognize me?” I ask her, my eyes staring directly at her.

“What? Why would I recognize a nobody like you?” Emi responded. A grin spreads across my face. She doesn't recognize me. I can restart from zero. I look up at a huge smirk. I grab her hands, gripping them tight.

“Emi. Marry me.”

“WHAT!” She responded, becoming flustered, her face bright red. She pulled her hands quickly away from me.

“I admire you... NO! I LOVE YOU!” I say as I lean closer to her face.

“Are you insane! We just met.” She says, still blushing red. Adorable, I think to myself. God to savour every moment of this. The girl who saved me at my lowest point.

“ATTENTION PRIVATES!” A large shout from behind me. SGT Claire. Ah, right... I was drafted from my home to join the Royal Nation and its stupid war. I heard you get more meals, so I didn't mind, but now I definitely don't mind now that Emi is here. I immediately stand up straight and get back into orderly formation. Yet I know it... Emi is blushing bright red behind me, and I can't turn around to see her gorgeous, blushing face. How cruel this world can be. I

pondered my fantasy until the lecture was done. Yes, that's right. We're in a war. The year was 1923, right after World War. The world is split into two. I didn't really care for history, but from what I learned as a child, the war is mostly about the Golden Empire and the Royal Nation.

The surface was bombed till nothing remains, forcing everyone to live underground, and yes, my home was destroyed on the surface. Quite early on during the bombing, actually. And yes, the person who helped me out during my dark times was none other than Emi! Although she acts like a bully and most people hate them for her narcissistic behaviour, they still feel bad and have empathy. She may not remember, but for a few months, she helped me get back on my feet and kept me away from death.

After SGT Claire finishes her lecture and speech, we are all sent to our barracks to move in. We were separated into rooms of 6. Lucky for me, my barracks are in the same place as Emi's! Oh, how perfect. I turn to look at her with a response of a glare full of hatred. She chose the spot completely opposite my bed.

"Mark my words, I'm going to make you suffer from the time you are here. Not a moment of peace will be expected, you understand?" Emi glares with a sinister smirk

"Please, by all means, keep it coming," I respond with a face full of bliss.

"I HATE YOU!"

"AND I LOVE YOU!"

"What in the world is wrong with you, you freak of nature?"

"Nothing is wrong, just the power of love..."

"God, you are insufferable!" She chucks her pillow straight at my face. I don't dodge or flinch. Like embracing love. "What a tsundere," I think to myself.

And with this, I said to the life of despair, depression, and sadness. A new hope has appeared before me. Goodbye to that miserable famine and hello to a dream come true.

So I thought... the future was really turning bright.

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"Arin, you are a dumbass. Did you really taunt the biggest bully in our platoon? She is clearly stronger than you physically."

Yes, that voice comes from my quiet, reserved best buddy ol pal Tsukino Mae! Or what I like to nickname her, Masumae, or just Mae for short. I met her not that long before being

drafted into the military. She honestly reminds me of a snail. She is slow, but calm. She is always reserved and goes at her own pace despite the situation. Although she doesn't think much, she still takes care of me.

Oh, I must introduce myself. My name is Arin. Arin Yuuli to be exact. I was born to immigrants who moved from the East to the West. As you heard, my home was bombed and moved underground. I was saved during the bombing by none other than PFC, now SGT, Shiro. When he saved me, he was nothing but an officer, and now it's good to see him. I heard he was a Radio or something. Whatever that means.

"That wasn't antagonizing for a fight. We were just doing lovers bantering." I respond to Mae's accusations.

"What drugs have you been doing to even think like this..." Mae looked fed up with my nonsense. She went back to eating her soup. "Clearly, if you keep continuing, you will get a fist lodged in you're face."

"REALLY!" I grin with excitement. She looked at me unamused and sighed.

The room we were in was quite a large room. I should mention we are in the middle of breakfast after all. Maybe lunch or dinner, who knows. There isn't a sun or moon to tell the time. Many recruits and veterans filled the Canteen: some notable groups and their own seats. The Volk group is filled with Brigadiers. Another group is the same battalion as us. I think they called them Op Reserve B5. The loudest group in the dining hall, with most of them shouting at each other. A brown hair girl shouting at her groupmate, and the Worst of all, Tut is in that group. Honestly, not my cup of tea.

As I sit and chat, Emi swoops up next to me. She grabbed one of my bread pieces and dunked it into the soup, causing it to crumble into little pieces, mixing it with the soup.

"Did you honestly think you deserved that bread?" She lets out a cocky, loud laugh, thinking she got the best of me. I immediately chugged the soup.

"W-what are you doing!"

