you against my eyelids

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you against my eyelids

by Anonymous

Summary

Hana has been trying to stay out of a hole. An instagram post brings her to the edge.

Her taxi is 5 minutes late. The app on her phone says delayed but the location tracker isn't working. She squints through the pouring rain anyways.

Maybe if she could just lean forward and risk - she steps backwards instead.

No. Better to be safe and dry. She could just call another taxi.

Getting wet is bad luck and today is important - her and Megumi's three year anniversary is in two days and today she will get her love the perfect present to represent it.

Her phone buzzes in her hands.

Nobara had posted to Instagram. Again.

She has her notifications on because with how much Megumi hates social media, Kugisaki Nobara is the only consistent source of candid photos.

She's rewarded immediately. This photo dump opens on Megumi's face, half asleep and smushed into the couch pillows. Her hair is sticking to her mouth. Hana saves it automatically.

She swipes and swipes and frowns.

The third to last is a Megumi again, still bleary eyed, mouth pursed delicately.

This time with his arm thrown over someone's shoulder.

Itadori Yuuji scrunches her nose, Nobara's face parallel to hers and Megumi's pressed against the other side, all of them blowing on the candles being held far too close to their faces.

These photos are all from Nobara's birthday party exactly 4 days ago.

Hana was late. Work.

It happens, Megumi had shrugged. I'll see you there.

She hadn't stayed more than an hour. Megumi was so drunk, she'd had to ask two people to help get him down the stairs to get in their taxi. They hadn't spoken in the morning afterwards.

Megumi made 2 cups of sugarless coffee and Hana poured one into her flask and went to work.

She thinks she's in 2 of the photos in this particular photo dump. Nobara had favourites, people she liked to include in every one of her posts.

The strangers who inflated her following and comments often called them her recurring cast. Somehow Hana had made it into that group.

Her finger hovers over the like button. There's another picture and a video.

She puts her phone in her bag.

The taxi should be here soon.

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A million years ago, Hana was a lonely little girl in a very dark hole.

Her heart could not sustain her loneliness and she knew she was doomed.

Then she was saved by a dark prince who had held her heart for her as the hole changed its shape. A bright door held open by an angel.

But once she stepped through her prince melted into the shadows before she could even say thank you or retrieve her heart.

Years later she would find out her prince was no prince at all but she had still stolen her heart. But by then Hana didn't want it back anymore.

–

It's an unlucky day. She can't find a good enough present for Megumi.

–

She'd met Yuuji before she had reunited with Megumi.

A nice girl with a nice, easy smile. Friendly and welcoming. She'd felt secretly relieved as Yuuji rambled about the lore of the school she was joining three quarters into the school year. Then shocked when Yuuji caught her eye and asked if she felt any better like Hana had let her heart slip.

She'd liked Yuuji. Or she'd thought she could like her.

Maybe Yuuji had felt the same.

Then, Megumi had strolled around the corner and Hana's heart had seized in her chest.

Megumi scolded Yuuji for taking the transfer on a walkabout when they had class, before dryly relieving her of her buddy duties. Yuuji pouted like she was deeply aggrieved and the two went back and forth as if performing a well-worn routine. Then, Yuuji saw the time and abruptly started sprinting down the hall, waving a loud goodbye to them both.

Megumi turned to watch her go. During their conversation, Yuuji had introduced the two of them and Megumi had nodded at her and she had forgotten how to speak.

When Yuuji turned the corner, she saw Megumi's face change and she could suddenly see herself in his eyes, looking at her like he'd only just realised Hana was there.

She felt one ventricle of her heart flare forcing blood to her face. She was suddenly short of breath.

His eyes swept over her, frictionless, already turning away when he said she should follow him to their first class.

The blood finally reached her head and she grabbed his hand. He hadn't recognised her.

The memory of his face, thinner and younger, was as strong as those of the bruises on her skin.

She would remind him.

He looked at her wide-eyed. Wide enough to fit her whole face.

"Um! I'm Kurusu Hana and we met a long time ago!"

She had to remind him.

