



Title: OreGairu Shin Volume 1

Original: Watari Wataru

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Prelude: And So, Hikigaya Komachi Said

What is all of this about?

Even if you ask Komachi about that, Komachi wouldn't know ... rather, Komachi would like to ask him by myself.

Komachi wanted to ask Onii-chan about it, but every time I tried asking, I couldn't go any further, as I was too shy to continue ...

No, it's not like that. It's not because "Onii-chan is going to be taken away from me, I'm going to be so lonely, uwuwuu ..." Ah, that scored a lot of Komachi points! No, for real, no!

I'm not lying to you! You're asking how honest I'm being? I'm being quite honest! To say the truth, it's probably best for Onii-chan to get married away quickly, that's what I had always thought. Yes, I really didn't lie to you. It's true! I'm not feeling lonely at all. So, what I'm saying is the truth, it can't be truer than that.

... I already said, it's true!

This person is so annoying, not giving up at all! How many times do you have to ask about the same thing! Are your parents parrots or something? Ah, so that's how it was, I understand now!

If it's like this, then there's nothing I can do ... to think that I would meet the alternate champion of the Birdman Competition here ...

For real, I'm not feeling lonely or jealous or anything. It's not that I'm in denial.

It's just that I'm too shy to ask him about it ...

It's like asking your parents how they started dating.

Hearing how your dad courted your mom, isn't that just awful to hear? If he was making an embarrassed face and speaking in a deeply emotional manner, that would make it even worse!

So, you would feel uneasy and naturally start playing with your fingers. That's right, you will make the face that Komachi is making now.

Listening to your brother talk about his love stories would be a similar scenario. Can you understand? Hey, can you understand?

I think that in daily life, I've always kept an appropriate distance from my brother, so even when I hear about topics related to relationships, I can stay calm. You're saying that's not the case, that we're very close? Really? Aren't all siblings like this? Well, actually I'm not too sure myself.

So, until today I had no problem hearing about things like this. I don't know whether it was that I couldn't understand in that moment or what, anyways it just didn't feel realistic.

... Ah, no no, it's not like I never imagined it, rather, it's just that I hadn't imagined enough. A hazy scene of "I'm so blessed! So happy! Onee-chan!" *that* type of scene I have imagined.

But in reality, it was not that simple ...

What? Repeat what I said again? I'm so blessed, so happy, Onee-chan! You mean this?

Another round? This isn't a sauna, why another round? But I'll say it again anyways. Komachi has a great spirit for service after all.

One, two, three, Onee-chan!

Whew ...

What's up with this person ... ah, let me have some tea first.

... Wheeew ...

Ah, sorry, I'll continue. It doesn't feel like Komachi should be the one to apologize though ...
whatever, let's just put that matter aside.

I did hear Onii-chan try to bring it up once. He promised me he would tell me if anything was to happen.

But, being the person he is, even if I went to ask him, he would try hiding it and make excuses, so I thought I'd just take it slowly, he'd reveal it bit by bit anyways. That way, Komachi could also accept reality bit by bit, that's what I thought ...

But things were not what I had imagined ...

No, at first I was just going with the flow, teasing him in an attempt to squeeze some information out of him, but when it came to the "So? Are you two actually dating?" part, the conversation suddenly became unbearable.

Because, it's that Onii-chan! My Onii-chan!

You know what happened? Onii-chan made a serious expression and cleared his throat, then in a serious manner told me: "Komachi, actually I have something I want to tell you ..."

I thought he was going to get into the topic, he was finally going to get into the topic!

So, Komachi sat straight immediately.

I waited ages for him to start talking, but he never did.

And in the end, all he could say sounded broken and small like a mosquito “Um, so like, I think, it went pretty well,” his ears were red, he couldn’t make eye contact, and he sighed, but still, he forced out a smile.

I didn’t even know if I should have called him disgusting, cute, or pure, I didn’t even know if he was happy or not, anyways, even I started to feel bashful ...

And then, I couldn’t help but say, “Oh, oh! So that’s how it is! That’s great! Then Komachi can rest easy,” faking a calm expression and ending the conversation. Oh my, that really gave me a fright, I didn’t even know that I had such talent in acting ... if I don’t keep myself in check, I could turn into an evil woman that toys with men’s hearts!

Hmm? You’re saying that we’re similar in how we try to muddle past our problems? Nonono, there is no resemblance, not a bit. If you keep saying that I’ll get angry!

Because, we’re not the same at all! Onii-chan muddles past his problems by adding weird self-deprecation, which makes it especially disgusting, but Komachi’s technique has an indescribable cuteness to it, a flair of personality ... what are you laughing at! Uh ... no, like I said, we bear no resemblance ...

You’re saying that I’m trying to muddle past this? That, I admit.

We both have the same idea.

Yes, Komachi accidently muddled past the problem again ...

Onii-chan is the same too, I think.

Like a thorn stuck in his heart, there are things he isn't prepared to let out, and therefore he can't say it out loud, which is why he didn't tell Komachi more about it.

But that's just my own selfish thoughts ...

Ah, no, it's not like there's any real evidence. After all, Komachi wasn't even with him, didn't hear about it all, and still have a lot I don't understand.

However, during activity time in the club room, I can't help but have the thought that "Ah, Onii-chan is daydreaming again."

Do you know? When Onii-chan is daydreaming, he's usually thinking about complicated things, and his face just becomes this jumbled mess.

Yesss! Like the face you make when you eat sour candy!

Ah, so you already knew. You're smarter than you look.

Yeah, so like, it's ok if he makes a normal expression like frowning, but his entire face gives off a sour and off-putting vibe when he's daydreaming.

Things like this, if you hadn't been together for a long time, you wouldn't possibly know right ...? That's what I thought. Oh really? There are people that know this other than Komachi?

Oh, ok.

Well, since everyone knows already ... looks like Komachi said something unnecessary.

... Ah!

Aaah, stop it, stop patting my head! It took me so much effort to tidy my hair ... say, this person uses so much force when patting someone's head ... ouch, take your hand off my head! Hmm, that wasn't really all that bad.

... Yes, you're right.

Indeed, even if Komachi does nothing, those other people would do something, I think.

Heh-heh, hearing you say that, I think I've cheered up a little.

Ah! Wait! I said stop patting my head! No! I'm not that down!

But the future really makes me feel uneasy, ah ... what a troublesome future ... thinking about what will happen from now on, Komachi gets really worried ...

Yes, just as you thought.

This is probably going to go on for a while.

But I think things will slowly start to change.

No matter it being Komachi, or Onii-chan.

... Or for all of the members of the service club.

My new life? Yeah, it's going pretty well! I'm working hard, slowly but surely.

As for the club ...? Things are considerably well ... not good but not bad ...

So, if you can look over him for a while longer, I will be very happy as a little sister. Ah! That scored pretty high on Komachi points!

Then if there's anything else, I'll let you know!

That's the gist of it—

I'll be in your care for a while longer!

Chapter 1: And So, Our Youth Will Never End

No matter how the seasons alternate, some things never change.

It's already half-way through April, looking outside the window from the classroom, you could see the cherry blossoms starting to wilt.

However, the branches reaching into the sky, the thick tree trunks accumulating energy, and the roots deeply plunging into the ground, remained the same.

From a flowering cherry blossom to a tree starting to sprout new leaves, despite the changes in its appearance, it doesn't affect its composition.

Human nature may also be the same.

In the third spring of my high school life, no, if we're talking about spring in my high school life, because of some reasons, it's only my second time, but if we're including elementary and middle school, I've already passed through countless new semesters.

No matter how long time has passed, I still don't like this season.

The atmosphere of mutual greetings, superficial conversations, those, I've already long been accustomed to.

Because I have to go through this every year, all I can do now is just sigh and say, "It's that season of the year again ..." It's like in the summer when family friends gift salad oil as a greeting. You thought it was a bottle of Calpis, but uncapping it, you see that, it's all oil, and

mom and Komachi are happy. But then, getting oil as a gift is pretty exciting too, as you can use it to fry things to eat.

I should have already grown accustomed to the new semester by now, but I still felt uncomfortable somehow, even more so than previous years, which made me suspect whether I had a pollen allergy.

But I already knew the real culprit.

It was the classroom redistribution after we became third years.

No, the redistribution itself was not the issue.

After all, I wasn't all that comfortable with our class when I was in my second year, so I doubt I would have any nostalgia about that. At the most, it would just be crying into my pillow and complaining, "I'm in a different class as Totsuka!" I'll never forgive you, Ministry of Education!

But as the saying goes, good things don't last forever, life is filled with goodbyes. Separations in the short term are inevitable. Rather, I'd already gotten used to them. Looking from another perspective, I could finally go to the tennis court in the afternoon break and just squat there, waiting for an encounter with fate. So, the class redistribution itself really had no downsides for me.

Therefore, the culprit that was making me uncomfortable was not the class redistribution.

Unwittingly, I squinted at the true culprit, and even softly clicked my tongue.

I'm not sure if he heard the sound, or if he felt the stare of hatred on his back, but the culprit of my uncomfortableness turned around to face me.

His tie swung in front of his chest, and his bangs fluttered in the wind.

Hayama Hayato.

He was my former classmate, now current classmate, and the main cause of my uncomfortableness.

Hayama originally had a cool smile on his face, but as soon as his eyes met mine, they flashed an unsure look. He raised the corners of his mouth, then bowed his head slightly.

With that action, it was as if he was saying “Is there a problem?”

I have no business with you ...

I shook my head lightly in response.

Hayama shrugged his shoulders, as if saying “Don’t call me if you have nothing to say.”

No, I didn’t call you ...

I sighed impatiently, and right at that moment—

“Huhuhu ...”

A weird laughter reached my ears.

In an instance, Hayama and I had straightened our backs.

It’s over! That person’s coming! I raised my alertness, discovering a female classmate in my peripheral vision.

She had soft shoulder-length black hair, a pair of red-rimmed glasses, and the sides of her mouth were contorted in an unpleasant manner, showing an oddly delighted smile.

Ebina Hina.

She was also my former classmate, now current classmate, and another cause of my uncomfortableness. She showed a satisfied smile, pulled the chair beside her, and started pointing between me and Hayama.

“We’re in the same class as Hikigaya-kun again huh”

“Hahaha ...”

Hayama let out an awkward laughter after hearing Ebina’s meaningless comment.

“Um, yeah, I guess this is fate ...”

He helplessly replied, but, towards Ebina, he had made a grave mistake. Who knew Ebina would then snicker and say:

“Fate ... fufufu ...” (TL note: This is a play on words, “fu” meaning rotten, BL)

She licked her lips, looking like a devil with no decency at all.

Miura had always been here to stop her rampage! *Great queen, please come here quickly!* I shrunk my shoulders and prayed that this rotten storm would blow over.

As our new semester seat arrangement was based on our school number, Hayama was the one to sit in front of me.

Up until middle school, schools in Chiba arranged our school numbers by birthday, but for some reason they decided to arrange it by alphabetical order in high school. *Damn it!* Hayama's birthday was on September 28th, if our seats were arranged by birthday, he would be in the back ...

God, oh god, I just clearly remembered Hayama's birthday ... doesn't that make it look like I care about him a lot ...?!

Ebina seemed to have picked up on the maiden-in-love scene playing in my heart, as she quickly walked over, and her rotten energy intensified.

Since becoming third years, everyday has been like this.

Of course, the three of us weren't always together.

From an outsider's perspective, Hayama and Ebina frequently talked with the other classmates, and seemed to socialize well. Rather, they seemed to always be happy with everyone.

But maybe because of the seating arrangement, sometimes things like this happen.

For example, after school when everyone is thinking of what to do next, or during the brief time before and after class.

At times like these, a situation like this would gradually form, and Hayama, Ebina, and I would end up together.

Even if we did make eye contact, we seldomly talked, and any talk that did come up always ended in a simple two lines, not even counting as a conversation, pretty much the only way we

“made conversation” was through sighing. But it’s still one month before the next seat change, so before then, this situation can only continue on.

If it’s just one month, I think I can make it through.

Furthermore, I’ve already had a whole year’s worth of experience with Hayama and Ebina, and at least knew how to handle being with them.

We respected the same rules, that is, not to meddle too much with each other’s business.

Because both Hayama and Ebina were inclined to maintain the status quo, getting along with them was quite easy. As for my other classmates ... that was not the case.

Hayama Hayato had always been one of those attention-hoarding people, same goes as Ebina.

Many people in the class had already known them to an extent, plus, there were definitely some that wanted to use this opportunity to get to know them.

And so, all the attention in the class naturally fell onto Hayama and his friends.

Even so, Hayama often uses a non-offensive manner to coolly block their gazes, while Ebina uses her rotten mode to make herself look like a clown character, so, no one had actually gotten close to them.

To be able to break through all these protective layers is probably pretty impressive ...

