

# I'm with you!

Von abgemeldet

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## People are amazing

*Teru and Ann, who are friends for five years now, are sitting on a riverbank, , when Ann begins to talk to Teru about Maya, his girlfriend, while staring at the beautiful sunset ahead of them.*

"Ne, Teru."

"Yes?"

"How did Maya and you come together?"

"Why are you asking me that? It's always the same. Two people come to fall in love with each other and if one of them tells the other his feelings, they eventually go out."

"I know that. But I can't imagine anything of it. I read a lot of love stories and it was, like you said, always the same. But how are people falling in love? Where does this courage to confess come from? I don't get it, really."

"So want to hear another cheesy love story?"

"If it's from you, yes."

"Remember the day I called you because I didn't get any prize for the novel I wrote?"

"Uhm...yeah. I wanted to help you, but you were too angry to listen to what I wanted to say. I'm sorry I couldn't find the right words that time."

"Never mind that, you aren't at fault. I was so upset and thought I lost all my motivation to study and to become an author that I wanted to throw everything away. I didn't want to waste any time just to be sent back to the beginning. I went to the riverbank and stared at the water. I was totally lost. But then Maya got by. I think she heard what happened. As she saw me destroying everything I wrote, she slapped me. I got angry, looked at her and was shocked. She was crying. While crying she told me, that she loved everything I wrote. And that I would totally regret it if I threw my work away. That time, I thought she was naive, but now I know she was right. She said "Please don't give up. I know that you can do it". And when the sunlight was glittering on the water and Maya standing in front of a beautiful sunset, she told me that every dream could become true if you really want it to."

"That's..amazing. It sounds so like a dream."

"Yeah, I almost thought it was one. But you know, what I want to say is, people are amazing. They can change your heart so easily if you let them. I think that was the moment I fell in love with her. I never forgot the smile she gave me that day."

"But that doesn't answer my question. So you fell in love, and then? Just went to her and said that stupid line "I love you" or what?"

"Actually...yeah. Not just that line, but all in all it was like that."

"Now I'm even more confused. I alway thought that I can't imagine something like that, because it only happens in books, but now I know it really is that way. You know...I just don't understand how two people can get so near each other. Everyone thinks I despise romance, but that's not true. Actually I always dreamt of something like that. Somebody to tell me something important. That somebody actually says "I love you"...it all sounds so surreal. I can't imagine anything of that happens to me. I'm afraid...that I'm not capable to be so chummy with somebody. I'm scared that such a day will never happen in my life."

"Don't say something like that. I know I can't say for sure, but I believe that you will find somebody who will be so important to you that even you will let him in your heart. Actually I'm afraid, too. It really seems imaginary. It seems so fragile that it could break apart every moment. So I think what's most important is confidence and the courage to look ahead."

"Maybe you're right. But I still can't believe it. Maybe I will someday."

"You will."

## Live every day as if it would be your last one

*Yuen, a sixteen year old boy, is talking about what he experienced one year ago.*

„Live every day as if it would be your last one“ everyone always quote. Up until now I believed that it's rubbish. That there's no reason for me to think there won't be a next day. Even if I would die tomorrow, I wouldn't be able to feel regret, would I?

But then my sister got ill and had to move into the hospital. She had always a frail body, but nobody expected something like that. I visited her every day, talked to her, made her laugh, so that she would be the last person to get worried. I remember one conversation, every word I said and every word she responded. "Hey, Yuen. Why are you always wearing clothes in dark colours?" "Because they suit me." "And why aren't you wearing white?" "Because it doesn't suit me." "Heh? That doesn't make sense." "It doesn't?" "No. See, I don't think any colour doesn't suit someone. You decide yourself what suits you and what suits you not, don't you? And of top of that, I think white totally looks good on you, since white represents hope, mom told me!" "Well, is that so? Maybe I could think it over to wear white once in a while." "You have to! He, promise me something." "Yes?" "Next time you visit me, wear something white, 'kay?" "I promise" I said, looking forward to the next day, seeing her smile if I turned up with a white shirt. But that next day never came. In the following night, she died. Her body could not bear her illness any longer. With my family I spend the last moments of her life with her together. I held her hand. Just once she opened her eyes, when I was talking to her so much, only nonsense, but I wanted to talk to her just a last time. When she opened her eyes, she said "I...thought it over, too. You don't have to wear white. I like my black Yuen, too. I just want you near me. Thanks...for coming...again." With that smile on her face, she fell asleep. Forever. And I was holding her hand, now wet because of my tears. I couldn't hold them in any longer. I broke my promise, couldn't fulfil her last wish. What a despicable older brother I am.

