Wind-Blown Petals

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by kogetsu

Summary

Meanwhile, in another universe…[Reader] was looking forward to her date today, but the boy she asked out stood her up! Walking to the nearest convenience store, she tries to get the last chocolate milk, but someone else beats her to it.

Notes

so, there's a lot of stuff that i've written that i've written a LOT for (upwards of 1k+ words) but haven't technically finished. using this site (maybe the femslash one if i get accepted) to document the bulk of the sfw stuff :). the gaps in the "actual" fic will be explained meta-ly (yeah.)

the following is the original beginning note i put vv

a long time ago, i wrote two fics about self-insert dating hayate/kokoa because i was so sad that i'd never dated anyone at the decrepit old age of 18. 2.5 years and one tumultuous relationship later, i've been cleaning out my backlog, and discovered these. cleaned them up a little, but the bulk of the writing comes from pre-2025. forgive my past self: i was so very lonely.

Because she fully expected to have him walk her home, [Reader] hadn't brought her subway pass. Because she hadn't brought her subway pass, she couldn't ride any public transportation home. Because she couldn't ride any public transportation home, she had to walk. And, as the *smart* girl she was, she knew all the crime rates and the dangers of young, underaged-looking girls wearing mini-skirts and crop-tops walking alone at twilight-to-night. With her path lit up by the sickly white artificial storefront lights from businesses about to close, [Reader] knew she had to have been one of the *stupidest* people on earth to have put herself into a situation like this. All this could've been avoided if he'd shown up…

But he didn't. Because he had "stuff to do". And, because he had stuff to do, she suffered the consequences of her own hubris.

Actually, if she wanted to admit some uncomfortable truths, [Reader] knew that all this could've been avoided if she hadn't risked her reputation and basically her entire academic career if she'd just…not trusted a stranger so easily.

The various restaurants she passed on her way home were either closed or, admittedly, too sussy-looking for her to risk her life to get a hearty meal. However, one lone convenience store, with its sterile blue-white lights, seemed her best bet here. Well-lit, albeit hospital-esque, establishments would be *slightly* better, right? Carrying less than 20$ in her frustratingly-shallow pockets, lukewarm hot-dogs and sickeningly-sweet candies tempted her hungry self to venture inside…and so, [Reader] readily indulged herself. She'd been through too much today; she needed a win.

Strolling down the aisles, [Reader]'s heart nearly could've given out, what with how dangerously-high all the prices were. This was a *convenience store*, not Erewhon! As a poor, struggling high school student, she felt it well within her right to straight-up cry right now (seriously, not everyone has this much disposable income!). But, in the corner of her eye, she spotted a yellow-and-brown cardboard carton of chocolate milk, she presumed, unless the brand suddenly switched to making lemonade. Her favorite childhood drink, and the last one, too! Walking over, [Reader] reached out for it; if everything in this store cost about as much as an organ, she might as well pick the product she knew would always make her smile.

But someone reached for it, too. And their hand grazed her own.

Looking at the person next to her, with the brief physical contact surprising her, [Reader] noticed that…oh, she *knew* this girl!

Hayate Tendo sat right next to her in literature class. If she had to describe her in a few words, [Reader] would say that she was drop-dead gorgeous, beautiful in a way that made boys' hearts stop (or *would*, had they gone to a co-ed school). Quiet and genuinely demure, Hayate didn't show up most of the time, a constantly-truant delinquent, as [Reader]'s friends put it. Even so, during the few times that she *did* show up, she knew the content as well as anyone who'd attended daily.

Beyond that, though, Hayate was as much of a mystery as the geometrical shape of the earth: — flat or round, square or sphere. *Quiet*, as a word to describe her, was an understatement;

every time that [Reader] tried talking to her, she'd never said much. Admittedly, [Reader] was a bit more outgoing and socially-inclined than the average person, but usually, she could get even the most hard-assed peer to crack a smile. She'd always attempted to get Hayate to feel more included, but she'd stopped recently, since it seemed like all of her amicable advances toward the ever-silent girl hadn't made much progress in the way of friendship. Could you blame her? Hayate didn't seem like she wanted to be friends with her, what with how little she spoke, and it seemed like she barely tolerated [Reader]'s presence.