Can’t say that I called it, but just as I was thinking about those things, a large ruckus sounded from outside the classroom, and the door in the back was opened.

“Hayato! Listen to me.”

Accompanied by the ambient noise, someone came in crying like how Nobita calls for Doraemon's help. The one noisily running towards him was our former classmate, Tobe.

"This is bad! Yumiko is making me in charge of the 2F class gathering, but the soccer club is also preparing for the imminent competition, I already said I have no time to spare ..."

Tobe came towards us and started playing with the hair on his nape, crying and complaining about his situation.

So that's the case, that really does sound like trouble.

As for the people remaining in the classroom, they had heard what Hayama and his circle were talking about, and formed a discussion that went "Ah ... Miura ... ah ... so that's it".

But with just that level of understanding, it was not sufficient to truly understand Hayama and his circle.

Hayama and Ebina made no response. Surprisingly, Tobe changed the tone of his voice.

"This is not good; I'm betting my all on this last competition for the soccer club."

With that said he took a glance at Ebina.

"But she's forcing me to plan the gathering, what should I do? This is bad. I'm also in charge of the gathering for our new class, I wonder if there's anyone else that can do it."

With every sentence, no, every section, no, every word, he glanced towards Ebina.

Even without deciphering the contents of his speech, it was evident that he was using a super self-humiliating way to boast about himself. But it seemed that it had little effect on his target, Ebina. From the beginning of his speech, she had not uttered a word, only smiling and nodding.

“Sure is hard for you huh, Tobechi.”

Ebina’s indifference made Tobe stop talking for a moment, but that wouldn’t be enough to let Tobe down, that’s the kind of person he was.

“This is bad, this is really bad. Ah! If there was someone else that could do this other than me! But I also want to prepare for my club! Ah! I’m in trouble! After all, this is our last year in high school, so we also have to do something about class gatherings as well.”

He was making it as if it was his last move before victory, with only one weapon called “boasting” to carry him on. *Um, that weapon you have, it’s a bamboo gun ...*

His gallant effort sure was touching, but in the past few days, the frequency of his visits and boasting had increased substantially, and to say the truth, as a bystander, it was quite sad to watch.

This dude, I feel like he’s the type of person that will one day send a “I may look frivolous, but during Mother’s Day I went home with my childhood bros to give her carnations” kind of uninteresting and crazy tweet.

The bystanders listening to him had also gradually made a “What’s up with that person ...” kind of look.

But the one person that can solve this problem is non-other than the human air purifier Hayama Hayato! Although I don't know whether he has that plasma cluster-something function, it's like he always has the fresh breath after eating a Frisk mint candy! He silently looked at Tobe and showed a smile.

Seeing his cool smile, Tobe somewhat shyly scratched his nose.

Hayama started speaking while maintaining his smile:

“Doesn't that mean everyone thinks you're reliable? That's pretty good. Don't worry about the club, you can focus on planning the gatherings.”

An almost perfect reply. His speech really showed his matureness. Tobe was annoyingly boasting about himself, and yet, he could still reply with a smile and decent tone. *He really is something.*

Actually, the people listening to Hayama were also radiating a “Ah...Hayama really is something, he's so mature ...” kind of vibe.

But with just that level of understanding, it was not sufficient to truly understand Hayama and his circle.

For people that knew Hayama well enough, his message was evident.

It seemed that Tobe had picked up on this, as he reached his hand towards Hayama's shoulders, complaining:

“Wait, wait! Hayato! Nonono! I also want to work hard for our club!”

But Hayama swiftly dodged Tobe's incoming hand, and with a hammering smile, he said:

"No need to worry about that anymore, worry about the class gathering, I'll be cheering for you."

He showed off a cool smile with perfect white teeth that made Tobe brim with tears. It was like he was saying that the soccer club no longer needed him ... the only person that could force Hayama to say such toxic things was probably only Tobe.

On the flip side, Tobe was able to make this annoying, twisted, cool, and dark-sided handsome person open up his heart, that's impressive on its own.

Seeing Hayama reveal his dark side, Ebina and I nodded without any surprise. As for the others still remaining in the classroom, they started to secretly chat with one another.

"Should we also consider arranging a class gathering?"

"Right? Let's think of something too."

The people in the class started to make conversation. Their conversation was supposed to be happening within their own circles, yet, they were secretly shooting glances at Hayama in anticipation.

Things like class gatherings were usually organized by the leading figure of a group.

Although our classmates didn't openly request for it, their intention was obviously to get Hayama to grant their wish for a class gathering. The whole class were waiting for Hayama to say *"Let's do it then (showing shiny white teeth ☆)!"*

Noticing this, Hayama lightly sighed.

That sure looks exhausting ... this year he was sure to be the center of the class again, stuck being everybody's Hayama Hayato.

Just as I was trying my best to show an indifferent attitude, Tobe made an "eh?" sound, and showed a worried expression.

It seemed that Tobe had also heard our classmates murmuring. He looked around his surroundings, pulled at the hair on his nape, and asked Ebina a question:

"Ebina, you guys haven't had a class gathering yet?"

"Yeah. No one's planning one."

Ebina laughed troubledly after being asked that question, turning to look at me and Hayama.

"Is there anyone that would plan one?"

"Who knows ..."

Seeing that Ebina was elongating her sentences and feigning ignorance, Hayama lowered his shoulders. And then, as if he remembered something, the corners of his mouth floated into an annoying smile.

"Right?"

He directed this simple question towards me and tilted his head in fake concern.

Stop that, don't ask me ... what does this have to do with me ...? Please don't drag me into this mess ...

To express my thoughts out loud, I tidied my new textbooks on the desk, then stowed them in my drawer. At the same time, I picked up my bag to express my intention to leave. After all, it *was* nearing club time ...

I tried getting out of my seat, but Ebina and Hayama continued speaking to me, completely ignoring my signals.

“But I *do* want to have a class gathering.”

“After all, if we don’t plan one now, there won’t be time later.”

“Yeah!”

Even Tobe, who was unrelated to our class matters, had joined in on the conversation, and gradually, anticipation for a class gathering was growing in the classroom.

Not good ... if I stay here, I will surely be forced to participate!

Even the three of them had begun to throw glances at me that said “What to do?” like they were waiting for my reply. We were enveloped by an awkward silence.

If I were to agree now, they would probably say something like “Then I’ll tell the girls, Hayama, you’ll be in charge of the boys, Hikigaya you’re in charge of contacting everybody, choosing the location and booking it, and we’ll rely on you for all the other errands.”

Even so, this growing anticipation would not be stopped even if I rejected the class gathering.

Towards Hayama and Ebina, I felt that I couldn’t muddle past this situation with just an excuse.

I was really not good at handling those two ...

And so, there was only one thing left for me to say:

“Remember to tell me when everything’s settled ...”

That was my killer technique.

Whenever there was going to be an activity, if I said those magic words, I could covertly express that I had no intention to participate.

The person saying this basically didn’t need to do anything, not even needing to chip in on the finances. They were the people that others would label as an asshole, and so, in most situations, that person would not be invited in the future. But if things were still to shape up, they could avert it easily by saying “I’ll go if I can.” This technique may have originated from the polite way that people in Kyoto used to refuse others, but it seemed that Hayama and Ebina had caught up on what I was implying, as the two of them showed a troubled smile and lightly nodded their heads, with a look that said “Thought so.”

But sometimes you’d meet that one person that just didn’t understand.

The person I’m referring to is Tobe.

Tobe played with his annoyingly long hair as he made a solemn expression, he looked to be immersed in thought, but then he suddenly patted my shoulder.

“You’re wrong, this type of thing needs to be done in the moment! We need to decide it, now or never, or else if we consider everyone’s plans, this matter would never be settled. Just WEI it! WEI!”

“Oh, ok ... don’t suddenly say something so correct ...”

Because his smile directed towards me was too handsome, I accidently made a casual reply like such.

Even I had a reaction.

Tobe's rude loud voice seemed to have entered the ears of all the people remaining in the classroom.

In front of the classroom, a few boys and girls that had formed a group suddenly looked back towards us.

The impression they gave at first glance, were not of people that caught the attention of others, and not like Hayama and his circle's outstanding appearances, also not like the weird type you would find with the woodworks or game creation club's members. Plus, they also did not seem to have the dark vibe that Sagami had.

To put it simply, they were what we call normal people. You might disagree to what the threshold is to be a normal person, but looking at the people I'm acquainted with, calling them normal would be most fitting.

Because of this, they blended in to school life very well. Rather, they did it so well that it was hard to even remember their names or faces. (TL note: Some names are referred to here but they make no sense, so they're not included)

Two of our classmates glanced at Hayama, then at each other, and softly spoke to one another:

"What do we do?" "Do we say something?" or something like that.

At last it seemed like they had reached a conclusion, and one of the short black-haired girls in the group nodded and stood up.

Under her friends' scrutiny, she nervously marched towards us.

Her hair was slightly curled in, its length going just around her shoulders, and her bangs rested on her pretty forehead. With each step, her hair bounced about.

Her facial features were favorable, and she gave off a lively vibe, adding to that, her stature was quite short, and the way she walked was like that of a small wild deer.

Because we had just recently been distributed to new classes, there were still many classmates that I could not recognize, yet, I knew this girl.

I think she was the one that became our class leader.

Her name was ... uh ... her name ... I think it was Tomioka Mio?

No, Tomioka Mito? Or Tomioka Mika? Nono, it's Tomioka something ... well it could be in reverse too ...

No matter what it was, I was certain was she was a To-something-san. I'm actually pretty good at remembering names, so much so that I haven't forgotten the name of that Kawa-something-san. I wonder if Kawa-something-san is doing well now ...

Just as I was trying to remember To-something-san's name, To-something-san approached us, took in a breath of air, and said:

"Um, about ...!"

Possibly due to her nervousness, her voice came out somewhat sharp, but unexpectedly energetic. Because of the sudden disturbance behind him, Tobe jumped and gasped.

To-something-san was frightened back, and couldn't speak for a moment.

Her sharp voice and Tobe's unsightly gasp attracted the attention of everyone. Perhaps still being embarrassed from earlier, her face became all red. In the silence of the classroom, to make up for the awkwardness, she repeated again and again "um ..."

Seeing the situation, Ebina lunged forward to hug her.

"Oh Toto, what's up?"

Ebina called her by a nickname and started patting her head. *That really is impressive ...* Ebina was talented at reading the mood, so her ability to resolve awkwardness was top class ...

She really is the person that tamed the Miura-lion and the endangered Kawa-something-leopard ... if this goes on, Toto could become a new member of "Ebina's Exotic Animal Kingdom ..."

Just as I was thinking about that, Toto seemed to have slowly calmed down in Ebina's embrace.

Hayama saw that she had calmed down, and took the chance to ask her:

"Is there anything we can help you with, Tomioka-san?"

Ah, it was Tomioka, yes, Tomioka-san. Uh-huh I already knew that. As I nodded my head,

Hayama shot me a contemptuous glance that said "You forgot her name, right?" *No, I*

remembered, ok? Wasn't it To-something-san? You sure mind my business a lot. That said, in the end he would still remind me, Hayama-san is really such a gentleman ☆!

Just as my maiden heart was going doki-doki ☆, Tomioka-san was just like me, doki-doki-ing for Hayama.

“Um, you were talking about a class gathering, right?”

Tomioka-san stuttered as her face turned red, glancing at Hayama.

“Yeah, we were just discussing about it. Were you talking about it over there as well?”

Hayama answered with his usual cool smile, making Tomioka-san frantically avert her gaze.

Wow, what a maiden-in-love reaction that was. Hayama senpai-pai is so handsome, just his looks set him apart from everyone, if it weren't for me being used to it, I wouldn't be able to gaze at him directly. I understand. Sometimes, I too don't dare to gaze at him directly!

I smiled at the sight in front of me, just then, Tomioka-san's averted gaze fell onto me, and we made direct eye contact.

Of course, of course. Her gaze didn't leave me after that.

“Then, what do you plan to do after this ...? Um? A class gathering? Dinner together?”

Something like that ...?”

Tomioka-san tightly held onto the ribbon in front of her chest, and looked at me with her earnest eyes. Because she couldn't yet calculate the distance between us, she had a soft tone to her voice, from that, I could tell that she was a serious but air-headed person.

I'm guessing she said all of this because of the nonsense that Tobe was spouting earlier, like "We need to decide it, now or never, or else if we consider everyone's plans, this matter would never be settled. Just WEI it!" *Tobe, it's all your fault, quick, apologize.*

As a brotherly figure, seeing a girl try so hard made me want to just go along with what she wanted, but if we were to go for a class gathering right after this, it would be way too sudden.

I still had my own plans for later. Normally, "I have plans later" is just a common excuse to push away an event, and in reality, they were probably just watching re-runs of idol shows at home. But today I really did have plans that I couldn't push away ... and to be honest, if I could, I would really want to.