Two weeks later, I had to go to her funeral. Everyone was looking at me, but not because I was her older brother, no, because of what I was wearing. Between all those people in black, I was white. Wearing a white suit. I really looked like "hope" that day, in the midst of darkness.

"Live every day as if it would be your last one". Now I truly understand what that means. "Your last one", there can be many "last days" in your life. For example, the last day with a person you loved. I now know I was egoistic, thinking I won't be able to regret anything, anyway. I didn't even think that it would be the last day of someone else's life. I was wrong. I regret so much. I haven't told her so many things. I wanted to go with her on a trip, to the cinema, everywhere. I wish I could have seen her when she's entering middle school, getting her first boyfriend and so on. Even if I'll say to everyone, live life so that you won't regret anything, I don't believe anyone understands the true meaning if he hadn't experienced something like this.

"Can you hear me, Imouto-chan? I'm wearing white today. And know what? I got compliments. It seems it really does suit me after all."



## Don't ever think nobody cherishes you

*Ryo, a nine year old boy, is running across a field in the summer, when he suddenly sees Hime, a girl he doesn't know yet.*

I was running across a big green field. The sun was shining above me and I was surrounded by the smell of beautiful flowers. It was such a wonderful day I couldn't help but smile. I closed my eyes, seeing many different, warm colours on my eyes made by the sun. I opened them again and saw a girl sitting under a lonely looking tree in the middle of the field. I looked forward to talking to her, I didn't want to spend that beautiful day all by myself. But as I came near her I could see that she was crying. Shutting her eyes with her arms leaned on her knees she didn't notice me coming. The day's so nice, just why is she so sad? I thought. I wanted to know more and spoke to her "Hey." I said. No reaction. "Hey!" I shouted. Still, no reaction. Maybe she's sleeping? I sat beside her and closed my eyes, but was interrupted by a calm, but cute voice "Do you think there are people in this world which cherish you?" "Huh? Of course." "Of course? Aren't you a bit arrogant?" "Why? People you like, like you too, don't they?" "Hah! What a wishful thinking you have there. How can you be sure of that?" "Hmh...I wonder. But I actually didn't think of this up until now. Isn't it way more important to do everything you can to help the people you like? It's nice if they'll do that for you too, but you can't call for that." "So you like people who doesn't even think of you?!" "Well...yeah? You can't know what they're thinking, though." "...this is a very depressing kind of view." "Did you cry...because you thought nobody likes you?" "...". "There is always at least one person who likes you." "..huh? Who?" "Yourself. How can you think and expect people to like you if you don't even seem to like yourself? Of course people will think you aren't an interesting person." "What do I do wrong..? Would you..um..help me to like myself...?" "'course!" I laughed, being happy that I found another interesting, good-hearted person. She cried again, but I think her tears didn't come out of sadness. We were sitting there for a long time after our conversation, without saying anything, just watching the blue sky and the beautiful sunset that followed. It really was a warm day.

## That's why I'm living

*Chinatsu, who's in love with Shiro, heard that Shiro and Ann are going out. Those are her thoughts:*

There's no way he'll tell me anything about his life, his thoughts or his feelings. I know so much about him. He is so important to me, I want to help him if he has problems. I wouldn't judge him for anything he'd done. I would listen to him...anytime, anywhere. But that's impossible. There is a wall between him and me, which protects him, so that he doesn't show me the side of him I don't know. It hurts. It hurts so much to be no use. Why doesn't he care for me? What did I do wrong, so that he doesn't trust me? It is unfair. There is no such thing as justice in our world anymore. I could love him so much that it hurts and he wouldn't even look at me. Friendship? How does it work, if he doesn't know how I feel and I don't know what's going on in his life? I'm sick of this. I just can't bear this any longer. Crying because I can't get near him. Weeping because he isn't the least bit interested in me. And now I'm standing here and my time finally ran out. I thought it would get better if I certainly know what he feels, but this certainty is breaking me apart. There are no feelings in me anymore. No thoughts. Nothing. Now I'd prefer pain over indifference. I don't know what I should do, now, that there's no hope left at all. Should I smile to him? Congratulate him? Slapping him? All of that wouldn't make sense. I couldn't congratulate him since I would be lying if I do. But I couldn't slap him either because I love him. And though I love him there are times I feel like I hate him. Seeing him smiling to another girl. A smile I don't know. A smile he would never present me. Me, a girl who can't stop loving him. Me, a friend. A classmate. A stranger. For me, that makes no difference.