"Eating the soup of love"

A bit later, she shoves me onto the floor in the hallway. I fall face-first into the wooden floor. I look up to see the cause of this. The gorgeous Emi is smirking down upon me. She stood there, proud of what she did. She is so... darn... CUTE!

"You walk too slowly, Pendejo." She says

Mae crouched down next to me with a worried face. "Are you alright?"

“That was amazing!” I look up to her with pure happiness

“Huh?” Emi stares at me, creeped out, and Mae looks displeased with my response.

“I lov- AGH!” Emi stomped on my foot before kicking me with her foot.

“Know your place, vermin,” She said to my face

“-ease..” I respond

“Begging to me won’t make me stop,” She says with a smirk.

“PLEASE KICK ME HARDER! You clearly held back when you kicked me to the floor! So put some muscle into it and kick me HARDER!” I shout

“Ehe... You freak!” She storms off

“Why do you look so disappointed?” Mae asked, looking at me.

“Guh, because she isn’t teasing me anymore!” I respond with a face full of disappointment and sadness.

“You are a weird one...”

A bit later, during first aid practice, Emi walks up to me, taunting that I don’t have a partner to practice with.

“I assume nobody wants to be you’re partner...”

“SGT Claire, Emi volunteered to be my partner!” I shout

“What no I- fuck...”

While eating breakfast again in the dining hall, Mae asks me a question

“Why do you even tolerate her bullying anyway?”

“You clearly aren’t seeing the bigger picture. These are acts of love. First, when she dunked my bread in my soup, destroying it, but she made sure not to waste food, making sure it dissolved in the soup! Secondly, when she shoved me, she pushed me in an area where the floor was made of wood instead of the rocky hallways. Also, when she kicked me while I was on the floor, she lacked strength in her kicks, holding back.”

“That still is bullying...”

“Finally, during first aid practice, she even offered to be my partner while I was alone!”

“No, I don’t think that ti-”

“OVERALL SHE TEASES ME OUT OF PURE LOVE!” I shout before spotting none other than Emi, who is deliberately sitting on the other side of the dining hall. “I must go, Mae, I’ll talk to you later.”

I run over to her, excited, while she grumbles and stares at me with disdain.

“Oh Emi, my beloved!”

“What do you want, pendejo?”

“Oh, nothing, just admiring my future wife.”

“Please don’t call me that.”

“Call you what, my beloved?”

“How can you even handle my bullying...”

“You mean our lover banters?”

“No, it’s me bullying you!”

“What! That wasn’t your teasing!”

“Insufferable!”

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The first training session was an intelligence test. Whoever scores the highest upon multiple subjects, such as History, Writing, Math, or Surgery, would score the highest. The test would be placed in a multiple-choice or short-answer situation. Luckily, since I had nothing to do for most of my life, I did do a lot of research on most of these subjects. The first upon the test was history.

Question: Who started the war between the Golden Empire and the Royal Nation?

Obviously, the golden empire. They did teach it in our school, and posters were filled everywhere. Isn’t that obvious, I thought to myself. I breeze through the exam in seconds.

Our Second training session of Soldat training was mining. My group's job was supposed to mine from point A to Point B in groups of three. My teammates were two girls who wouldn't stop bickering. One named Alloy and the other named Caz. As we mined through the tunnel, mud splattered all over my clothes and helmet. God, I wanted to shower desperately, but I had no choice right now. With the continuous mining of the pickaxe clashing against rocks, followed by the loud arguments and insults.

"Caz, can you shut up! I'm trying my best!" Alloy shouts angrily, the last of her patience waning.

"With those frail arms of yours? I highly doubt it." Caz responded with a grin of evil thoughts.

"Fuck off!"

After a long mining session, we were nearing the end when all of a sudden the ceiling above abruptly cracked, sending down a hail of falling rocks. I wasn't there to notice, but a sharp scream of pain pierced the air. I whip around to see Caz leaning against the wall, holding her shoulder, Crimson red trickling down her hand. Although it wasn't fatal, we had to take care of it immediately. Before I could react, Alloy already ripped a piece of her shirt off and wrapped it around Caz's shoulder.

"Caz, are you alright! You should've been more careful! You idiot!" She shouted quickly, securing the wound.

"I can keep mining... We're almost near the end." Caz said with a hunch of pain under her breath.

"No!"

"Yes!"

Alloy grabs Caz by the hair, pulling her face close.

"Listen here, you bitch... You'd better promise me right now! Don't strain yourself or move without permission, or I'll make sure myself that you won't have more than just a dislocated shoulder." She says, trying to intimidate Caz, yet her voice carries suppressed worries and concern in a mellow tone just behind the exterior.