At least, that's what [Reader] felt. Despite all that, she figured that Hayate really was a nice person, despite her alleged delinquency. She just didn't like talking. Most especially not to her.

"There's only one, hm…" The girl — Hayate Tendo — muttered under her breath, before looking at [Reader], "Sorry, you can have it." She backed away, gesturing toward the sole carton on the shelf.

"Um…Hayate, right?" She tilted her head, mentally checking and rechecking that she'd said her name correctly, "From Literature class?" 3rd period, West building, with Sister Margaret and the occasional Brother Jacques.

Hayate looked startled, as if she didn't expect her to actually remember her name. "…Yeah. [Reader], right?" Noticeably, she took a small step away.

"The one and only." [Reader] exaggeratedly opened her arms wide, a parody unto herself; given her high-ranking positions at school, most people knew who she was without needing an introduction. "You can have it. I don't like this kind, anyway." Lying straight through her teeth, she grinned.

"But you were trying to buy it too?"

"Ah…well…" She didn't know what Hayate thought of her, but she knew damn well she needed to lie so that she wouldn't seem weird, "…I'd never had it before! Yes, it, um… seemed like an interesting drink. All that brown and yellow, haha…" She knew she talked way too much but, maybe, this would make Hayate drop the subject entirely. And, because she couldn't stop herself from talking, she quickly added, "Like, what's even in a drink with this kind of packaging…?"

"Then you should have it." She took the drink off the shelf and thrust it toward [Reader], "You've never had it before, so you should try it. It's really good."

Hayate looked at her, directly in her eyes. Something about her gaze, perhaps it was her directness or her completely side-stepping her babbling, made [Reader] feel…seen? Hayate knew exactly what she meant by that whole spiel, without her having to explain much else.

"…I wouldn't say that…tastes more like *sugar water with a hint of chocolate*." She muttered under her breath.

"So, you've had it before?"

"No — I-I mean, *yes*, I mean…" [Reader] covered her face with her hands; her flushed face evidence to her embarrassment, "Just take it. You were probably here first, anyway."

"No, I wasn't. You were here first." Hayate said, "I saw you when I came inside."

"Hayate…Hayate," she repeated, still unsure if she could be referring to her with her first name, what with how distant they were, "I…I've done too many bad things today. You can have it. I need to repent." Usually, she wasn't so dramatic when it came to the theatrics of religion, but, well, with how things had been going recently, [Reader] felt like she needed to apologize to God for her behavior. Daring to date a boy, then getting stood up…how cumbersome a weight on one's soul.

"How about we split it instead?"

Hayate held the carton out, ignoring all else of [Reader]'s statements again.

"You're going to split a *carton* of milk?" She gawked, confused, "Won't it spill everywhere? Even if you had a really sharp knife…?" And Hayate, the sweetheart that she was, didn't seem like the type of person to carry a knife around.

"You drink half, then I'll drink half."

[Reader] looked at Hayate, who was completely serious at this proposition, with a gnawing sense of shame because *why* in the world would she not think of that? While she, herself, wasn't opposed to splitting a drink with a friend, because of how little she knew about Hayate, [Reader] thought she would've given the matter up by now. But, regardless, her day had been long and hard and not in the expected way, so…

"…Okay, why not?"

Standing behind Hayate paying her half of the carton of milk at the register, it suddenly occurred to [Reader] how oddly friendly (at least, compared to prior interactions) she behaved with her. Not that that was a bad thing — she loved talking to people and making new friends — but Hayate had never responded to her with such interest. Aloof, nonchalant, blasé, Hayate never went beyond the superficial pleasantries, if ever at all. And now, all of a sudden, here she was, indulging in [Reader]'s strange speaking habits and general awkwardness she usually masked when they were at school. *Indulging* may have been an overstatement: more like Hayate paid no mind to them. That made [Reader] feel a strange sense of peace and contentment, like she didn't have to hide herself.

"If it's alright with you," Hayate said, as they walked out of the convenience store together, "We could sit on the bench over there and drink it."