"Make sure you don't fall in love with somebody who doesn't feel the same" I wanted to tell everybody on that day when I felt nothing. But now I can look back at that love of mine. Back then I wished I didn't fall in love with him. However, today I wouldn't want to forget the days when I loved him. When everything he said made my heartbeat faster. When every smile of him made me feel true happiness. "Your first love", there doesn't have to be a second. But there can be a second. And just because this possibility exists, I'm living and looking forward to the next day.

## Just smile and I'm smiling back

*Ichiko, who's going out with Hiroshi Mazaharu for one or two months now, is in her room, just about to leave, when her older brother Kaito speaks to her.*

„Ichiko? Where are you going?”

„Mazaharu.”

„Again?”

„Got a problem with that?”

„Unfriendly again, huh? I just don't get it, what do you like about him, anyway? He's naughty, bull-headed and easy offended!”

“He's...stubborn. Unreasonable. Impulsive. He's easily getting jealous and is dense.”

“Eh?”

“But if he get's so upset, it always has to do something with other people. People being treated unfair. People who are worried and don't know what to do. Or just some kid crying at the pavement. He's stubborn because he can't bear unfairness and misunderstandings. He isn't good at school, because he isn't interested. Hiroshi-kun just can't understand why it's important to study hours for school instead of being happy with friends. For him, it makes no sense.”

“Even with reasons, they don' get good characteristics.”

“I know. But does it matter? Even if he's always unreasonable, there are time he says wise things which are important to me. He always can make a person happy, whether the person likes him or hates him. I think he knows a lot about the world and its people...”

“He doesn't make me happy though...”

“You know, you're just as naughty, stubborn and unreasonable as him! Why can't you just accept him?”

“...” “...because you're just as important to me.”

“...”

“I don't want you getting hurt again. I just want to be sure he's a good person.”

“As long as I'm sure of it, everything's okay, isn't it? You should know I wouldn't spend time with people I don't trust.”



"I know. I'm worried though. How can I be sure that my little dumb sister doesn't make a mistake?"

"Idiot."

"I'm serious."

"..." "He doesn't need to be perfect. I'm accepting his bad characteristics. Even if I'd try to dislike him, I couldn't. He just needs to smile and I'm smiling back. You know, I don't get that, either. But every time he smiles I know that there's no way that I made a wrong decision. Don't you think The final Judgement should understand this? I'm happy. But...thank you for your concern...I cherish my tetchy older brother, too."

"Oh, shut up."

"Ah, come to think of it, why are you in my room, anyway? Didn't you want to tell me something?"

"Oh..uhm..I..just..er..wanted to say..um..that I'm going out with Chinatsu now, well anyway – Bye then, have fun!"

"...you're..YOU'RE WHAT?! Hey, wait!!"

## What, do you think, is "Love" ?

*Kaito is writing a new song for the Band "The final Judgement", when Hikaru, another member of TFJ and a friend of him, enters the room, exited, and speaks to him.*

„Kaito!“

„...“

„Kaito!!“

„...shut up! I'm trying to write something, okay?“

“I need your help!”

“As if.”

“...” “Hey, Kaito.”

“...” “...what is it?”

“Are you...in love?”

“cough cough Why the hell are you asking me that?!”

“Well...there is a girl and I think maybe I'm in love with her.”

“You? No way.”

“You're pretty mean, you know..”

“It's true, isn't it? I can't ever imagine you being in love. The boy who always flirts with every female being he sees.”

“Maybe you're right...but I just love women. They're so smooth and lovely!”