–

The second time Yuuji had smiled at her, Hana truly pitied Megumi.

Was there such a thing as someone with too much love to give?

–

It's an unlucky night. She can't sleep and she watches the door.

Megumi had sent a text earlier saying she'd be home late. Hana had hoped she wouldn't sleep alone anyways. She still might not.

She should have gone to work today. She thinks of Angel. Her aunt's cold practicality could make her feel as twice as pathetic as her kind gaze could make her feel seen.

She was right not to risk it.

She flicks through her phone and ends up back on Nobara's instagram account.

Her latest post is filled with comments praising how fun her life looks, commenting on the good vibes and good looks of her entourage. She thinks one is talking about the outfit she'd worn, praising her dark tights and asking where to buy a similar thick wool dress.

But Nobara has warned her against interacting with her fans and Hana's account is set to private for a reason.

god i'm so lonely.

She stalls too long on that comment. Justifies it by opening the replies, a chorus of people agreeing, lamenting. Some of Nobara's following is borne of jealousy. People who buy too

deeply into the curated feed of a Tokyo socialite. It's better to see it like this than the ones who hunt for flaws. Still she leaves it there.

But she notices the recurring theme in the comments. It's confusing. Is life so bad that a birthday party engendered this much longing?

must be soooo nice to be so in love

She stops.

- may this type of love find me TODAY
- - Anybody know if they actually together?
- - - who Cares man Love is Love
- - - - lol even when its cheating

She flicks through to the video, letting it run.

Nobara's dancing and talking quickly, the camera zooms out a little and catches the full length of the couch. Megumi had been lying there when Hana had come to get him. In the video it's Yuuji, talking to someone at first. Then a hand lifts her leg and Megumi slides into her arms and Yuuji laughs and holds Megumi like she does this everyday. They cuddle for a while, whispering far too quietly for the video, loud with music and meaningless chatter, to catch. Yuuji's hand lingers on Megumi's back. Megumi's face is hidden, but she can tell she says something by the way Yuuji is nodding and rubbing up and down. The video cuts awkwardly and the cake is set up, held in front of the camera and Nobara is hurrying everybody into frame. The angle is only slightly different, good work on Nobara's part, so Hana watches as Yuuji whispers into the ear of the only person Hana loves, as her love wrapped his arms around Yuuji's shoulders so she could pull the love of Hana's life up by the waist. They linger in each other's arms even as they shake in the position, but Nobara rushes them and Yuuji laughs again like everything is so funny and Megumi puts her arm around Yuuji's shoulders and they're right beside Nobara blowing out her candles.

She flicks back.

Somehow Yuuji is at the centre of the image as if it were her party, as if she had been the most important person in the room.

She had sat up at some point. She looks at the empty spot in the bed beside her and then the starless night sky.

When had the hole come back for her?

–

After Hana had offered Megumi a hand to take, when she caught Yuuji looking at someone else with a bright smile, she had to turn and walk the other way.

Otherwise, she might have screamed at her.

It was so unfair. If she could smile at anybody like that, if she could feel like that for anyone, why not just give Megumi to her. If only Megumi was just hers, she would be so good at keeping those feelings just for her. How dare she force Hana to share and not give anything up. How could someone be so.. So…

She couldn’t stand it.

Hana didn’t notice the next time Yuuji smiled at her.

By then, Megumi had accepted her hand and held it tight in hers.

Hana’s gaze couldn’t hold Yuuji’s, so it clung to her abdomen, toned and tan.

Did Megumi like that, she wondered.

She started going to the gym that week.

–

Megumi is not in her bed when Hana wakes up.

She’s not in their home at all but his side of the bed is still a little warm.

Hana rolls in the cooler space and shuts her eyes.
She sleeps in.

She crawls out of bed in broad daylight. Megumi hasn’t texted her yet.

She goes to the gym.

–

When she returns, Megumi is waiting for her in the kitchen.

“No.”

“Hana, we need t-”

“I said no. Can’t we just go to bed? You haven’t been home this week. We should sleep.”