To get away from Tomioka-san's searing gaze, I could only look away to the side, towards Hayama for help.

Say, weren't you the one being asked that question? Shouldn't you be the one to answer? I silently pressured him, and gestured for him to respond quickly.

Hayama lightly sighed, nodding in answer to my plea, then, he immediately put on his usual cool smile and turned towards Tomioka-san.

"I'm sorry, but I have to go to club."

"Ah, sorry Toto. We are very serious about soccer practice. I'm not sure about Hikigaya though."

After Hayama rejected her with a smile, Tobe quickly followed up. *Say, no one even called for you, you're not even in the same class as us ...* but because I also had my own club to go to, I obediently nodded in agreement with them.

And so, Tomioka-san also nodded.

“Yeah, yeah, I guess ... So, like, after club ends or something ...?”

She nodded her head as if she understood, but despite her apologetic attitude, she didn't give up just yet. *Ah-ha, so we have a troublesome girl here!*

Hayama and Ebina were also shocked by how stubborn she was.

Usually when Hayama uses his cool smile to reject others, the other side would give up. As far as I knew, the only person that strategy wouldn't work on was Yukinoshita Haruno.

“Toto, that's some real spirit you got there. You're right, we could always go after club time!”

It seemed that Tobe had been swayed by Tomioka-san's stubbornness, as he voted a yes for the gathering. *Wait, I'm pretty sure you're not in our class though ...*

“I have time today as well.”

Ebina slowly raised her hand in approval, and Hayama also nodded his head.

“After club huh ...”

And then he glanced at me, as if seeing what I was going to do.

“Ah, today is not so convenient for me ...”

I reflexively used that lame excuse, Hayama seemed to be baffled for a second after hearing that, but he quickly thought it through and regained his composure, nodding his head and saying:

“Oh yeah. Then it looks like we really can’t go.”

“Huh?”

Because Hayama became so understanding out of nowhere, I couldn’t help but throw some suspicion at him. But before I could think any further, Tomioka-san hurriedly interrupted.

“Ah, anytime is fine! We’re just out to have fun, it’s fine even if we go at night ...! Yeah?”

“Um ... so like, how to say ...? It’s just that the timing really isn’t good ...”

She really was being way too stubborn; I didn’t even know how to reply in that moment.

Meanwhile, Hayama was holding back a laugh, his shoulders shaking non-stop. Just then, he suddenly raised his head, and greeted me with a cool smile.

“Why not just say you’re not available tonight.”

“Yeah ... that’s right, but why are you the one saying that ... and how do you know ...?”

Wait, what’s up with this guy, he’s been smiling so slyly since just now ... hey, wait. He wouldn’t really know what’s up right? Wait a minute, wait a minute, no, are you kidding me? Wait, hey, what the hell is up with this person? God, he has been way too interested in my matters, right? How scary.

I stared at Hayama, attempting to read past his cunning and annoying smile, but from my peripheral vision, Tomioka-san raised her hand abruptly, her jumpy actions making me think how much she was like a fawn.

“Well, if that’s the case then let’s just do it next time! We could reschedule it to a time convenient for Hikigaya-san to participate as well!”

“Um, ah, excuse me ... actually, you really don’t need to care about me ... I’ll go if I can next time, you guys should have fun, no need to mind me ...”

If it was someone that knew me, they would quickly pick on the fact that I didn’t want to go, but for someone that was speaking to me for the first time, it seemed that they wouldn’t be able to understand.

Tomioka-san stared into my eyes, then shook her head.

“No, I don’t think that’s ok.”

“Ah, really ...”

Isn’t this kid way too serious ...?

How have I been able get out of situations like this before? Just as I was pondering this question, it looked like Tobe couldn’t bear the situation any further, so he stepped in to resolve the awkwardness.

“Then let’s just do it next week or the week after and see if our schedules meet!”

“Yeah.”

Hayato nodded in confirmation, and Tomioka-san also nodded back. *Thank you, Tobe, even if we are in different classes, even if our class gathering has nothing to do with you, still, thank you.*

With that matter solved, it was nearing club time. Hayama grabbed his schoolbag, noticing that, Ebina said to Tomioka-san:

“Want to go get dinner later? If we’re going to do a class gathering it would be best if we could talk about it first.”

“Ah, mm! Ok! Let’s go get dinner!”

“Let’s go, let’s go!”

It was supposed to be a girl’s gathering, but Tobe was inviting himself in, seeing that, Hayama smiled and said:

“Oh, so that’s how it is? Then you can go along with them, have fun.”

“Heyyy, don’t be like that, Hayato.”

The scene of Tobe leaning on Hayama made Tomioka-san panic a bit, but as soon as she realized it was just how the two of them joked around, she showed a gentle smile. At the same time, Ebina was deep in thought, muttering:

“Ooh, that’s the kind of scene I want to see ...”

That so? Tobe X Hayama, it actually sounds pretty good ... no, or is it Hayama X Tobe ...?

As I was thinking about these things, I picked up my bag and got up from my seat.

As if that were the signal to leave, Hayama also stood up, and we left the classroom, entering the hallway. Tobe, Ebina, and Tomioka-san also followed along.

“I’m going ahead.”

After leaving the classroom, I muttered a useless comment, but just as I was heading to the special building—

“Hikigaya.”

Hayama abruptly called me, making me turn around.

“Good luck.”

“... What nonsense are you spewing.”

What are you talking about? — I wasn’t able to say that in time, and neither did I want to go back to ask. Most importantly, what I had to do today that would require luck, I knew all too well.

Even if I were to feign ignorance, Hayama would definitely just say something like “Whatever, as long as you’re fine with,” it would be an empty comment, but something I wouldn’t be able to ignore.

And so, all I did was make an annoyed expression and sigh as I replied harshly.

As for whether Hayama heard it? I’m not sure, as we left in different directions and there was no way to confirm it.

But because I could still hear the sound of Ebina's high-pitched rotten speak "Hahaha that's what I like, fufufu", it's safe to say that he heard what I had said. I was too scared to look back anyways, so I hurriedly fled the scene.

I walked speedily through the hallway; outside the windows I could see the cherry blossoms in the courtyard.

A breeze of wind passed by me, blowing up a storm of white petals, and as the wind blew away, all that was left on the branches were fresh green shoots.

The sense of finality to the scene made me stop in my tracks and ponder.

This is the last spring of my high school life.

Summer will be coming soon, but even as the new leaves sprout, spring won't end just yet, instead a touch of green will grow on.

—And so, our youth will never end, and spring will continue on.

Chapter 2: Even So, His and Her Routine Will Continue On

No matter how the seasons alternate, some things never change.

Inversely, some things *do* change.

For example, the service club that I'm in has had some change.

A while after parting with Hayama—

I entered the special building and headed towards the club room, immediately, something running towards me appeared in my peripheral vision.

“Oh, Onii-chan, what took you so long?”

The biggest change here, is that we now have an adorable new club member, who was coming to greet me in smiles.

The one and only, best sister in the world, Hikigaya Komachi—wearing the Sobu High uniform and joining the service club. That was a scene that I'd never imagined to see one day.

During spring break, I'd already seen her in uniform at home plenty of times, but to see it in school made me more emotional than I thought possible. Because of how precious she was, I didn't even dare to talk to her when we ran into each other on the hallway. To be exact, Komachi treats me like air in school, but talks to me normally in the club room. *Onii-chan is so happy ...*

Perhaps because she was still not used to it, she wore her uniform jacket with her sleeves slightly rolled up, and had a new hair pin to put down her bangs, and now, there she was,

applying Sock Touch casually like it was no big deal. (TL note: Sock Touch is a type of glue that prevents knee socks from falling off)

When she had just joined the club, she was like a new cat in the house exploring its new home, however, just a few days later, she had already completely adjusted, thus exposing such a defenseless pose. *Don't do that in front of other boys, alright? With how cute you are, I'm afraid that you will awaken a Sock Touch fetish in them!*

Sock Touch ... sounds pretty good ...

Of course, the change here is not only in my newly discovered fetish, there are other things that have changed.

“Ah, Senpai, what took you so long?”

Isshiki Iroha puffed her cheeks in an adorable manner, and was busy doing a manicure on her nails ...

This person is just the same as the last huh? Say, what are you even doing here ...? You're not a club member, right?

But the one sitting next to Isshiki, Yuigahama Yui, *did* undergo a bit of a change.

“Hikki, yahallo!”

Her smile and cheerful waving had not changed, and neither did her weird but lively greeting.

Although, she now sat in a different place compared to before, on the other side of the table, right beside Isshiki.

“... Oh, good afternoon.”

The change from the usual distance confused me, thus, I was slow in my reply. To cover that up, I speedily walked towards my seat.

But even this seat was different from before.

“Good afternoon.”

As I was sitting down, a soft voice came from beside the window. As usual, this voice was quiet and composed, but it felt closer than before. And so, I replied with a quieter voice than usual:

“... Yeah, good afternoon.”

This was probably the smallest change of all.

Yukinoshita Yukino sat in front of the windows, the sunlight shining in and forming a glowing backlight on her. She was lightly combing her hair, with an elegant smile on her face.

The distance between us had become slightly closer than before, just by a few millimeters.

In the past, my seating arrangement had always been diagonal to Yukinoshita's, but now, we were on the same line.

Looking back at the past, it was clear to me that however far I stretched out my hand, it would never be enough to reach her, and so I never tried. In the past, the distance between us was as far as such.

But now, the distance between us was such that, if we both took a step forward, and tried our best to reach out, we would be within each other's grasp.

Even so, the distance between us now was still not all that close, *that* point hadn't changed that much from the past.

Despite being an almost negligible change, it was still something.

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The ambient noise and faint scent of tea gradually filled the club room.

Interrupted by the fragrant scent, I looked up from the novel I was reading, and faced the source of it.

In front of a billowing cloud of steam, Yukinoshita Yukino was elegantly brewing some tea. The sunlight reflecting off the cloud of steam made it look like there was a veil over her face.

I gazed at this marvelous scene, just then, Yukinoshita's eyes suddenly met with mine.

Anything wrong?

Yukinoshita tilted her head, silently asking me.

To that, I responded by shaking my head, and looked down to shift my attention back onto the novel. At that moment, I saw the corners of her lips move into a gentle smile.

There was nothing special about this type of exchange, but it made me feel a bit uneasy, so I decided to concentrate harder on my novel.

That's what I thought ... but I couldn't concentrate at all ...

Getting used to a new environment is a time-consuming process. The subtle change in relationship, the deviation in our positions, and the unfamiliar distance. All of this was par for the course.

Other than that, there was still something bugging me.

The thought of the words Hayama spoke to me as we parted stayed in my mind and wouldn't dissipate, it really was troubling me ...

The moment I thought about that and the upcoming event, I couldn't focus on the novel, and all I could do was scan through the lines one by one.

In situations like this, when only your ears are hard at work, naturally, you would be attracted by the trivial conversations around you.

"Did you know a new café opened around here?"

The one that said that was Isshiki. She tapped at her phone, and showed it to Yuigahama.

Yuigahama took a look at it, then exclaimed:

"Ah, it really is close!"

"Yeah, I think we can go after school. It looks like the shop was originally from Kobe, so the décor is pretty stylish. There's quite a diversity of drinks too."

The two sat shoulder by shoulder, and chatted as they tapped at the phone screen. Just then, Komachi pulled a chair over and sat beside Yuigahama, looking at the phone.

"Ooh, pearl milk tea."

“No one’s drinking that stuff anymore, only old-fashioned people drink that now.”

Hearing Isshiki’s mean comment, Komachi was greatly impacted. I’m not sure whether it was the force of the mental impact, but Komachi sat slanted on her seat upon hearing that.

Then, she said in a shaky voice:

“Eh, but, but Onii-chan said he quite likes it ...”

“Ah—that’s probably because Hikki *is* like an old-fashioned person ...”

Hearing what Yuigahama said to Komachi, I was impacted even harder than Komachi was, so much so that I also sat slanted on my chair.

Hey ... I didn’t drink it because I knew it was all the rage, um, it’s just that I enjoy sweet things like milk tea, and the stickiness of the pearls were quite intriguing ... say, in its originating place in Taiwan, it is already a mainstream beverage, you can’t even describe it as “the rage” anymore ... I feel that it should also gradually have such a presence in Japan ... like how even the convenience stores sell ice cream sundaes in the summer ... (TL note: Taiwanese here, can confirm pearl milk tea/boba is the best, STFU Irohasu)

Just as I was furiously protecting my pearl milk tea, or my old-fashioned-ness, Isshiki added to the insult, as if she was not satisfied yet:

“Old-fashioned people *really* do like to chase trends from two weeks ago.”

“I understand what you’re saying ... that type of person that comes over and says ‘This is all the rage now right?’ really makes gets on your nerves ...”