“(Oh dear...)”

“Are you...betraying your past self if you don't cherish something you've always wished for?”

“Now where's that coming from?”

“In middle school I always wanted to be surrounded by girls, being popular and so on. I always thought that I would be truly happy if so many people like me. Now I am popular, but I don't like being with them. I just can't enjoy it, cause I don't think I belong to them. I am getting the feeling that none of them are honest and that there

have to be more important things in life than that.”

“Wow, never thought you would ever figure that out, how did you do it?

“Well...every time I'm with so many girls, I think that I want to be with our band, practicing and chatting. I think it's really fun. I haven't enjoyed something so much ever in my life.”

“I..enjoy it, too. Even with you.”

“I like you, too.”

“Shut up... You're right, it doesn't make sense being with people you don't really know. So do not ever think those girls truly like you for who you are. But, who's the one you 'love' out of them?”

“It's not a fangirl. There is a girl I often see recently...and I can't stop thinking of her. She's not stunning pretty or outgoing or something like that. She's actually very quiet and doesn't seem to like being with many people. I don't think she's interested in our band either. But she's so...different. So, what I wanted to ask you – what, do you think, is love?”

“That's a pretty difficult question you asking... I think everyone would describe it different. Well...love is something...warm. You can't think or speak properly if you see the person you love. You're forgetting everything if you see her smile. You're nervous by doing the simplest things in life, like saying hello or writing a sms. Love is...if you think, you can't live without the person. And if this person is more important to you than yourself.”

“...” “Hm...I don't know her this much, but I'm having the desire to want to know everything of her life. I wanna know what she did today, what she's thinking and what she's feeling right now. She...seems so special. Fragile, but strong. Shy, but honest...I don't think I could flirt with her like I do with other women. What does Kaito think I should do?”

“I can't tell you if you love her or not. Speak with her, you'll figure it out soon enough by yourself.”

“Seems I have to.”

“I'm glad..that you have a person you truly like. I thought nobody is really important to you. You always seem like you are talking with people just to have fun.”

“That's not true. I'm sorry that I make that impression...I just don't trust people easily. Before I talk about my deepest feelings, I want to make sure it won't be something I'll regret.”

“Does that mean, I'm a person you trust?”

"..."

"Then I am..really happy. I can understand you, I'm not better than you. The only difference is that I won't act to be all happy with those people. I think, you will hurt someone easily this way. What if you are really important to someone and he thinks he's really important to you to, but then he realises you don't think about him at all?"

"..." "You have a point there. I'll think about it, but I don't think I'll be able to change all of a sudden."

"You don't have to. You'll change automatically if you really want to. Well...shouldn't you go and see this girl you like?"

"Yeah, you're right! You should do the same, you know..."

"What?"

"Don't play dumb. You can't tell me you aren't in love, you know way too much about it."

"Hmpf...then I wish you good luck with Hikari!"

"Wha-what?! I..I haven't told you that..."

"Pft, it's totally obvious. You're staring at her all the time."

"//////// (For real...?)"

"Well, by then, I have to finish that song. Want to show it somebody when it's completed."

"Y-yeah...bye..."

## Sick of this

*Hiyori's thoughts about Kimimaru, a friend of her and a boy with whom she is in love with.*