“No. We can’t just go to bed.”

“Why not?”

He looks at her.

She looks at the kitchen. Their kitchen even if Megumi never used it. Everything he knew how to cook, he’d learned from Yuuji. She thinks her heart contorts then. The pain lets her look at him.

“Have I done something?”

He looks at her. She thinks he looks guilty. Stricken.

“If I, if I didn’t do enough or I failed somewhere you can just tell me and we can fix it.”

He’s shaking his head before she can even finish speaking.

“No, we can’t fix it, we can’t just - ”

His voice sounds heavy like he’s holding back a sigh. It grates at her.

“Just listen to me! Just listen, we can try couple’s therapy? We can move if you want, if you don’t like the house -?”

He sighs and she stops. There’s too much in the air now. She wants to bat it away with a stiff towel.

“It’s not the house, Hana, you know it's not that.”

“Then, what is it? What am I doing wrong? Why won’t you tell me, why won’t you let me fix it?”

“You’re not doing anything wrong. You haven't done anything wrong.”

“Don’t you dare try ‘it’s not you, it’s me,’ ok? Don’t you fucking dare.”

His face twists - he doesn’t have anything to say to her. He drags his hands down his face and groans.

She’s making him upset.

Good, she thinks.

“Then,” he speaks from behind his hands, “what the fuck do you want from me, Hana.”

“Don’t leave.”

“That’s not fair.”

“What’s not fair? What’s not fair? No, no, Megumi. What’s not fair is I've been here for three years.”

He blinks suddenly. Oh. He forgot.

She laughs. It sounds strange to her ears in this room. When was the last time she laughed in their kitchen? She doesn’t dwell on it.

“What’s not fair is that you run out on me with that girl while I lie in the grave we built together to rot alone. What is not fair is you fucking someone else while I slept alone every other night. What is not fair is that I don’t care how you look at Yuuji because I love you and I’ve kept loving you and I am here.”

Megumi freezes. “We didn’t, I didn’t…”

Oh. Good. Hana thinks. Of course, that’s what you want to focus on. Her relief is chased away by anger and resentment.

“How nice for Yuuji to keep her hands off other people’s things only most of the time.” It comes out exactly as acidic and venomous as she intends, and Megumi flinches like she struck him.

“Don’t talk about her like that.”

“Fuck you, Megumi.”

He’s silent.

She’s exhausted.

“She won’t leave him, you know.”

Megumi says nothing.

She looks up at him.

He looks ill.

A lock clicks somewhere. The door opens, at last.

“You haven’t even asked.”

Something sick in her wants to laugh.

“Because you know she won't. You would rather be alone than with me?”

“I’d rather be alone than miserable.

Yuuji’s boyfriend had been there, from the side. Offscreen at Nobara’s party, a word caught by the audio here and there. On first meeting, he’d just been one of Yuuji’s friends, her recurring cast. Then the two of them had walked into school with their hands intertwined and Megumi had looked sick.

Later, when Megumi had let Hana close enough, he’d told her the story. That Megumi had known Yuuji first and it hadn’t mattered because one summer Yuuji came back with a boy in tow and he’d stayed ahead of Megumi ever since then.

“You think you won't be miserable? Watching her be with him every day til all three of you drop dead? You think you won’t spend every day hating yourself. You think the anger won’t redirect back to her like it did then. You think you won't spend the rest of your life hating her for not loving you?”

He shook his head. “Shut up.”

“No.”

She reached out a hand. He smacks it away.

“Megumi. You need me. The same way you did when we were teenagers and you couldn’t look at her without making that face.”

His hands shake as she speaks. She can see him so clearly now.

“That same face.”

He can’t look at her. It’s alright. She’s memorised him. She’ll die with his face in her eyes.

“You already hate her a little bit, don’t you?”

She reached out again.

–

Nobara takes the pictures for the 4th anniversary.

In her favourite, Hana is pressed into Megumi’s side. Holding his arm tight as she closes her eyes, pleased and smiling. Megumi looks straight ahead.

It's almost like she’s holding him up.

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