Yuigahama said that with an impatient tone, making a very annoyed expression.

Yet, the one listening to their conversation, Komachi, showed a frightened expression.

“Both of you are way too familiar with old-fashioned people ...”

“Yeah, cause daddy ...”

“Yeah, because dad ...”

Komachi heard both Isshiki and Yuigahama answer in a similar manner, and, as if noticing something, started murmuring non-stop:

“Ah, so that’s how it is ...”

What’s wrong ...? What type of “daddy” are they talking about ... I don’t really understand, but it sounds pretty scary, better for me to pretend that I never heard anything!

I shifted my gaze away from them, and saw that Yukinoshita had prepared five servings of tea. She poured the tea into a mug with the dog illustration, a plain teacup, and a paper cup.

“Here, have some tea.”

Yukinoshita said, and the three people opposite of her reached over for their cups and said their thanks.

“Ah, thank you.”

“Thank you, Yukino-san.”

“Thanks, Senpai.”

Yuigahama, Komachi, and Isshiki held the tea in their hands. Then, Yukinoshita quietly poured one last cup of tea into the mug with the Pan-san illustration and gave it to me.

“Thank you.”

Hearing my quiet thanks, she lightly nodded. A look of satisfaction appeared on her face, she’s probably pretty confident in the taste of today’s tea. Or it could have been because I properly thanked her, and she thought that her daily teachings had finally paid off. *She’s always reminding me to be polite ...*

Even without direct conversation, both of us weakly signaled to each other similar feelings. This type of lovey-dovey old couple interaction made me feel a bit uneasy, so, to conceal the reddening of my cheeks, I blew at my tea, trying to forget about it.

Looking sideways, I could see that Komachi was using her long sleeves to hold the teacup as she blew on her tea.

And then, both of us took a sip at the same time.

“Ah, hot...! Not really ...”

My voice and Komachi’s overlapped in perfect unison. This made both of us stare at each other, but despite our shared surprise, no one else felt that way.

“You could even say it’s not hot enough.”

Isshiki held the paper cup to her lips, and made an unsatisfied expression. Then she glanced at me and put on a face that said “What’s this guy talking about?” and added:

“What’s this guy talking about?”

Hey, what type of expression was that? It was cute, sure, but also so irritating ... how can you be dissatisfied with the temperature of Yukinoshita’s tea? Pupu!

Just as I was thinking that, Yuigahama showed an interesting expression and looked me in the eye, saying:

“Ah, it’s because Hikki is afraid of hot things.”

Her smile seemed a bit awkward, and I returned a similar expression in agreement. From my peripheral vision, I saw Komachi with a look of gratefulness as she sipped her tea, and then she moved her chair to sit beside Yukinoshita.

“Everyone in the household is afraid of hot things, even Kamakura.”

“Well, he does have a cat’s tongue.” (TL note: In Japanese, a cat’s tongue can be used to describe people that don’t like eating hot things)

“So, this warmth is perfect for our whole family ... what do I do, Yukino-san ...? I like you too much ...”

And then she put her hand on Yukinoshita’s thigh, and meowed as she cuddled on her.

“Don’t be like that, Komachi ...”

Yukinoshita looked like she was at a loss then and there, but it seemed that she didn’t dislike Komachi’s feline way of expressing intimacy, so, she just left Komachi to do whatever she wanted. A short while later, she cautiously reached towards Komachi’s head, and started to pat

her gently. *Hm, not bad, Komachi's preciousness really is something to behold ... it makes me want to sing like Remeoroman "Machi —Yuki —ah ..."*

I really wanted to become a wall then ... but just as I was acting like a bystander in a play, suddenly, an ice-cold sound "GURAWEAGOWARAGAKIN" knocked down my imagination. (TL note: References are too Japanese for me to understand, something about a song and a manga catchphrase)

"Oh, that so."

I glanced towards the side, only to see Isshiki make a very cold expression, saying something so harsh without a damn. Then she took a sip of tea and made a disgusted expression, and murmured:

"So that's how it is ...? It is pretty hot, and it's bitter, sour, and annoying."

She had done away from her previous opinion, and let out her feelings in a stream of consciousness, rivalling the excitement of Okada's triple home run. (TL note: Japanese baseball reference, something about a triple home run by some person)

What are you saying ...? It's not hot, I don't think so at all ... I averted my gaze and sipped my tea.

It was neither hot nor cold, it wasn't at either state, it was just perfect in that moment.

x x x

After drinking the perfectly prepared tea, I finally felt more relieved.

Around me, everyone had a look of satisfaction, and the club room returned to its usual calm atmosphere. It was silent as if nothing had happened, anyways, we were very idle, not much different from the usual.

Me, Yukinoshita, Yuigahama, and Isshiki were all doing what we wanted to do, drinking tea, reading, and playing on the phone.

The only person panicking from the idleness was Komachi.

“... No one’s coming.”

She held her face with her hand, and lightly sighed.

“That’s just how it is. This silly club is basically idle all the time.”

You could say that being idle and not doing anything was what we did in the service club.

There was only the occasional troublesome request, other times, the service club = passing time in the club room.

And so, I held up my novel, gesturing for Komachi to bring a book or a phone to pass time here.

Just then, Yukinoshita, who was also reading, lifted her head, and said in an amused tone:

“Yeah, that’s why there’s one silly club member that treats this place like a library.”

“So you do now that you’re a silly club member.”

Yukinoshita pressed her temples as if she were in great pain, left speechless, she sighed a breath. Just as she lowered her head to get back into her novel, she silently added:

“... It’s better than it was before, at least he knows he’s a club member now ...”

The way she flipped the pages of her novel was very gentle, and the way she gazed into the distance, paired with the novel in her hand, made it look like she was holding an album of memories.

“Hm, huh, ok.”

A year ago, as I was dragged into this place, all I could think about was how I could get out of here. Remembering how I was in the past compared to now made me feel super embarrassed, and I wanted to kill the me in the past. *In times like this you need to cough twice to cover up the shame!*

Cough, cough.

After coughing a couple of times to perfectly cover my shame, I turned to Komachi like nothing happened and said:

“Whatever, isn’t it good that we have no work to do?”

Either way, we’re not getting paid for this. Such unfair labor, calling it evil is not enough to describe it. Say, why are we still relying on manpower in this day and age? Can’t we rely on AI?

Just as I was speaking nonsense in my heart, Ms. Isshiki enthusiastically said:

“Yeah that’s right. That way, I can casually redistribute student council work to here.”

“In your dreams. Say, what are you even doing here ...? You’re not even a club member, right?”

The second we let our guard down this girl appears here ...

“Don’t you have work in the student council and soccer club ...?”

I asked in concern, and Isshiki tilted her head with a finger on her chin.

“I’m not a club member, but as a client, shouldn’t I be entitled to being here?”

“Showa-era thinking?!”

This type of power-abuse attitude made Yuigahama exclaim in shock. Isshiki saw the shocked expression on Yuigahama’s face and seemed to realize she had said something bad, so, she cleared her throat and said:

“I mean, last year we really went overboard with our budget, so, I’ll need some help from you guys to make up for it.”

“Over 80 percent of that is your fault, isn’t it?”

Isn’t it because you keep planning those meaningless activities ...? What was up with that free newspaper thing ...? Of course the budget is not enough.

Hearing me speak such logical but annoying things, Isshiki adorably pouted at me.

“What about the joint prom from earlier ...”

“Yes, you’re right, I’m so sorry.”

I really couldn’t refute that, so I just admitted that I was in the wrong, forcibly ending this conversation. Then, Isshiki exhaled dissatisfiedly.

“To say the truth, I’ve even thought of borrowing the cat’s paw” (TL note: An idiom in Japanese meaning being understaffed and busy as a result)

“Ah, then you can borrow the one we have at home, our cat is really cute!”

Noticing the commotion, Komachi suddenly interrupted and pulled out her phone from her pocket. She tapped a few times and showed the screen to Isshiki.

On the screen was an out of focus and blurry picture—a picture of our housecat Kamakura's butt facing the camera.

Say, Komachi, couldn't you have taken a better picture ...? If you were to participate in a worse cat photos competition, this would surely be the champion ... anyone seeing this picture would just make a confused face ...

That's what I thought, but there was one of us that showed a strong reaction.

“...”

Yukinoshita was trying to peer over Komachi to look at the phone, it looked like she was jumping up and down on her seat. *This person really loves cats like they love their Friskies ... that's so cute.*

But other than Yukinoshita, no one was making any reaction. Isshiki was wearing a cold expression and waving her hand dismissively.

“No, I don't need a real cat's paw.”

“Oh really ...?”

Isshiki's coldness made Komachi droop her shoulders in disappointment, but she immediately lifted her head, as if she had thought of something.

“Ah, then Komachi can lend you a hand?”

As she suggested that, she made a gesture like a lucky cat. She really was a cat owner, the curve of her fingers, angle of her wrist, and cuteness of her action, even the lurking danger of hidden claws, was perfectly represented in her glamorous display.

But her outstretched hand did not reach Isshiki.

Because before that could happen, another hand from beside her had taken it away. This made Komachi look back in surprise. Behind her, of course, was Yukinoshita Yukino-san. Yukinoshita made a serious expression and started to caress Komachi's hand.

"Oh, oh? What's up ...? Ah, Yukino-san's hands are so warm ..."

At first, Komachi was surprised, but after that she snuggled onto her like a cat. Yukinoshita also took the chance to obtain the phone from Komachi's hand, enjoying the cat photo while patting Cat-machi (cat-form Komachi). *This can be considered VR, right? That's way too advanced.*

Yuigahama and I looked at this warm scene leisurely, but Isshiki didn't look happy at all.

She pouted at Komachi, and as if she had thought of something, she turned around to face me, and squeamishly pulled at my uniform jacket while saying:

"Senpaiiii ... can't you think of something?"

"There's no use talking to me ..."

She tried convincing me with her squeamish voice, gleaming eyes, and soft pull on my uniform jacket. I gently pried her hand away. *Don't think that would work on me every time!* I looked towards Yukinoshita and Komachi, then gestured to Isshiki to ask someone else.

“Go ask the club president.”

Hearing the term “club president”, Isshiki and Yuigahama looked towards the same direction.

At the other end was a playful Komachi, making purring noises as if she were in a dream, on the other hand, Yukinoshita stroke her chin while holding Komachi’s phone, it was like she was a villain of some sorts.

Noticing our attention being focused on her, Yukinoshita nodded her head, and calmly expressed her opinion in a clear voice.

“Yeah, borrowing a cat is a good idea. Rather, we should just get a cat.”

With that said, she revealed a smile of wisdom, but her actions were totally the opposite of smart. *Yukinoshita ... she’s gotten cat-deficiency syndrome ...*

“You weren’t even listening to what we were saying? This can’t go on! Komachi, wake up! Come back! House! House!” (TL note: House is a command to get a dog back to their shed, lol)

Yuigahama shrieked, trying to get Komachi to wake up, as a result, Komachi sprang up abruptly.

“Woah! Whew, that was close ... I almost fell asleep ...”

This person really is scary—she had such a loving expression for Yukinoshita, but I think the intimate Komachi is really deadly ... it can’t be ...! Are you Beast II?! (TL note: Reference to

Tiamat in FGO, who has the same CV as Komachi, Yuuki Aoi)—That’s what I had thought, but Yukinoshita drooped her shoulders and looked distraught after Komachi left. *Yukinoshita-san, you’re pretty scary too!*

After getting some vitamin c (cat), Yukinoshita returned to her usual calm self, and sipped at her tea as if nothing had happened.

“Anyways, this is a matter for the club president to decide.”

“Yeah.”

Saying that, Komachi continued to leisurely sip at her tea, but then she realized everyone had a “No, um...” look and were silently staring at her. Noticing that, she suddenly raised her head.

“Eh, ah, eh?! Komachi?! Komachi should make a decision?!”

Komachi tilted her head, and continuously pointed at herself. Towards this, all of us frantically nodded. The club president of the service club had now become Komachi. No, to be exact, it only began this spring, as the first president for the reformed service club was registered as Hikigaya Komachi.

Also, Yukinoshita’s service club had never even *been* officially recognized. Hiratsuka-sensei must have done some funny business to get the club running.

But since we were now an official club, we needed Komachi to be the leader for it. Considering we’re third years now, it would be best for Komachi to start being the club president from now on.

It seemed that Yukinoshita and Yuigahama shared the same idea as me.

Yuigahama lightly patted Komachi’s shoulder, and cheered her on:

“Yeah, since the club president *is* Komachi.”

“Eh, eh...?”

Komachi’s worries and confusions were all over her face, so, to help calm her down, Yuigahama smiled and said:

“It’s ok, we’ll help out as well.”

“Yui-san!”

