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I FAKED AMNESIA to Break Off My Engagement
and Now He's All LOVEY-DOVEY?!

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Fake It to Break It! I Faked Amnesia to Break Off My Engagement and Now He's All Lovey-Dovey?! Volume 2 [Complete]

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The Calm Before the Storm

It had been three months since the months-long drama caused by my amnesia act and my fiancé Phil's unbelievable "You were crazy for me" lie. The misunderstandings that had been between us for many years were finally cleared up and we had become a real couple.

Phil and I always met once a week to chat and our days passed by peacefully and calmly, as if we were making up for the past when we hadn't been able to understand each other. As usual, I dropped by House Lawrenson in the afternoon and the maids immediately led me to Phil's room. Little Vio the parrot was calmly perched on my shoulder.

"Is the usual milk tea all right for you?" Phil asked me.

"Yes, thank you very much."

Lately, he'd started pouring tea himself for me. While he prepared everything, we conversed about anything and everything, as well as updated each other on recent developments in our lives.

I was overjoyed that Phil and I could enjoy conversations with each other now. It made the past, when my visits would be marked by an oppressive silence between us, seem so distant. I could never tell Phil this because it would undoubtedly upset him, but our monthly meetings were more painful than anything to me. I used to never want to visit him.

As I reminisced on our past and mentally shed some tears at how far we'd come, I ran my fingers over Little Vio's soft body as she continued to sit on my shoulder. Her eyes narrowed in pleasure under my ministrations and then she opened her cute, little mouth.

"Viola, I love you!"

"Thank you. I love you too, Little Vio."

Despite my reply, I knew that Little Vio was simply repeating Phil's words at me. Little Vio had grown quite fond of me at this point, and I loved her and how talkative she was.

“You really enjoy Vio’s company,” Phil observed.

“LITTLE VIO!!!” Little Vio squawked.

“You...really enjoy Little Vio’s company,” Phil corrected himself.

“Hee hee, I sure do,” I replied.

Little Vio was as strict as ever when it came to enforcing usage of her nickname. I couldn’t suppress my giggles at Phil obediently rewording his sentence to use it.

“I really like Little Vio because of how cute she is, and I’ve always been partial to animals,” I continued.

“Is that so?”

“Yes. Dogs are a particular favorite of mine, but my mother’s allergic to them so we can’t keep any in the house...”

Every time my mother made physical contact with a dog, her body would start itching and she would start to sneeze uncontrollably. Though I’ve dreamed of owning a dog since I was a child, it never came to pass.

“I’m not sure if you know this but I also like animals and dogs,” Phil said.

“Oh, I didn’t know that.”

I had been under the impression he wasn’t very fond of animals since as far as I could remember he never tried to hold or touch any animal that I would be petting. I said as much to him and Phil covered his mouth with his hand like he was thinking back on something.

“Well, that’s...” he paused briefly, “That’s because I wanted to focus on observing how adorable you looked while enjoying the company of cute little animals,” Phil said in a soft voice. He must’ve been embarrassed to admit it.

“Huh?” My chest grew warm as affection welled up inside me. “Let’s go and play with animals together next time then,” I suggested with a giggle.

“That sounds good.”

I was so unbearably happy at how we could make plans for the future like this as if it wasn’t a big deal. I could also feel my love for him growing stronger as I

learned more about him. I watched, half paying attention, as Phil placed leaves in the teapot and poured hot water in it, his motions smooth as if he'd done this many times before. Eventually, I opened my mouth.

“Um, Phil, why are you so good at making tea?”

In truth, I'd been curious about it ever since the night we spent at the hotel together. It wasn't often that you'd see the eldest son of a duke prepare his own tea. On top of that, he was very good at it and the tea he brewed was always delicious.

On that day, the tea I'd prepared for Phil was basically hot water. Since then, I practiced in secret and was now able to make tea that someone could actually manage to finish.

“I practiced it since you like tea, and I hoped that it would serve as a conversation starter,” Phil said as if it was obvious. He poured some milk into the teacup and picked up the strainer.

I watched the tea and the milk mix together and tilted my head to the side. “Since I like tea?”

“Yes.”

I was happy to hear about Phil's consideration for me. Of course, I enjoyed delicious tea. But tea itself wasn't a particular interest of mine. I didn't recall ever mentioning it either.

“Why do you think I like tea?” I asked, curious. Phil slid a cup of tea before me and after I thanked him, I took a sip from it.

Phil, too, took a teacup and sat down next to me. “You were always drinking tea. I was even worried that you had some sort of inflection.”