I'm sick of this. Waiting for you every day, but you won't come. Smiling to you every time I see you, but you won't look at me. Speaking with you, but you won't answer seriously, anyway. I want to talk with you so much. I want to tell you so many things. I wanted to tell you, it would be nice to spend Christmas with friends. I wanted to tell you about my past. I wanted to get you to look into my eyes. Seeing you smile...is what I wanted the most. There are so strong feelings in my heart, but you wouldn't see them even if told you everything I think. I'm so ridiculous. I thought you think of me. I thought you enjoyed talking with me, too. I even thought you'll wait for me. And...I thought you liked me. Just a little. It doesn't have to be romantic feelings. I would be satisfied if there was the least bit interest to be friends. But now I get the feeling that you didn't think of me at all. That you would never notice that my sadness has something to do with you. I fell. But you reached out your hand for me, so that I would stand again. I was hoping you did that because you are worried. But I was wrong. You didn't think anything as you did that. It hurts so much. I don't know what to do. I want to speak with you and laugh with you, but I have no idea how we laughed before. It seems so unreal that I had so much fun with you, how did that happen? And why is it over? Just why does everything get worse and worse..? I don't want that anymore. I'm sick of this. I want to go out with friends and have fun. I want to smile. I don't remember when the last time was I smiled because I was really happy. I don't feel anything but pain anymore. I want to cry, but the tears won't come. I could cry for hours but nobody would notice me. I'm such a coward. I used to like myself. I used to like my way of thinking. But I get the feeling that it's fading. Who am I, anyway...? I think I laughed easily, was thrilled by so many little things, wanted to help everybody who's important to me. So many people are important to me. But I'm not important to anybody. Nobody needs me. Nobody knows me. Please, someone, tell me what I do wrong! I don't know, really! I won't find an answer by myself anymore. Anyone...can you please help me out of this hell...? Can you please wake me up from this nightmare...? Please...I'm frightened of losing who I really am...

## Say why you're sorry

*Hiroshi enters the house, Anzu, his little, five year old, sister, who often gets to play with Ichiko, runs into him and speaks to her brother.*

Anzu: „Nii-nii? Where's Ichiko?"

Hiroshi: „Won't come today."

Anzu: „Heeh? Why? She promised she would play with me!"

Hiroshi: "Shut up! Don't you have other friends?"

Anzu: "But I want to play with Ichiko!! Why isn't she coming!?"

Hiroshi: "Shut up already, you brat!"

Anzu (shocked): "..."

Hiroshi (kneeled down): "H-hey! Don't cry. I'm sorry, I didn't mean it like that...I'm just not in a good mood today."

Anzu: "Nii-nii..? You look sad..."

Hiroshi(looks down): "..."

Anzu: "Did you...fight with Ichiko?"

Hiroshi(looks up again): "You know...your brother is a really big idiot."

Anzu: "Yeah."

Hiroshi(chuckles): "You didn't have to agree."

Anzu (stares in his face, worried): "You aren't yourself today, Nii-nii..."

Hiroshi (looks away, shuts his face with his hand, whispers): "...shit..."

Anzu: Nii-nii...? Are you crying...?

Hiroshi: "Am not."

Anzu: "I don't want you to be sad! Can't you make up with Ichiko?"

Hiroshi: "Don't know how. I don't think she would forgive me, anyway."

Anzu: "Of course she would! Ichiko is a kind girl, you just have to say you're sorry."

Hiroshi: "I know she's a good person. But just saying sorry...I don't think that works."

Anzu: "Our teacher said we have to say why we're sorry."

Hiroshi: "Saying why I'm sorry...?"

Anzu: "Yeah. What do you think you did wrong, Nii-nii?"

Hiroshi: "I...shouted at her again, though she didn't do anything wrong. I'm always like that, I get angry easily and then behave totally unreasonable."

Anzu: "That sounds like you. All you need to do is to be honest. If Ichiko is your real friend, she'll forgive you."

Hiroshi: "...a friend...I wonder if it's just that."

Anzu: "Huh?"

Hiroshi(chuckles): "Nothing."

Anzu(laughs): "That's more like you. I bet Ichiko is sad because of your fight, too. So you have to make up and then she'll play with me again!"

Hiroshi: "Haha..yeah. I should go now."

Anzu (hugs Hiroshi): "I like my brother sooo much! And Ichiko likes you just as much!"

Hiroshi(smiles): "Thanks...Anzu."

Anzu(waves): "Byebye!"

Hiroshi: "See you later!"

Hiroshi steps outside and closes the door.

Hiroshi(shocked): "...Ichiko."

Ichiko(looks down): "...Hey."

## Can't help at all

*Hiroshi and Shiro spent the afternoon and evening at Ichiko's home together with Chinatsu. On their way home:*

Shiro: "Hey, Hiroshi. Did you notice that Ichiko was acting strange today?"

Hiroshi(looks down): "..."

Shiro: "She seemed so nervous. She was wearing a skirt, too, but I thought she would never wear a skirt or a dress by choice."

Hiroshi: "Hm."

Shiro: "Hey, you know something, don't play dumb!"

Hiroshi(looks up in the sky): "Her...father was home."