"I promise," Caz mutters, but a visible smile is forming under her helmet.

"Hey! Are you even taking me seriously!" She huffs

With that, Caz stops moving, and Alloy completes the rest of the course. Alloy helps carry Caz to an instructor who points them to the mortician's wing. Before Alloy leaves, I look over to

her.

“You two should just kiss,” I say before walking off to the next training session, leaving her dumb struck.

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Shots ring through the air with the smell of gunpowder. Simple Soldat Target practice. Everyone was equipped with either a Prince long rifle or a Grace Service Revolver. Shot after shot, I still could barely get any headshots, averaging shoulder and arm shots. Worst of all, they forced us to wear helmets. I could barely see, and my breath filled it. Helmets save lives, they say, but honestly, this is horrible.

“Fuck” I mumble under my breath. I look over at Mae with a way more accurate shot than mine.

Next were melee fights. One-on-One sparring matches with each other with wooden knives. Now this is where I strive. My first practice opponent was Mae. Despite wanting to be with Emi, she had her victims to torment. I quickly take a stance, hands in front, my right hand carries the wooden Knife. Mae took her stance with her hands up and carried her knife right-handed. Clearly, Mae had no melee combat experience.

“Ready?”

“Ready.”

Mae lunged forward, her arm slicing downward. Right before her knife hit me, I caught her wrist mid-swing, twisting behind her and forcing her down onto her stomach in one swift motion.

“I win. Try not to use backhanded unless you’re stabbing from behind.”

“Yeah,” she mumbled.

Now then, the moment we’ve been waiting for. After some minor duels, I face off against none other than the tsundere herself, Emi.

“Let’s have a deal,” Emi proposed to me. “If I win, you have to stop talking to me entirely.”

“No, why would I do that?”

“At least think it over!”

“Ok... I decline”

“What, why!”

“I don’t gain anything!”

“Fine, I’ll do whatever you want as long as it doesn’t cross any line!”

I hold a devious grin while she looks at me with annoyance. I take my stance the same as before. Emi holds her wooden knife. She looks so hot and cool. I can’t help but just stare in awe at this magnificent figure right in front of me. Emi stands before me. Her gray hair was tucked into her helmet, with some pouring out. She makes the first move quickly, trying to take me down in one swift move. I fight defensively, quickly stepping side to side

“Can you stop fighting passively! You won’t win unless you beat me, and I assure you running won’t work!”

I smirk and stay quiet, still fighting defensively, only pushing and side-stepping. After a few minutes or so, I decide to make my first move.

“If you say so,” I respond to her previous request. I grab her wrist when she tries to swipe, and before she can act with my free hand, I push her off balance. With that, I quickly pin her to the floor, both her hands above her head and legs straddling her waist. I lean on top of her, looking down while she lies on her back. My wooden knife was up to her neck.

“I win,” I say with a smirk

Despite the helmet covering her face, I can tell she had a face with moment of shock before blushing. Her purple eyes are trying to look away from the eye hole in her helmet. I felt the warmth of her figure against me. Her chest was rising and falling, giving away her unease away.

“I get it now, so can you get off me...” She mutters in her quiet voice, trying not to decide if she should be mad or embarrassed.

I continue to straddle her waist, enjoying the moment, pretending not to hear her mutters. I savour every moment of this.

“I said, " Can you get off me!” She shouts with an angered tone. I sigh and let go, sitting up from her. How sad, the moment lasted too short. With that, the basic Soldat training was complete.

It's finally time for the final results of Soldat training. A highly anticipated moment to see who places top amongst the rookies.

Soldat Intelligence Exam

1st Alloy Bron

2nd Plumo

3rd Adwin Dawd

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5th Matthew Puffy

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8th Caz Spaz

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14th Emi Erebet

15th Tsukino Mae

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18th Arin Yuuli

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34th Chris Ashton

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“Eh? Really, I thought I did way better,” I say, surprised by where I ranked.

“It’s because you keep falling for propaganda, Arin,” Mae says with a disappointed face. You should check your source first, at least.

“Oh... Alright,” I say, embarrassed.

Soldat Mining Test

1st Adwin Dawd, Plumo, Matthew Puffy
2nd Emi Erebet, Chris Ashton, Tsukino Mae

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14th Arin Yuuli, Alloy Bron

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28th Caz Spaz (The only one to be injured while mining)

I sigh a bit of disappointment with Mae patting my back.

Soldat Accuracy Test

1st Matthew Puffy

2nd Chris Ashton

3rd Plumo

4th Emi Erebet

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6th Alloy Bron

7th Tsukino Mae

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27th Adwin Dawd

28th Arin Yuuli

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81st Caz Spaz (Injured while mining, unable to participate)

“Hah, peasant! You can’t even aim a gun properly? Are you even fit to be a soldier?” Emi points at me, laughing. I smile back at her and stick my tongue out at her.