Komachi lunged forward to hug Yuigahama, and it was now Yuigahama’s turn to playfully ruffle Komachi’s hair.

“What’re you going to do about it?”

Isshiki glanced at Yuigahama and Komachi, then whispered towards me.

“... She’ll get used to it after some time, I think.”

I said as I grabbed my teacup and drank some tea.

No matter it being the role of the club president, or some other things, it’ll all work out after you get used to it. A year ago, this club also felt very wrong, but as time passed, everything began to fall into place.

To be honest though, even now, regarding this club, this relationship, or its current situation, something still feels out of place.

Sometimes, I feel as if there’s a thorn in my heart that I can’t pull out, leaving me with pangs of pain.

But even with all these scars, from the bottom of my heart, I really think that this is the place that I belong to.

It's a good thing this club continued on.

Because of Isshiki and Komachi, this place that would not have continued existing was preserved. Although they didn't tell me exactly what happened, this type of thing, I'd still understand.

Not too long later, I'll have to leave this club behind, in the limited time that we have left here, I want to repay for that kindness.

The biggest problem at hand was probably Komachi's transition to the club president, which would ensure that the club could continue on. *Oh, and of course, the student council would have more lackeys to order around.*

But even without all this talk about repaying kindness, all of these problems have to be solved in due time.

After all, the service club is one hell of a fishy club ...

Up until now we had Hiratsuka-sensei to rely on, therefore, even if the meaning for the club's existence was ambiguous, we could still continue on through her dubious methods. But now, it was only because of Isshiki's role in the student council that allowed for the preservation of this club.

The problem is what will happen after Isshiki steps down.

If we want the service club to continue existing, we'd need to set a clear basis for our activities.

A proclamation of independence without any backdoors involved.

Ah, feels like that's not possible at all ... the future sure is looking grim ...

I lightly sighed, and finished the rest of the tea in my cup.

After I put the lightened teacup on the table, Yukinoshita silently stood up, and naturally poured a new cup for me.

Thank you.

I lightly nodded to express my thanks, then I sipped my perfectly warm tea. I was thinking of getting some snacks to go along with the tea, but as I raised my head, Yuigahama's eyes met mine from across the table.

However, she said nothing, and immediately averted her gaze, continuing to play with the phone in her hands.

That was all, nothing had happened, but just thinking that our silent exchange may had been noticed made me feel a bit uneasy. This type of thing used to happen a lot, but now it felt quite awkward ... *I feel like I'm starting to sweat ... anyways, let's drink some tea and have some snacks to calm down!*

To get away from these feelings of unease, I reached out for the snacks on the table.

But just as I touched the plate, it suddenly moved towards the side, and my hand grabbed at thin air. I reached out my hand another time, but the plate escaped once again.

“...”

What? —I stared in protest at the culprit behind the moving plate.

With her flowing black hair, snowy white skin, and clear blue eyes, she looked elegant even while she was standing and drinking tea.

The culprit behind the moving plate, Yukinoshita Yukino, directed her gaze at me, and her long eyelashes drooped as she slowly shook her head.

Eh ...? What ...? What's wrong?

Are you telling me I don't have the rights to snack? Having snacks when we don't have any bread is pretty fine in itself, but not even letting me have the snacks? Is she telling me to starve? You're even more harsh than Marie Antoinette! (TL note: It is said that when Louis XVI's wife heard of how the peasants in France had no bread to eat, she said: "If there's no bread than have some snacks!" this phrase is now used to mock the upper class on know nothing about the common folk)

But I'm the rebellious type, how can I just give up then and there? My stomach demands snacks now!

I reached at the snack again, but once again, the plate moved away from me. *Eh? Is this a flying saucer? A UFO ...?*

"... Hey, trying to bully me?"

Because of the illogical treatment I was being given, I couldn't help but say that. But then, Yukinoshita glared at me from the side.

"Have you forgotten our plans for later?"

Hearing her say that, my shoulders immediately drooped down.

“... I really want to forget.”

For the whole day, the thought of tonight’s plans had been in my mind, failing to dissipate.

After thinking about it again, I deeply sighed.

It may have been that I looked too down, as Isshiki tilted her head and asked:

“Is there anything happening later?”

“Um, yeah I guess ...”

It wasn’t anything worth talking about. I answered as ambiguously as I could, as there was the saying that there are always ears on the wall, people can’t keep secrets.

Komachi made a knowing look and murmured, then she clapped, and energetically said:

“Say, I think I’ve heard something about that.”

“You know something, rice girl?”

Isshiki said in a serious voice, urging for her to continue on. The two sandwiched Yuigahama, and started to whisper to each other.

“Um, according to Haruno-san’s intel ...”

Hearing that name, a wave of despair came over me.

Why would that person go out of her way to tell Komachi? The intel has leaked in full already, this was way too unbearable ...

That explained Hayama's attitude today. Of course, Haruno had already told him ... *Ahhh! The person I wanted least to know was him!*

Hey! Say, what is up with that sister of yours? —I shot a protesting glance at Yukinoshita, but she too was shaking in anger.

"That person has told Komachi ..."

The hatred in her voice made her speech feel colder and colder, but then, her voice started to weaken, until I almost couldn't hear it, then she said:

"I already said it was embarrassing, I told her not to do that ..."

Her face was red, and her eyes were brimming with tears as she put her face down and shivered.

... Hm, that was different from what I thought, but being able to see something so rare, not bad.

The root of all evil was that good-for-nothing big sister.

Younger sisters aren't in the wrong, younger sisters are justice!

That's what I thought, but my sister continued leaking the intel like it was nothing.

"I heard that Onii-chan is dining with Yukinoshita-san's mother tonight ..."

Ahh, she really said it! Actually, after the joint prom ended, Yukinoshita's mom had invited us out for dinner.

I already resolved myself for it to be revealed, but I was beaten to the punch, and it was answered before I could say anything, thus, the awkward situation now.

“Ah ... so that’s how it is?”

Yuigahama tugged at her hair buns, and revealed a troubled look. Beside her, Isshiki was eating snacks, and uninterestedly replied:

“Oh, so that’s it?”

Isshiki’s dull tone shocked Komachi. Then, Isshiki looked at me while chewing snacks with a teacup in hand.

“Well, I’m not all that interested ... but, hearing you say that, Senpai’s face *does* looks a bit awful now huh.”

“Really? It doesn’t look all that different from usual though.”

Isshiki’s words made Yukinoshita stare intently at me in wonder. And so, I did my best to put on a lifeless expression. My dead fish eyes were world renowned, and by relaxing my facial muscles to make a lifeless expression, I could really make the anguish at the bottom of my heart surface.

Just then, Yukinoshita giggled.

“See, I told you he looks the same as usual.”

“How have you been looking at me?”

Can I ask how you have been looking at me? Yukinoshita-san, have you really seen Hikigaya-san’s expression? Although I don’t want to admit it myself, I’m basically no different from a zombie now. Being able to express the rottenness of a zombie without any makeup, even the

zombie film makers all around the world are interested in me. Say, do you think that is the expression that I have all the time?

Just as I was about to launch into an emphatic speech, Isshiki used an overpowering voice to say:

“I can understand how Senpai is feeling, having to go out for dinner with that old hag must be pretty exhausting.”

“Old ... you ...”

Yukinoshita was speechless.

Isshiki, how could you say that? That's not the case at all! —Was what I wanted to say, but what she said really resonated with me, so I couldn't refute her. Ah, no, I don't think Yukinoshita's mom is an old hag, I think that she's a pretty, young, elegant, and scary woman, and sometimes I can even see her humorous side, which is quite lovable.

It's just that, out of all the good, the scary part really stands out. *In conclusion, going out for dinner with her is pretty exhausting.*

As I nodded to my thoughts, on the other side, Komachi and Isshiki were deep in conversation, appearing to be pretty entertained.

“Woah, Iroha-senpai, you're bad mouthing really is excellent, ☆ I definitely don't want to call you my sister! ♪”

“I didn't ask for it, and I don't want to be called that either.”

“Komachi, what even is your standard for calling someone your sister?” (TL note: The way Komachi has called Yukino and Yui can also be interpreted as “sister”, like “Yukino-nee” and “Yui-nee”, but it felt off, so I used “-san” instead, up to your imagination)

Yukinoshita also added in to their conversation. *What are you even asking about ...?*

Because Yukinoshita’s attention was now diverted, it was the perfect chance for me reach for the snacks I wasn’t able to get to earlier.

Don’t look down on the appetite of a healthy teen. Eating some snacks is nothing for me, and considering the hardships later, filling up my belly now is important!

This time I was definitely going to get my hands on some snacks.

Just as I thought that, my hands grasped at thin air yet again.

“Huh?”

Eh? Why? Wasn’t Yukinoshita with Komachi? I lifted my head in confusion, seeing that Yuigahama had the plate in her hands.

“Aren’t you having dinner later? I’ll be taking this.”

With that said, she held the plate in a protective manner, and started eating away at the snacks.

“No, why are you the one eating then ...?”

“Because, it would be wasteful if no one ate it.”

As she said that she turned to look at the clock, and so did I, it was nearing evening, outside the window in the direction towards the west, the sky had already been dyed a thin layer of red.

“Yukinon, shouldn’t it be time for you guys to leave? We’ll clean up here.”

Hearing that, Yukinoshita also looked towards the clock. Although I didn’t know the exact time they had arranged, now was probably the time to leave. Yukinoshita thought for a while, then nodded and responded:

“You’re right ... then I’ll let you take care of it ...thanks.”

Yukinoshita showed a smile and thanked her, in response to that, Yuigahama shook her head as if to say it was no big deal.

“Then let’s go.”

“... Yes.”

Yukinoshita picked up her schoolbag and urged me to leave, and I also started keeping my things in preparation for leaving. There was nothing much in my bag, but it felt particularly heavy now.

Yukinoshita had already packed all her things earlier, and was waiting for me by the door.

Nothing else I can do but resolve myself and go ... I sighed one last sigh, stood up, and slung my bag behind my shoulder.

“Then we’ll go first, see you tomorrow.”

“Yeah, see you tomorrow.”

Yuigahama and Komachi waved their hands at me, and Isshiki added in a “good luck”, but didn’t turn to face me. Under their supervision, we opened the door and entered the hallway. *Wait, one person wasn’t paying attention to us at all.*

Just then—

“Ah, Yukino-san, you forgot this.”

Komachi called for Yukinoshita, and ran towards us, holding a small paper bag in her hands.

She firmly placed the paper bag in Yukinoshita’s hands, Yukinoshita looked down at the bag and tilted her head in confusion, but she carefully opened it and peeked at its contents, then abruptly smiled.

“Thanks, this will help a lot.”

“Don’t mind it!”

Komachi elegantly bowed while standing by the door, and waved her hand while saying:

“Be careful on your way!”

Inside the club room, Yuigahama waved us goodbye, while Isshiki continued playing with her phone.

This time under everyone’s gaze, we left for real.

Wait, there was one person that didn’t look at us. Whatever, it’s easier on me like this, it makes no difference really!

Interlude

After seeing off Senpai and Yukinoshita-san, rice girl slowly closed the door.

Because of that, the club room plunged into an eerie silence.

And so, Yui-senpai put down her hand, and an audible sigh reached my ears.

I peered over my phone look at her, and I could see that she had a smidge of a smile. Her face looked the same as usual, but perhaps because of the light shining in from dusk, she looked a bit lonely.

I pretended not to have noticed Yui-senpai's lonely smile and sigh, and directed my gaze towards rice girl.

For some reason, rice girl also sighed.

"... Is Onii-chan going to be fine?"

"There's no need to worry so much."

Yui-senpai comforted the pouting rice girl.

"No, it sounds like Haruno-san will also be there."

Hearing that, I also sighed.

Haruno-senpai looks pretty, has a good figure, and a big chest, she's like an ideal woman, but I couldn't quite understand her stubbornness towards Yukino-senpai. Between the two of them, there was surely some complicated and hidden matters, but what made matters worse was the

existence of Senpai. Ignoring Yukino-senpai, I think if Senpai was involved in the equation anyhow, it would surely turn into a mess.

“Ah—some conflict is definitely going to happen. I bet one perica that those two will argue on the way.” (TL note: “Perica” is a reference to the currency in the manga “Kaiji”, 1 perica = 0.1 yen)

Hearing me say that, Komachi enthusiastically replied:

“Ah then Komachi bets 1000 points that Onii-chan will hole himself up in a toilet and never come out for the rest of his life, what does Yui-san want to bet?”

“No, I’m not betting anything ...”

Our betting seemed to have frightened Yui-senpai, but I think I can understand how she was feeling. *Anyways, Senpai’s defeat was already a fact, so this round of betting wouldn’t even establish, and most importantly, rice girl was still worried a while ago, but now she’s fooling around with me, so scary. What is up with this kid ...?*

It was because our motives met that we were able to create the service club we have now, as for what thoughts resided deep in her heart, I still didn’t understand to this day.