Shiro(looks at him, surprised): "Huh?"

Hiroshi: "I don't know if I'm allowed to tell you this, but you won't pass it on anyway. Ichiko's father can't remember her."

Shiro(shocked): "What...do you mean?"

Hiroshi: "I don't know what exactly happened, but her father had an accident when she was seven or so. He laid one year in hospital in a coma, then he woke up, saw Ichiko and Kaito, but couldn't remember either of them. He could remember his wife, though."

Shiro(looks down): "..."

Hiroshi: "You did notice that she was acting all out of person when her father was in the room, right?"

Shiro: "Yeah...she seemed kind of frightened."

Hiroshi: "It's not fear. I think she behaved like a girl who met the person she's in love with for the first time, trying to make everything right."

Shiro: "Huh? But she's not in love with her father, is she?"

Hiroshi: "No, that's not it. It's just a hypothesis, but I think she plays the perfect daughter for her father."

Shiro: "Ichiko's strong...I don't think I could endure to change myself so much."



Hiroshi: "She might be strong, yes, but what she's doing is wrong. Her father will never remember her if she hold this up. How could he recognize Ichiko if she's not the least bit like she was before? I can't understand why she's doing all this."

Shiro: "I think she wants her father to love her."

Hiroshi(looks at him, astonished): "Huh..?"

Shiro(looks in his eyes): "Did you never think she might be doing this, so that her father will like her, though he doesn't remember her at all? So that her father will show her a smile, when she's wearing things he likes or act a way he loves?"

Hiroshi: "You know, I know that, too and I can understand this...but that doesn't change the fact that it's wrong! Ichiko's Ichiko, short tempered, a bit artful and mean, but always caring and responsible. When she acts like this, she doesn't seem to have a heart at all. Just like a doll."

Shiro: "... " ...hey, Hiroshi, did you tell her all that?"

Hiroshi(looks down): "No...she doesn't really talk about her father. I asked once as I noticed her behaviour when her father's around and she told me the thing with the accident, but not anything about herself. I can't just shout at her and tell her all that."

Shiro: "Then you aren't better than her. You know, a person's dumb if he doesn't know what's right. But a person who knows what's right, but acts like he doesn't know, is irresponsible and weak."

Hiroshi: "But what should I do?! She closes herself up and I can't help her this way at all! It's not my fault!"

Shiro: " 'It's not your fault', huh?! Since when are you so stubborn?! I thought you always worry about your friends, the ones you love? This isn't you at all!

Hiroshi(stops, keeps his view on the ground): "I know that! But of course I'm not like myself! How could I act like I do with a friend? I love her! She's too important to me to risk that she'll cry and I know she would cry if I told her this! Ichiko's strong, yes, but she's fragile, because she had to endure this all by herself. She didn't have anyone...I don't want her to be hurt any more. Can't you understand this..?"

Shiro(looks back at him, a bit shocked first, then serious): "And you actually think she doesn't cry now? That she doesn't whine after acting like that?"

Hiroshi(looks up, shocked with tears in his eyes): "...ah.."

Shiro: "..."

Hiroshi(sinks to the ground, shutting his face with one hand): "...Shit! I'm an idiot, like always...I can't help her at all..."

Shiro(kneels down, looks in his face): "Oh no, you can. I think Ichiko really wants to tell you all this, but she doesn't want you to worry. Speak with her. You're the only one who can really help her out of this."

Hiroshi(smiles while keeping his face shut): "How can you always be so calm? I really envy you for that."

Shiro(laughs): "Hehe."

Both are standing up, continue their walk.

Hiroshi: "I'll speak with her."

Shiro: "I know."

Hiroshi: "But...you know, Ichiko wasn't the only one acting strange today."

Shiro: "Huh? Who else?"

Hiroshi(looks at him): "You. You were grinning to yourself every few minutes. Now tell me, why are you so happy?"

Shiro(blushes, looks down): "Ah..uhm...you know...Ann came back."

Hiroshi(surprised, then laughs): "..whoa!"

## You decide it yourself

*Ichiko sleeps over at Chinatsu's home after Shiro, the guy Chinatsu's in love with, and Ann came together. They're sitting on her bed, then Chinatsu says something:*

„Hey, Ichiko, do you think luck is divided equitable in the world?”