"Ah…the bench…"

Hayate, having worn pants and a jacket, seemed much more equipped to sit down on some sketchy convenience-store bench than [Reader], in her poor choice of a mini-skirt that would definitely show. Standing there, wondering if it was worth it, she watched Hayate elegantly(!) sit down, not a care in the world. She could make even such a mundane thing graceful, huh?

Evidently, Hayate had noticed her plight, and turned to look up at her, as she hit the straw of the carton against herself, trying to get it out of its plastic packaging.

"Oh, you're wearing a skirt."

She said that with such a nonchalant air that [Reader] couldn't tell if she was being made fun of or not.

"That's a nice way of putting it, huh?"

[Reader], still not having sat down, walked about the bench, determining the best way for her to sit down. If she sat down a regular distance away from Hayate, then she'd be sitting in the area of the bench with discoloration that did *not* seem natural. If she sat a bit further away, Hayate would think that she didn't want to drink the milk with her at all and might possibly be offended. The only conclusion here was to sit as close to Hayate as possible, their legs touching, but then she'd be violating social boundaries — really, she'd *just* met the girl — then Hayate would hate her and then her day would turn from horrible to downright awful. Normally she wasn't a quitter, but…

"…You know what? I'll just go home. Keep the milk."

[Reader] would rather get home hungry than screw up a social situation and be branded as weird.

"No, stay. Sit with me."

Hayate said, pointing to the spot next to her — the spot that [Reader] had deduced as the closest. Reluctantly, she did so, wondering if the random men she'd made eye-contact with in the parking lot earlier were looking. She hoped they weren't. They probably were. But, distracted by the potential stalkers, she hadn't noticed Hayate pulling off her jacket, then draping it over her legs.

She smoothed out the top part, the part on top of her thighs, and [Reader] didn't know what to make of her breath hitching or the growing blush on her face. And, looking at Hayate's face from here, illuminated in the artificial lights of the convenience store, she seemed prettier than she'd ever seen her.

But, this was *Hayate*, that random girl in her literature class who never showed up; why was she getting so worked up over this?

"Are you alright?" She'd noticed, apparently, "Your face is flushed."

"…y-yeah, I am." [Reader] gripped the edge of the bench, trying to balance out those strange feelings with the pain of the hard green plastic, "Get the straw out yet?"

With a flourish and an unfamiliar (to [Reader]) grin, Hayate pierced the circle at the top of the drink, before handing it to [Reader]. "Here."

She looked down at the familiar yellow-and-brown carton, then back up at Hayate — her expression neutral, back to how it'd always been. [Reader] didn't know what she was

thinking, what she was making of the situation, what she thought of her, and she hated it. She *needed* approval that what she was doing was right. "You…you're sure you want to do this with me?"

"Of course. We both wanted it, didn't we?"

"I…guess…"

Okay, and that's it. Yeah. So the general trajectory of this fic, based on my notes, was supposed to be another paragraph of [Reader] feeling awkward, then saying something that provokes a discussion of why they're here. Hayate's here because she's been at the arcade and just wandering around --- because (implied) her and Kokoa broke up --- and [Reader] tells Hayate why she's here. The following is a bit of what the dialog I wanted was supposed to be:

" [stuff about how she's scared what people will think of her and starts ranting about how alone she feels or whatever] And, haha, I know what you're thinking---"

"Do you?"

"Huh?"

"Do you really know what I'm thinking?"

"Um...not *actually*, but I know you probably think I'm weird for all this, haha...haha..."

"Why do you care about what others think of you?"

Here's where I would have implied that the HayaKoko break-up happened because Hayate genuinely just can't take the fact that Kokoa can't be open about it. When I say implied here, I mean that I deadass would've put "Hayate: 'I don't think you should compromise on love. I don't think you should hold back. I kinda hate people who can't be forward with their feelings, making others dig it out of them".

So, from here, Hayate and [Reader] hash things out, then they part ways before exchanging numbers. It's not super romantic so much as it is indicative of the possibility of a romantic relationship --- on Hayate's side at least; [Reader]'s heart is left fluttering.

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