“Yeah? Well, let’s look at our melee score next!”

Soldat Melee Test

1st Adwin Dawd

2nd Arin Yuuli

3rd Alloy Bron

4th Plumo

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6th Matthew Puffy

7th Chris Ashton

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21th Tsukino Mae

22nd Emi Erebet

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81st Caz Spaz (Injured while mining, unable to participate)

“Let’s GO!” A loud scream stretches throughout the training hall. I spot a boy celebrating by throwing his helmet into the air. It was the boy who came first. Adwin. “Beat that Plumo! I beat you, me better than plum!” He points at the boy next to him. I quickly move away, but smile, knowing I came in the top 2 in my battalion.

“Oh Emi?” I run over to Emi, grinning with joy.

“If you are here to gloat, just get over it.” She responds with a tone of annoyance

“Well, no, I’m actually here to claim the rest of the deal!”

“Oh, right... just don’t do something too embarrassing.” She looks down, scared of my request.

“I request you to stay by me at all times during battle,” I respond with a smile.

“That’s it? I thought you’d want something more.”

“I mean, if you want, I could have you fulfill some fantasies of mine!”

“What, no, I’m happy with what you asked!”

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“Oh Emi!”

“What do you want...” She responds, fed up.

“I’ll be sure to be your guardian. A vanguard to protect you whenever!” I say proudly, raising my fist above my head, watching her walk off. Throughout the week, she constantly avoids me. When I turn to her, she has already walked off to do some target practice.

“Uhh... she's ignoring me...”

“Is something the matter, Arin?” Masumae appeared behind me. The stars that shine in my day when the Sun isn’t there. A true friend indeed.

“Yes, Mae... Those who stand above all have smited me with misfortune.”

“You should be thankful Emi isn’t picking on you anymore.”

“WHY SHOULD I BE THANKFUL FOR ANYTHING AT ALL! Emi has been completely ignoring me for the past few days. It’s horrible... I need my daily dose of Emi or I might wither away and die...” I trust falling into Mae, who catches me easily.

“Maybe because you became so resilient to her that she lost interest. Also, you haven’t really caused her any problems, but annoyance, so I’m not surprised that she got over you quickly.”

“Wait, that means if I just.” I turn to Mae with an inspirational idea. “Mae, you are a genius!”

“I’m not a genius; you are just an idiot.”

I later find Emi talking to one of the squadmates. Chris Ashton. A 6-foot man with white hair and a 2-block style cut with sharp red eyes. I’m certain any girl or man would fall for him. Emi looks so happy and joyful as she speaks to him. Although jealousy rose in my stomach, I

decided to let it go. If Emi isn't gay, I can't control what can't be controlled. What matters is that she is happy.

"Emi," I sneak up behind her after Chris left and whisper in her ear.

"AHH! Oh, it's you, Arin. What do you want?" She stares at me with an annoyed face.

"You like him, don't you. You should go ask him out." I tell her with a smug look on my face.

"W-what are you talking about!" Emi exclaims, "I do not like him at all."

"Oh, come on, Emi. It is as plain as day. You like that, Chris boy. I heard he has a compass collection. Do not forsake yourself and go talk to him about it."

"I will not..." She says, blushing. Knowing Emi will not make the first move. I grab her hand and drag her along, running towards Chris.

"Let's play some Cho Dai Di!" I exclaim.

We sit at a table, the four of us. Me, my beloved Emi, Mae, and Chris. A perfect game of cards to have small talk over. I nudged Emi to talk about it and create chit chat.

"Come on, talk to him..." I mutter just enough for her to hear. Time is of the essence. I watch as Emi swallows air down her throat. A faint blush on her cheek as she looks up to Chris Ashton with a nervous stare.

"Chris. I heard you had a compass collection." She says as her voice stutters.

"I do. I love compasses," Chris responds with a half-monotonous, half-enthusiastic tone. "I have such a large collection. Would you like to see it someday?"

As Emi continued her chit-chat with Chris, I focused on the card game, determined to win. As seen, Emi has a weak poker face, clearly showing a bad hand. Chris and Mae have a strong poker face themselves. As the game continues, I notice that as Chris tells his backstory, it doesn't add up. Chris ends up winning the game. I was truly deceived here. I open my mouth to speak, wanting to ask him something before shouting occurs.

"Get ready Soldat! We are heading to Fort Perry!" A voice from one of the commanding officers shouted. One thing is for certain. I do not trust this Chris Ashton.