She really is Senpai’s sister ... as I was deep in thought, Yui-senpai tilted her head, as if thinking about something.

“But, a big fight ... I don’t think that will be the case.”

“Eh? Why is that so? Aren’t the two of them always arguing?”

Ever since I began hanging around the service club, that had been the case for them.

Yui-senpai showed a shocked expression, then laughed out loud, as if she had heard some kind of joke. "Ah, that's funny ..." she pressed the corners of her eyes, then smiled as if nothing had happened and said:

"That's not the case at all, you're being too dramatic, that can't even count as a fight. It'll probably be just two weeks of ignoring each other?"

"Isn't that even worse ...?"

"Woah, now everyone surrounding them have walk on egg shells."

Both me and rice girl were shocked.

How could this person say such heavy things with a calm expression ...?

Anyways, Yui-senpai doesn't even consider that as a fight, that's really something ... she really is experienced after dealing with them for a whole year ...

Just as I thought of that, I looked towards the seats that both of them were sitting in just now.

"Those two, they really are troublesome ..."

My catchphrase is "All girls are trouble", but just as rice girl has said, Senpai is pretty troublesome too as a boy. *So Senpai's saying that "All human beings are trouble" really is true ...*

Anyways, the two of them together means trouble ... but that's not something that I hate about the two of them.

But that's another matter.

Thinking about the trouble that may come tomorrow made me feel as if the club room's atmosphere has become murky.

"It'll be fine! Completely fine!"

Yui-senpai must have felt the atmosphere sink, as she exclaimed in an optimistic tone.

"Is that so ...?"

Rice girl shot her a doubting gaze, and in return, Yui-senpai clenched her fists in front of her chest and made a victory pose.

"Yeah, you'll get used to it in no time! It's not like it hasn't happened before! It's quite the common occurrence!"

Woah, what an awful response. Could it be that you're the mythical optimistic monster? That's what I thought, but I found what she was saying to be quite negative. If this person were to start working, she would definitely be taken advantage of like crazy ...

Of course, I wasn't the only one shocked, as it looked like rice girl also had quite the fright.

She shifted her gaze away from Yui-senpai and whispered towards me:

"Um, Iroha-senpai, where do I submit the form to leave this club?"

"Not sure, I'm not even a club member, I think it should be submitted to the club president?"

But you're the club president."

Saying that, I couldn't resist my laughter anymore. *Hum, during these troubling times, I guess it would be best to not come here anymore.*

“Ah, I need to head back to the student council.”

Just as I said that and prepared to excuse myself—

“Wait! Don’t leave me here alone!”

Komachi tightly hugged my waist.

“Hey, what is up with you? Let go of me! I suddenly remembered that I have two weeks’ worth of work that I need to finish ...”

Depending on the situation it could also be three weeks, but if things cooled down faster, I could be back within two days, so don’t come to find me!

I pushed her hands away, trying to get out of her grip.

But Komachi tightly held me and refused to release me.

“Wait! Komachi was also in the student council in middle school! I could definitely be of help!

Take me along!”

Ah for real, she is annoying. There’s nothing else I can do I guess, I’ll just let her stay with the student council for now—just as I thought that:

“Ah, but I think it won’t be a problem.”

Me and rice girl looked at each other, communicating with a “What do you think?” and

“Nonono, that’s not possible” gaze. Considering her wrong optimism just now, it didn’t feel believable at all.

“Eh? Are you really saying the truth?”

Me and rice girl said at the same time, even matching in our doubting demeanor.

But this time, Yui-senpai revealed a warm and calm smile to us.

“Yeah, for real. Because Hikki probably wouldn’t get angry, at the most he’d just be tired for two or three days and look half dead, probably?”

“Ah ...”

So that’s it ...? Me and rice girl nodded our heads in a somewhat cheerful manner.

Hearing what she said, I couldn’t actually imagine the look of Senpai being angry.

Although we always hear him complain, no one had actually seen him overtly unhappy, at least not to the point that you wouldn’t want to approach him.

Should I say that he would take care of his matters himself? He is pretty mature in things like that. Although, he doesn’t give others that impression at all.

And also, Senpai looks half dead all the time, it wouldn’t make a difference to see it for two or more days longer, hmm.

Seeing me nod, Yui-senpai also smiled and nodded back.

But then her movements suddenly stopped, and her face darkened. Following that, Yui-senpai turned her head around like a rusty robot, towards the corner of the club room.

Why do I feel something ominous is about to come ...? I shivered in my corner, just then, Yui-san said something despairing in a broken voice.

“But on the other hand, Yukinon, she might, take offense, and become very depressed ...”

“Ah ...”

So that's how it'll be ...? Me and rice girl drooped our heads down, and sighed in a slightly gloomy manner.

I could relate very well, as the image of that happening immediately came to my mind.

Yukino-senpai may be dexterous, but she's also a cool beauty that's quick to reach conclusions.

If it had anything to do with Senpai, she would also be just like a maiden, even her mentality would become very fragile.

But that's something I like about her.

Giving off a girly impression, I liked that very much.

Yui-senpai probably also thought the same. If she didn't like that, how could she have dealt with them for so long?

They really are troublesome, but I like it that way, so there's nothing I can do about that.

Whew ... I lightly sighed, just then, rice girl suddenly leaned over, and whispered to me:

“Say, without Yui-san, the service club wouldn't be this peaceful, right?”

“Ah ... so you have noticed ...”

Seeing me nod with a wry smile, rice girl also showed a difficult smile and said, “Yeah, that's right.”

You really are impressive, Yui-senpai.

So, I like her.

I like girls in love and girls that never give up. I like myself, so I like others that are just like me.

I gazed at Yui-senpai with a look filled with respect and gratefulness, while she peered outside with a look of unease.

“... Yukinon, she’ll be alright, right?”

What she said sounded like it came out unwittingly, and along with it, a feeling of gentleness way surpassing that of a mom.

No, instead of saying she’s impressive, I’d say she’s impressive to the point of being quite scary, Yui-senpai ...

I continued to gaze at Yui-senpai, albeit with an extra bit of fear compared to earlier. The sunset shining in from the windows enveloped Yui-senpai like a halo, making her gleam so much that I couldn’t help but squint my eyes.

“Is this person an angel ...?”

“This should be the level of a goddess ...”

At least we couldn’t count her as a normal person anymore ... me and rice girl expressed the same opinion, albeit a bit fearfully. The two of us clasped our hands, and prayed towards Yui-senpai.

Thank you for protecting this place that we love so much ... after this, let’s go to a café and hold a conference to bad-mouth Senpai ...

Chapter 3: On the Way, See the World From the Train Windows that Chiba is Proud Of

The scenery outside the train windows gradually faded away.

It may have been that it wasn't yet the peak period, as there were few passengers on the monorail. The compartment Yukinoshita and I sat in also didn't have much people, so we could see the scenery of Chiba clearly from the windows opposite of us.

The evening glow that dyed the beach and sea red gradually grew further, and we were steadily approaching the city that was being engulfed by a dark blue color.

The endless tail lights of cars and glowing orange lights of street lamps appeared below our line of sight, as the train raced towards the colossal blocks of high-rise buildings.

The evening scene gradually transitioned into night, and the train moving through the air made it feel like we were on a ride in an amusement park.

Just being on the monorail was exciting enough, but adding in the scenery made it even better, it was impeccable. Especially during dusk, the route from the Chiba Port Station to Chiba Station was my favorite one of all, I wouldn't be surprised to see it featured in an issue of "See the World by Train." (TL note: "See the World by Train" is a Japanese travel TV show)

I could gaze at this type of dreamy for a lifetime.

... I really want to gaze at it forever.

That's right, I'm avoiding reality now.

After this, I'll be having dinner with Yukinoshita's family. If it were a one on one meal with Yukinoshita Yukino I would be pretty happy about it, rather, I'd say let's do it, but it's a different story if it's with Yukinoshita's family.

Ah, what do I do ...?

I looked down and sighed deeply, feeling a tug on my sleeve, I turned back, only to see Yukinoshita sitting beside me with a troubled expression.

"... What's wrong?"

I asked her, but she only replied with a light shake of her head. She pursed her lips, making an expression as if trying to say "I'm fine."

... But her gaze looked uneasy, darting all over the place.

What's wrong? Actually, you're making me so nervous by holding onto my sleeve, and there's a nice scent coming my way, plus you're touching me lightly every time the train moves! I'm so nervous my palms are sweating! What is this situation? Is she hinting at something?

I was confused, and my palms were sweating by gallons, just then, the train made a turn, and the compartment tilted.

In that moment, the grasp on my sleeve tightened.

That suddenly made me remember.

Say, five years ago, wait not that long, a few months ago at most, during Christmas we when we went to Disney Land, when riding that amusement park ride, and after that, when we went

to the aquarium and went on the Ferris wheel, I remember she was also tense like how she was now.

From the evidence proposed by my logical reasoning, I can conclude that Yukinoshita is afraid of heights ...!

Speaking from experience, at times like these, you just need to do shift your attention somewhere else. I remember that's what I did when I was at Disney Land.

If I were to shift her attention to somewhere else now, she probably wouldn't notice the height and shaking of the train anymore. It was just a few stations away anyways; some conversation would easily get us through.

No other way I suppose.

I moved over a bit to close the distance between us.

There's no other way if we need to have a conversation, it won't be good if we aren't able to hear each other over the noises and shaking of the train. So, this is probably a warranted action!

As if I were making an excuse to myself, I moved closer by the distance of two fists.

My thighs and shoulders touched hers.

Yukinoshita looked over in surprise. Her stare would have made me feel embarrassed, so I pretended not to notice it, and quickly said:

"Let me just ask you something, are you afraid of heights?"

"... I'm not so fond of high places."

After she whispered that, she turned her head to the other side. *Ah, the same response as that time when we were in Disney Land. I was right all along! Ha! I told you I knew!*

“Then you could have just told me, that way we could have avoided the monorail.”

In actuality, we just chose the monorail because it was the most straightforward way to our destination, but there were other ways to get to Chiba station. It was just because I excitedly said “Let’s take the monorail!” like I was saying something straight out of a Jazz classic, that we chose to take the monorail ... no, it could have just been that Yukinoshita knew I was a Monorail-type (a person that loves the Chiba Urban Monorail), that she followed along. *No, that probably wasn’t the case. Say, what even is a Monorail-type?* (TL note: “Let’s take the monorail!” is said in reference to the classic Jazz song title “Take the A Train”)

Anyways, no matter what, having to make you accompany me is making me feel quite sorry ...

Hearing my slightly apologetic words, Yukinoshita shook her head, then she put her hands to her chest and took a deep breath, closing her eyes and murmuring:

“No, the monorail is fine ... it’s just a type of transportation, it’s fine ... it’s just a train, it’s fine ...”

“You’re just hypnotizing yourself at this point aren’t you ...?”

Is it really fine ...? I anxiously exhaled, just then the grasp on my sleeve tightened.

At first, she was just using her fingers to absentmindedly pinch my sleeves, but now, she was holding on to my entire wrist through my sleeves.

Yukinoshita's cat nibble-like behavior put me at a loss for a moment, then she closed the remaining distance between us and leaned on my shoulder.

"I don't really like it ... but I don't hate it."

Saying that, she smiled and exhaled a breath, shifting her gaze to the windows on the opposite side, far away, the high-rise buildings glistened under the last light of sunset.

Presently, the train was still at a height, and the compartment shook around from time to time, but Yukinoshita looked quite clam. I could tell that from her calm breathing that sounded as if she were sleeping.

Actually, the one that couldn't calm down was me.

I could feel her worryingly light weight from her slender shoulders, through the school uniform, her warmth reached me.

Although I couldn't tell whether it was shampoo or perfume, from time to time a faint soap-like scent drifted over to me, and made me straighten my back.

To avoid letting her discover my nervousness, no, she's probably already noticed by now, I decided not to mind it too much, and shifted my gaze to the same scenery she was watching, then I silently said to her:

"Mind if I inquire further? Is there anything else you don't really like?"

Even though I knew all too clearly, I still wanted to ask her. Because, there were many things today that I had vaguely noticed but not understood.

“I can’t answer that on a whim ...”

Yukinoshita put her hand to her mouth, looking towards the right side. Indeed, it would be hard to answer something as spontaneous as this. If someone else asked me what Yukinoshita was scared of, I wouldn’t be able to answer immediately either.

“Well, in first it’s probably dogs. And then, anything related to monsters.”

Couldn’t I have answered this immediately?! Doesn’t she have too many things she fears? Is she okay? Can she live well?

“Anything else?”

Heights, dogs, and monsters. I counted one by one with my fingers, counting to the fourth and turning around to ask her for her opinion, except this time she made an unhappy expression.

“I’m not afraid of dogs or monsters ...”