I spluttered and spat out my tea at his unexpected explanation, and then hurriedly dabbed at my lips with my handkerchief. My reaction must have frightened Little Vio, because she leapt to sit on Phil's shoulder as if trying to escape from me.

“Viola, so cute!” she screeched.

Sorry, but I can say for sure that I am not cute right now.

“Er, no...well...that’s...”

“Hmm?”

I wasn’t pounding back tea because I was a fanatic for the stuff. It was due to me wanting something to do with my hands when I could no longer handle the hours of silence that I always had to suffer through when I was with him. It had simply been the result of me drinking down whatever was placed in front of me, rather than a conscious decision.

In retrospect, my refills always appeared before me at a fast pace, and they always prepared a wide variety of tea leaves for me to choose. Perhaps those were all the results of Phil’s attempts at showing consideration. *That’s not really what I wanted him to focus on*, I thought. I figured that telling him the truth would make him feel bad, so I decided to keep it a secret. Besides, it was also a fact that I liked him a lot more now, when he would prepare tea for us with his own hand.

“The tea you prepare is so good. I like it more than any other teas I’ve had. Thank you for everything.”

“I’m glad to hear it,” Phil said after a pause. He looked down as if embarrassed, his long eyelashes casting shadows over his cheeks.

He was as precious today as he always was. As I prayed for these peaceful days to continue forever more, I took another sip of my sweet milk tea.

“Viola, I’m home!”

One afternoon a few days after I had met with Phil, I was peacefully working on my embroidery while sitting on the sofa in my room when suddenly, a knocking sound rang through the air. Before I could even get up to answer the door, it swung open with a loud bang.



When I turned and saw the man standing in my doorway, I had to blink a few times to make sure my eyes weren't deceiving me.

“Alan?” I said after an uncertain pause.

“In the flesh,” he said with a big smile and a nod. He ran right up to me and grabbed me in a tight embrace. The familiar scent of expensive cologne and tobacco emanating from his clothing was nostalgic and soothing. “Long time no see!” he continued. “I missed you.”

“I missed you too! Wow, what a surprise. When’d you get back?”

“Yesterday. As soon as I arrived, I headed straight for House Westley.”

“Oh, you. I’m sure grandpa and grandma would love to see you too.”

“I was staying in Kilteria for a while last month so I’m sure they’re tired of seeing my face.”

After he said that, Alan took a step back and gave me a big smile before he affectionately ruffled my hair. Alan Slade was my uncle. He had a handsome face that paired well with his beautiful, shiny black hair and ruby-red eyes. Though he was my uncle, he was fifteen years younger than my father, who was his older brother. At twenty-eight years old, he was more like an older brother to me. The feeling was reciprocated, as Alan had always spoiled me as if I was really his younger sister.

“Spoiled” was a bit of an understatement. I had countless memories of how he’d go overboard with making sure I was treated well. Ever since I was born, he’d treated me as if I was the royal princess. Thanks to his job, Alan was living in the foreign nation of Kilteria. He only ever returned home a few times per year. Every time he did so, he came straight to House Westley to see me. Since I’d always been fond of him, this made me happy as well.

However, there was a problem with this visit.

“Speaking of, Viola, have you broken off your engagement with him yet?” Alan asked me with a cheery smile as he shrugged off his jacket and placed it over the back of the sofa.

“Um, well...” I looked away from him and mumbled.

“Him” referred to Phil, of course. Alan had been against our engagement from the start since Phil and I weren’t on the best terms.

“How can you let Viola marry that guy?! She’ll never be happy with him!”

Alan always got angry at Phil on my behalf because he was cold and taciturn toward me. There was no doubt in my mind that Alan loathed Phil. More than once, he’d attempted to break into House Lawrenson’s manor to try and break things off himself. I remembered doing everything in my power to stop him, since I had no idea what he was going to do. Alan was probably the same as me; he likely never realized that Phil had always been in love with me.

“Viola? What’s wrong?”

Upon seeing me fall silent, Alan tilted his head to the side, his expression tight with worry. His movement was so cute and unexpected from the way he normally looked that your average woman would fall head over heels at the contrast.

I kept in contact with Alan through letters apart from the time I was pretending to have amnesia, but I never told him anything about Phil and only updated him on myself. I kept quiet about Phil because I knew that if I suddenly wrote him, “Phil and I are in love with each other!” he’d rush to my home no matter how busy he was. Hence I’d decided that I would directly inform him about Phil and I upon his return.