“Huh? No...if that was true, there wouldn't be this much sad people.”

“I get the feeling that there's just a particular amount of luck, so that a few people seem to have just bad luck and others seem to have no bad luck at all. Everybody should have equal luck, right?”

“Hm...but then you would know that there will be a very sad time if you're really happy at the moment.”

“But you would know that you will be happy again someday.”

“Well, I want to decide by myself if I'm happy or not.”

“That's my point – you can't decide it by yourself. Other people, even your friends could do something which really hurts you, though you didn't do anything wrong. How comes that you can cause so much pain for someone by being happy? Shouldn't the world be more fairly?”

“So you want people to be just this happy that they won't hurt someone? If you never feel pain, you won't feel real happiness either.”

“...maybe I want that. As long as I don't know if I'll be happy ever again, I don't want to feel sorrow. If the world was fair, I could just wait until the situation has changed and I'm not sad anymore.”

“I wouldn't be pleased that way. I'll be happy by doing nothing? I want my actions to be the cause of my happiness! Then I can be truly proud of myself. You know, maybe you get the feeling that there's no justice in this world at all and of course there are times you'll be hurt, though you aren't at fault, but even if you think, you will never smile and laugh from heart again, you can always change your life and make it a better one.”

“...but there are times, when nothing I could do would change the situation. I could do my best and more, but he won't see me the way I want.”

“I know...others can interfere with your wishes and dreams. But if you remain the way you are, there will be people who cherish you because of that. I can imagine how you'll feel when you absolutely know your dream won't come true. But, you know, everything changes. And so do your wishes. Recently I thought about something like that and I came to the conclusion that love doesn't have to be the best you can accomplish. I think that friendship can be as important. Of course I wouldn't want to miss the smiles I have with Hiroshi, but I wouldn't want to miss the ones I have with you or Shiro or Kaito.”

“But now, everything's over. There's no way I can talk with him like I used to. I can't smile at him anymore.”

“Of course you can! If you're working hard, you'll be even better friends. And then he sees you in a different way than Ann. Nothing's over. See? I'm here with you, Hiroshi thinks about you too and Kaito and Hiyori. Even Shiro and Ann, everyone. If you look at it that way, there isn't much which has changed, right?”

“Hehe...yes. I'll try to be like myself again. You'll help me, right? Want to go to the festival tomorrow with everyone?”

"Yes!"

## Pain is Painful

*The following thoughts are from Hikari, Hiyori's older sister, in middle school, before she met Ichiko and her friend.*

"What's the most painful thing which can happen to someone?", I asked. "That a person you love dies, obviously." Yeah, that must be painful. It must be horrible, when someone so important to you dies. But is it the most painful thing? I thought about it. When a person near to you dies, you'll be sad. And – if it's possible – the person who died, will be sad, too, because he had to leave you and everyone else. At least you'll think that he is. But something else came to my mind. When a person you love, a person you want to help whenever you can, a person you would do everything for, leaves you. And leaves you, because he wants to. Because he doesn't want to talk to you anymore. Because he doesn't want to text you anymore. Because he does not love you, does not like you, because you aren't the least bit important to him. He just leaves you. You don't know why. You can't do anything about it. Knowing, that this person will never laugh with you again, that this person doesn't want to laugh with you. Well, no, that's somehow wrong. It's not that he thinks "I don't want to talk or to laugh with her again", it's probably more like, well, that he doesn't think about it. He's forgetting you, because you didn't manage to find a place in his heart. So – when a person dies, you'll never see him again. When a person leaves you, you'll never see him again, either. But to know that it was his decision to leave you, to know, that it didn't have to turn out like that, wouldn't that be...well, just maybe, more painful? I don't really know myself. But just hypothetical, when I think about it, I feel sadder. If someone dies, you can hate this world. This unfairness of our world we live in. If someone leaves you, leaves your world you live in, you can just hate yourself, if at all. You can't even hate this person. Because, no matter what he does, you'll still love him. Or at least the past self of this person you knew. For me, to imagine this, is pretty painful, I must say. Well, "imagine", I don't need to imagine it. It did happen to me already. Both occasions.