“Ok ok, save the act.”

Ok, that’s fine, I know already. That’s why I used the words “don’t really like” to ask that question.

Seeing me hint at what I was thinking from my serious expression, Yukinoshita pursed her lips angrily like she was prepared to throw a tantrum, then she exhaled a breath in resignation.

“... Yeah, I don’t really like them”

After that, she went deep into thought for a while, then she suddenly lifted her head, and with a confident expression, she said clearly:

“I can’t stand bugs at all.”

“Me neither.”

I couldn’t help but agree when I heard her confident and bright tone. *Bugs really are unbearable, that I can relate to ...*

I nodded to myself, just then, Yukinoshita enthusiastically said:

“How about you? What do you dislike?”

“Tomatoes, I would never eat them raw.”

Yukinoshita nodded, then took her phone out of her pocket and started typing. *No, you don’t really need to note that down, right? I also don’t like cucumbers, but I’m fine with them if they are pickled.*

But before I could say that, Yukinoshita shot a look at me, as if asking me “Any others?”

“And math I guess ...? Anything else? I can’t think of anymore.”

Suddenly being asked so seriously about the things I don’t like; I couldn’t think of anything immediately. I’m basically an all-rounded person, anything that exists in this world I probably dislike to an extent, I even dislike monsters too, so you could say that I would also dislike all the things from another dimension.

What else ...? Just as I was wracking my brain to think of something worthy to bring up, it seemed like Yukinoshita had thought of something, as she made an “ah” sound, and patted my arm non-stop, with a look that said “Quick, ask me ask me!”

Hey, you being cute, scary, and making me weirdly shy is really bad for my heart, can you not do that next time? —I glanced at Yukinoshita, only to find her giggling, and with a radiating confidence in her eyes, she said:

“If we’re speaking about what Hikigaya-san doesn’t like or is bad at, isn’t it dealing with interpersonal relationships?”

“Aren’t you the same ...?”

Why do you look so smug? And I already take that for granted, ‘m not even conscious of it anymore ...

“Everyone is bad at those kinds of things, so it doesn’t count. Plus, the only people that say that they are good at dealing with interpersonal relationships are scammers and the mentally impaired.”

If you are human, you’ve definitely faced issues with interpersonal relationships at some point.

While checking your horoscope, if you were to see something like “Woe is you! The one in twelfth place is Leo! Today you may be frustrated by interpersonal relationships, your lucky object is 7 trillion Yen”, it would definitely be 100 percent correct! No one is exempt from the troubles of interpersonal relationships. Anyways, if you have 7 trillion Yen you would definitely be lucky, are you making a fool of me? Quick, cough up the 7 trillion yen!

Hearing me say that, Yukinoshita shrugged and laughed.

“Indeed, everyone has that someone that they’re not adept in dealing with.”

Saying that was enough, but she still added in a “Let me think”, and started counting with her fingers.

“For you it’s probably my mom? And then my sister.”

“But we’re heading over to see them now ...”

Hahaha you little brat! I laughed along, but immediately felt the burden of reality before me, and fell to rock bottom. (TL note: “Hahaha you little brat” is a joke originating from the manga “Three Kingdoms” by Sonoda Mitsuyoshi)

“... Can I ask what we’re eating later?”

It could be that I wanted to make some mental preparations, so I asked Yukinoshita that question. Anyways, the money is coming from someone else’s pocket, might as well enjoy it.

But Yukinoshita made a doubtful expression and said:

“Haven’t I said? We’re having Italian food later. I thought you liked it?”

“Don’t tell me you’re talking about Saizeriya ...? But I do like Saizeriya ...”

Yeah, Saizeriya is an Italian restaurant, that is beyond a doubt, but hearing her say that made me have a lingering feeling of violation. It could be that I had already classified Saizeriya as an independent genre.

But I don’t think we’re going to Saizeriya with Yukinoshita’s family.

Saizeriya is a restaurant where the common folk go to eat, higher class families probably wouldn't go to places like that. *No, if it were Haruno, even if she were drinking a cheap wine at home it wouldn't be weird, but I don't think she'd be in that kind of mood today.*

We're definitely going to one of those high class and trendy places, and so, I felt uneasy, which forced me to ask for confirmation.

"... So where are we going to eat?"

"A restaurant my family frequents a lot."

"Hey, that's definitely one of those expensive places, right? Wouldn't it have a dress code? Would I be able to enter?"

I glanced at my uniform; it was messy with creases everywhere. This definitely wouldn't work, being dressed in such crumpled clothing would certainly result in me being refused in. *What a headache, it looks like I can't go anymore. I really want to meet you Yukinoshita's mom, I really do, but with how my clothes are, it's still so creased no matter how hard I try to fix it!* —I patted away at my uniform.

But Yukinoshita had a look of indifference, and silently put my hands down, then she smiled and said:

"The atmosphere of that restaurant is very casual, it's not as strict as you think it is. We should be fine in our uniforms."

"Is that right ...?"

Really? Is it really ok to go in our uniforms? But Yukinoshita-san, you don't really understand us common folk, do you? A casual restaurant at most for us means a trendy café, any place that makes a uniform the minimal requirement can't be called casual at all!

And so, she's definitely referring to some really expensive place. *Even if it's Italian food, it must be high class Italian food, at times like these please don't say it's Italian food, just tell me we're going to a very expensive place!*

Having to meet Yukinoshita's mom at a place like that, that's way too harsh on me ...

Has it come to the point that I can only use the backwater formation ...? Just when I was about to give up resistance, I suddenly found that my clothes were missing something. Even if the outer ditch is filled, I still have the inner ditch. Not enough! I want to use the Osaka Summer Array to escape the crisis! However, because the Osaka Summer Array lost, the Backwater Array has a better chance of winning! But enough of that, let's put this matter aside. (TL Note: I have no idea what is happening here, but the Chinese TL mentions it's a historical reference about how Yahata compares himself to the Toyotomi regime that was defeated at last, whatever that means)

"... Ah."

I suddenly stood up, and said in a voice like I had just noticed:

"Oh no, I forgot my necktie, I'll have to go back, actually, I'll just go back home."

"That you don't need to worry about."

Yukinoshita pulled at my sleeves to get me to sit down, then she fished out a small bag from her school bag. After she opened it, I could see that there was a Sobu High School uniform necktie in it.

“Komachi gave me this, that way there aren’t any more issues, right?”

“Oh ...”

Oi ... isn't my sister way too diligent? She'd definitely be the type to start working right after graduation ... much better than those smooth-talking students when they're applying for jobs.

Yukinoshita ignored my dumb look, loosened the necktie, and pulled at my collar. Her unexpected movements made me look like a helpless kitten being pinched by the neck.

She raised my collar and wound the necktie around it, after turning the wide end around the narrow end into a circle, she inserted the wide end into the ring to form a beautiful triangle, and finally, she pinched to tighten it.

In that instance, my eyes and Yukinoshita’s met at the closest distance up until now.

It seemed that it was only now that Yukinoshita snapped back into her senses, and her face flushed red in an instant, making her speechless for a moment. Even after tying the necktie and moving her hands away, she made no sound, and the redness on her face didn’t look like it was fading at all.

For a short period of time, a delicate atmosphere filled the train compartment.

“Ah ... thanks.”

“You’re welcome ...”

Because I couldn’t bear the silence anymore, I said my thanks in an attempt to break the silence, but still, Yukinoshita was looking down. Because of that, I could clearly see that her ears poking from underneath her hair had turned red.

Ah! What can I say! To think that she would be so embarrassed! It’s making me feel shy as well!

I didn’t know if she did that on purpose, but doing stuff like that on a whim, it was really a big headache for me.

—But I didn’t dislike that one bit, and that made my head ache even more.

Afterword

(TL note: This was the hardest part to translate, some parts might feel weird, forgive me)

Evening, I'm Watari Wataru.

I never thought that there would be a day when I would write another one of these ...

Who could have imagined such things to happen ...? Of course, I did! Rather, I really wished to write another one of these, but the reason we're even here in the afterword is because of everyone's support, thank you.

So that's the gist of it, now it's time for OreGairu's afterword.

No matter what, whether it is the afterword or not, after writing these so many times, I feel like there's nothing left for me to write, but miraculously, after finishing the main story, there's actually more that I still want to write.

Before writing this, I was still thinking "Noo, I don't have anything left to write ... just writing the main story was hard enough ..." But after steeling my resolution and starting to write, it went pretty smooth, sometimes I would even write too many unrelated things and have to delete them all. It could be because I was writing in the middle of the night, and my brain was bugging out ...

When the original series was publishing, I also wrote afterwords for most of them, so this is probably a custom by now.

But reading the things that I wrote before, I find that my writing style and content had changed, which made me feel the weight of time, and realize its impermanence.

Even if I thought there was no change, a detailed look would show that there was definitely change.

Rather, it could be that there was no change, so a little discrepancy made it feel like a huge change.

I'm not just talking about afterwords, it's the same for other things in life.

In the waves of society, I was able to float bitterly for over ten years with just a dinky boat. My schedule had always been full as well, being chased by the rabbit with a pocket watch (a gentler metaphor used for editors), urging me to "Hurry up, hurry up!", and barely surviving until now. I often wanted to tell him "You dead rabbit", but after calming down and thinking about it, it was usually all my fault, so I'd always only complain in my heart "In my mind you're not a rabbit anymore, you're just some wild delicacy" to relieve myself. (TL note: There are multiple references to "Alice in Wonderland" here)

Living life like this on the daily, gradually, there's nothing left that's worth being touched by.

Even in April, the situation hadn't improved, all that was left in my heart was a "...Ah, so that's how it was (despair)" feeling, then I have to work hard towards the next account. It would be fresh if new gears (gentler metaphor for new employees) were to enter, but due to the seasonal change of personnel, slowly, it no longer piqued my interest.

When you gradually get used to it like this, the culprit of the crime is buried, this intentional neglect and omission would then cause a great loss in profit.

At times like these, if the rabbit unintentionally spoke a few good words to me, I would feel touched and think “Hey, this rabbit is so nice to people” Will I? No? Probably not, no, how could that be possible?!

It feels like I’m making a “This is way too realistic” type of joke, few will probably understand, I guess? For real, the rabbits are unforgivable, but let’s not talk about that!

Precisely because life is plain without ups and downs, sometimes a slight discrepancy feels like a huge change, inversely, if you were to notice the small violations in daily life, one day you might feel welcome for a colossal change.

Even if the change is slight in actuality, if I feel like there was change, my feelings would be affected, and new perspectives would be discovered, updating my values as well.

In that case, there must be change in his and her daily lives.

Along with new environments, new relationships, and new sentiments, “OreGairu Shin” has begun.

Because it had supposedly ended, I’ve felt hesitant to pick up my pen again, but I felt that I still hadn’t written enough, so under the pretense of “It’s ok if it’s just a special volume ...” I decided to continue with an all new sequel.

I'll continue to write about his and her surroundings and people around them in their third year of high school, so I hope everyone can stay with me for a while longer, and continue to protect his and her present and future.

By the way, similar to OreGairu Shin, I've also written afterwords for my other novels.

The ones published now are "OreGairu Yukino Side", "OreGairu All Stars", "OreGairu Yui Side", and "OreGairu On Parade". In these four novels, I've written in each an afterword, you can read them together. These four novels are like short story collections, and they are all easy to read. They're very wholesome!

But whether or not OreGairu Shin will be the same I can't be certain ... but I think I will be able to write something wholesome and filled with content, so look forward to it! The reason I can be writing OreGairu Shin is also because of the TV anime "OreGairu Kan"!

Has everyone seen it yet? You've seen it right? After all, this is the special volume for the first two episodes! (TL note: Sorry Watari)

If you haven't seen it yet please watch it later, I'll just pretend that everyone in the world has watched it already, so let's continue.

... Say, don't you think it was made very well? It was made super well ... I loved it, so can I speak about it for a bit? Can I suddenly begin my interpretations for episode one?

In the special volumes for the first and second season, I'd also written these so-called explanations, to be direct, it's just me running my mouth, so please listen to me this time as well. Don't forget, the content can't be suddenly changed.

Those things that I wrote before can be called explanations, but they really are just my personal opinions on the anime, I'm not denying anyone's interpretation! You can have your own opinions and interpretations as you like. Rather, I hope everyone does. Then let us all follow the "For every thousand readers, there are a thousand OreGairus" spirit and casually read on.

Episode 1: "In Due Time, the Seasons Change and the Snow Melts."

The setting is just after the last episode of season 2, it really is a beginning for breaking the long silence.

What a long silence it was ... a full five years ... Hachiman's monologue unwittingly makes us make an exclamation like such, but it isn't about his feelings alone, it is about the feelings of all three of them. I feel that if someone else said that, there wouldn't be any violation.

This actually is expressed as well during their conversation on the bench. They're trying hard to act like usual, but from their conversation you can tell that they want to believe that this relationship would never change. They all know they have to get to the core of it, but they can't find a way to get to it. Which is why Hachiman says "Can we hear about you?" Because he knew this situation was caused by himself.

And then it was Yukino's wish, looking from the words alone, it sounds like it's about her family. But this is just the face of it, this can be seen from her gradually saddening expression. The one most sensitive to this, of course, is Yui. The image of holding Yukino's hand is very memorable.

In “OreGairu Kan,” “hands” are very symbolic things, even more so than the dialogue, I hope everyone notices the “hands” going forward.

Coming back to Yukino “... Even if my wish can’t come true. I’m probably too afraid to get a clear answer, so I never confirmed it.” These types of regretful words are her true feelings, her conclusion focusing on “wanting to give up” and “wanting to start over” means something has to end first. In other words, what she said early is at most the means, but the goal itself was to give up. It is precisely because of noticing this point that Yui would confirm again “Is this really Yukino’s wish?”.

Everyone in the story are controlled by their missing fragments of feelings, in another sense, “OreGairu Kan” is talking about how they face those feelings and reach a compromise.

In the second part, we reach the morning of the second day of entrance exams for the world’s best sister, Hikigaya Komachi. Considering Komachi’s feelings, Hachiman asks her in a non-pressured way “How are you feeling?” From this we can tell Hachiman’s loving side as a brother, and Komachi noticing that and expressing her happiness is way too cute, I really liked that.

After that, Hachiman meets the cute Kawasaki sisters in the café. The cuteness of Keika on the other side of the glass goes without saying, and Kawasaki’s half-stop nod and shy wave were also super cute. Kawasaki’s lines “Can you not spoil her so much?” and “You aren’t aware at all” without a doubt point out Hachiman’s nature. Hachiman wouldn’t notice that yet, and this would cause huge conflict down the line. My god, doesn’t Kawasaki understand Hachiman too much ...? It’s no wonder that Hachiman would say “Love you!” These flashbacks are really

amazing. Because “OreGairu Kan” casually adds in previously cut content, you can watch it along with the original!

And then came meeting up with Komachi, the lines “I’m lying, I love you so much” and “Are you a disgusting fruit user?” really show Yuuki-san’s outstanding performance. There’s no need to mention how touched I was when hearing the character voice recording sessions.

And then came an even more touching scene, isn’t that impressive?

I’m talking about the scene when Hachiman and Komachi were preparing dinner after their fun outing and shopping trip. Having a relaxing conversation by the kotatsu has a very sibling feel to it, hearing it made me feel cozy. During this happy conversation, the sister unwittingly reveals a lonely face, showing her coming of age.

Just as Hachiman said, Komachi’s thanks sounded like the type of greeting before being married, and because of that, Hachiman’s tears started to flow. Especially when Komachi said in the beginning “If I fail to get in, I wouldn’t be in the mood,” this way of speaking unwittingly shows her realistic side, and we can also see that she understands that point about herself. And then Komachi’s thanks him and talks about their childhood memories and stories of the past, towards Hachiman who has been with her for her whole life, it was no doubt a huge surprise attack. He definitely instantly pictured in his mind the look of Komachi in the past, present, and future. Because they can’t cry honestly, the two speak casually, saying “Are these tears?” and “Like a robot realizing what feelings are for the first time,” these types of ways to cover up their embarrassment really suits the style of these siblings. Following that, the words “Why am I stuttering?” and the shaky voice in the end is really great. That voice on the verge of crying

when the view switches also goes without saying, the scene after saying that and the angle avoiding their gaze, that wonderful transition made me gasp unwittingly.

That series of scenes depicting a sister's independence also prompted a huge change for Hachiman's mode of thinking for interpersonal relationships, I really appreciate the wonderful acting skills of the two voice actors.

Going on a tangent, similar to "OreGairu Zoku", the trailer for "OreGairu Kan" was also written by me. You could say I was putting in an extra word, or I ran out of space to write and had to add that in, or even that I want to hype it up, or also just purely out of interest that I wrote it ♪, anyways, I wrote a few different flavors of it, if you can also see them to the end like the main series, I would be very happy ☆!

Episode 2: "That Key Was Never Handled Until Today."

Before the OP started, the episode began with Hachiman and Hayama's conversation, the distance between them and their stinging words made me feel very comfortable. Hachiman chose MAX Coffee, while Hayama chose black coffee, from this you could see the difference in their stance, and it was visually pleasing as well. From their dialogue "Why would I? But I your concern makes me happy, thanks" and "I never thought that I would be thanked by you because of something like this," you could really feel the time that they had together up until now, making you laugh unwittingly. But later, Hayama's words conveyed a bitter memory that even Hachiman's MAX Coffee couldn't compensate for.

Let's turn back time to the past. (TL note: Reference to the classic catchphrase of Japanese comedic group PEKOPA)

Going back to the beginning part of episode one, when Yukino and Haruno met in the apartment.

The most memorable thing here, is the part after hearing Yukino say "I have something to talk to you about," and Haruno replies back "So that's how it is?" with a smile. Haruno usually gives people the impression of being an evil liar, yet her smile also gives people a strong sense of warmth. Even though it is easy to miss it, sometimes Haruno does show a soft side to her, as with when? You'll need to pay attention in the future. But the problem at hand is, she then sees that Hachiman and Yui's eyes have gone back to their look from before, though it's hard to notice.

After entering Yukino's home, the biggest problem there is of course Yukinoshita Haruno. Firstly, her home clothes are erotic and cute. God, that's wat too cute, I liked it very much ... just as I thought that, Yukino added in the words "about us." Haruno's happy reaction there could be classified as the softness I mentioned before, right? The people hard to deal with in this work can be counted by a handful, with Haruno being one of them, just looking at her behavior, she's quite a non-trustworthy character. So, when you want to understand her true intentions, you've got to look elsewhere from her words. Especially in this scene, after Yukino says "Because this concerns me, you, and mother," that expression she had was probably the thing closest to reality. Even so, she throws the question to Yui, that behavior also has a distinct Haruno style to it, so her true form always shakes things up.

Yukino is the same, if she were to focus on the surface of her words, she would also see truth in a wrong way. Her line after that “There’s only one thing that I want to say properly to make myself feel at ease,” this earnest line could be referred to as an example of such. “There’s only one thing,” inversely, there are many other things that can’t be said out loud. After she said that, she showed a relieved smile, and on the surface looked happy, as to why she felt relieved? That’s a point worth thinking about.

Even if Yukinoshita had only said a couple of sentences, as a sister, Haruno probably could still understand what she was trying to express. The one who could give the most correct response to Yukinoshita’s answer was most likely Haruno. Maybe Yui understood that, which was why she stayed over the night to help pack Yukinoshita’s bags.

Then what about Hachiman? Even in his monologue he deliberately does not mention that, as the explainer in the series, he deliberately creates misunderstandings, making it hard for people to trust him, if you were looking from his perspective, you naturally wouldn’t be able to understand it. The characters in this series, such as Haruno, also see Hachiman that way. In “OreGairu Zoku” she also calls his placing as “interesting.” And so, she would risk an ambush to talk to Hachiman.

Say, that “um” sound that Hachiman made when she was taking a whiff of her sleeves was way too cute, I really liked that ... going on a tangent, there aren’t many people that smoke in this series, plus having to drink and talk for a long time, I think you’re getting what I’m saying, right? That’s just the case! Say, that part when Haruno said “Hm? What’s with the surprise?” and twirled around, that was so cute ...

But the cute Haruno is also thorned. That type of thing is an established fact in the OreGairu fandom, and of course, this is shown substantially in the plot.

You can also see those thorns, albeit covertly, in the scene after the two of them crossed the road, of course, here I'm not talking about the kind that hurts people. Here we see her mention again "giving up," from that we can know that "OreGairu Kan" is also a story about her.

A big hint also lies in the words "sister" and "brother." The two of them are the eldest children of their families, yet they have a clear difference in their stances, the line "that type of brother" may have come from the deepest reaches of her heart. On the other hand, the sentence "You've always been the brother" touches on Hachiman's nature. This was also mentioned briefly in the first episode, and I hope you can all pay attention to that going forward.

"You can't be drunk," this monologue from Haruno is also an example of her nature, you can also interpret it as the source of her fun. Her prophecy for Hachiman nears that of some kind of curse, making the progression of the story look pessimistic. On another note, the series of face changes by Haruno were amazing, I felt like I was falling for her ... I also want to be toyed by a pretty Onee-san ...

The second half finally brings the spotlight to their school life. On the way to the club room, at the same time that Hachiman and Yui's conversation make us feel nostalgic, it also makes us notice that the time for it all to end was nearing, the locked club room can be considered as a symbol to that. Until now the club room had always been open, but now it was firmly locked, although it was just a small difference, it was still a change. Hachiman's urge to go get the key is the also the same logic.

And then, when he enters the faculty office, he sees that Hiratsuka-sensei's desk has been cleaned. That is also a small change.

Let's put this aside for now, as we finally see Iroha in the club room!

The sudden movie-watching session felt ominous, like something bad was to occur ... the headstrong attitude of Iroha here is really great, Iroha really is so cute. Her world's-cutest-scum act is really awesome. And that look as she adorably asked for a favor ... up until then she was still the same as ever, but she easily gave up after that, there we can see her change.

That change also affects him and her. Hachiman becomes lonely after losing his solace, while Yukino becomes too emotional in her willful attempt for change.

And that's why Yukino speaks up. Say, Yukino, is your opinion of Iroha really that high?

Thinking she can definitely become the prom queen ... not bad. But happiness is fleeting, from Iroha's emotional moment we can see her earnestness and growth. As for her real intention for holding the prom, we'll talk about it a bit later, here we're mainly focusing on her conversation with Yukino.

Even when facing their interrogative questions, Iroha bluntly answered all of them. Yukino saw in her an overlap of herself. That's what the thought "There must be change" is all about. But different from Iroha, Yukino has a more forceful perspective on this matter. As I commented in the first episode, her motivation culminates on the idea of "giving up," this for her, was just the means to achieve that. That point also shows up in later in the words "I want do it on with my own strength."

Even if those words sound positive on their own, they carry some feelings of loneliness.

The only one that noticed the meaning behind those words was probably only Yui. Rather, it seemed like Iroha, the one seeing the relationship of the three from the closest proximity, noticed something, which is why she said “So that’s it.”

It was precisely because Yui understood that her expression appeared down. This is because she too is a person struggling with her thoughts.

Yui goes back to her room, looks at the three of them in the picture, and remembers the events from a few days back. She notices, no, she faces that secret yearning again, those feelings cherished like treasures in her heart, and she begins to find her own “answer.”

That’s all the OreGairu talk for now. I’ll see you in the next volume!

Below are my thanks.

Ponkan^⑧-sama. You worked hard for the original series! It’s anime season again! I’ll leave the work for the BD, DVD, and CD covers to you. I’m so happy to have been able to work with you on the work for “OreGairu Kan”! Thank you so much, Next, let’s work hard on “OreGairu Kami!”
(TL note: Kami = god)

My responsible editor Hoshino-sama. Hahaha! The original series is finished, I’ll have a lot of free time now, hahaha! —Said someone once, but that wasn’t the reality. The reality wasn’t like that at all, hahaha. So, let’s end the conversation here ... there’s still a distance left for OreGairu to go, I’ll be in your care! Thank you very much.

To director Oikawa and all other staff. After “OreGairu Zoku,” “OreGairu Kan” has also been in your care. In the tough times now, I’m really grateful for your hard work at production. Thank you for putting up with the troublesome original work and author. Every time I see you guys creating the best anime for the best ending, I’m always touched. Please allow me to express my deepest gratitude to you guys once again. I look forward to working with you all in the future. Thank you very much.

To Hikigaya Hachiman’s CV Takuya Eguchi and all the other character voicers. Unknowingly, we’ve worked with each other for quite a long time. It was only because of your talented acting that those characters could sparkle. You have all made me learn how important a character is in writing. I’m sorry for causing trouble with my hard characters and troublesome plot. Being able to work with you all is the best experience I’ve had as a writer. Thank you all very much.

Lastly, to the fellow readers and audience. Thank you for waiting for “OreGairu Kan.” Over the past few years, I can relate more and more to the idea that “OreGairu only exists because of you!” It’s because of everyone’s support that this series was able to continue, and approach to the ending step by step. Whether it’s the anime, “OreGairu Shin,” or any other “OreGairu,” I’ll work hard until the last moment. If you can all accompany me to the end, I would feel infinitely happy.

OreGairu only exists because of you!

Then I’ll put down my pen here.

Next up is probably the second volume of the BD and DVD! Although I'm not too sure myself,
see you again!

One day in July, sipping MAX coffee while doing a live text commentary of the anime.

Watari Wataru