So the time’s finally come. I stood up and gestured for him to sit near the table for now. “Anyway, I have lots of things I want to say to you, so please, have a seat. I’ll go pour us some tea.”

“Ah, right. You’ll be the one preparing it? That’s exciting.”

“Yes. I practiced quite a bit, so I’m very good at it now.”

I didn’t want one of the more talkative maids to bring up Phil so I would pour us the tea myself. Alan was staring at me with a smile so bright it was blinding. Where should I start the story? I pondered that as I prepared the tea. Because I didn’t expect him to return so soon, I hadn’t had time to plan out everything.

If I told him about how I faked amnesia and Phil lied to me the entire time I was doing so, it would definitely cause some complications. Because of how soft Alan was on me, I felt like he would only blame Phil for everything, even if both of us had been dishonest. But even so, he would definitely find it

suspicious how we were suddenly in a mutually romantic relationship when we'd been on such bad terms. I knew he would start coming up with wild theories and worry about me. My mind raced as I worked to come up with the best solution.

"Speaking of which, you were working on some embroidery earlier, weren't you? I thought you didn't like it very much. Did something happen to change your mind on it?"

"Ah, yes. A little something... Actually, a *major* something..."

"You're so much more beautiful than the last time I saw you. Did something good happen? I'm excited to hear about what's been going on in your life."

He gave me a bright smile, which only made it harder to tell him about everything.

"Here you go," I said, placing the cups of freshly brewed tea on the table.

"Thank you. It looks great."

I sat in the chair across from him. Despite his cool exterior, Alan had always had a sweet tooth. After I placed two sugar cubes in his cup, he grinned, looking very happy.

"You remembered! Well then, it's time to enjoy some tea."

"Yes."

First of all, I had to tell him about all the misunderstandings between Phil and I, and that I was in love with him now. These were my true feelings and I wanted Alan, who was an important part of my family, to know about them. With that thought in mind, I watched as Alan held the teacup to his lips and opened my mouth.

"To tell the truth, I—"

"Heeeeyo, Little Vio! How've you been?"

"Huh?"

Someone had knocked on the door and immediately afterward, they burst into my room, announcing their arrival in a much too cheery voice. The

intruders were, to my surprise, my cousin Rex, along with Phil. I hadn't heard anything about them dropping by today, so why were they here?

Since you're all entering a girl's room, I wish you would all be a little more considerate, I thought. I wanted to cradle my head in my hands at their terrible timing. Then, I fearfully peeked over in Alan's direction.

The "Huh?" had been from him, spoken in a deep voice. His smile from earlier was completely gone, and he was looking at Phil with eyes as cold as ice.

"Oh? If it isn't Alan! Long time no see! I didn't know you were back."

"Yeah."

Alan was Rex's uncle as well. Though Alan and Rex were also pretty close, it was a whole other story when Phil got involved.

"So? Why'd you two drop in like this out of nowhere? Why're you here?"

Though Alan was glaring at the two sudden guests, this was *my* room and Alan was also someone who dropped in from out of nowhere. He acted so brazenly that one couldn't tell that I hadn't invited him either. It was pretty impressive.

"It's been too long," Phil said with a polite bow of his head.

"Yeah..." Alan replied, looking at him like a pouting child. *I hate you* was clearly written on his face, even though Phil was of higher status than him.

On Phil's end, he looked calm, as if this was any other day.

"I wish to spend some time with Viola alone. If you don't have anything you want from her, then I'll ask you two to leave," Alan continued.

"Don't be so mean! I haven't seen you in ages. The four of us should have some tea together."

Like Phil, Rex was the same as usual. He swung his arm around Alan's shoulder and Alan pulled away, looking dissatisfied. Apparently, Phil and Rex were running errands together and they finished earlier, so they dropped by to see if I wanted to have lunch with them.

Though I was interested in dining with them, I wanted to explain things to

Alan first. But I didn't have the heart to send Phil and Rex back since they took time out of their day to come see me. I figured that I would have them wait in a separate room for now. But right as I stood up to tell them that, Alan opened his mouth.

"Phillip, why are you even here in the first place? Why did you come by the Westley manor to see Viola if you didn't even have something important lined up? What are you planning?"

"Huh?" Rex said.

Phil didn't say anything, but he looked confused as well.

Because of how blatant Alan's accusation was, both Phil and Rex stared at me curiously. *Just what is this all about? You didn't explain anything to him?* The question was clear in their eyes, and I could feel their twin gazes boring into the side of my head.

I was just about to explain everything to him. So please forgive me. I stared back at them and tried to signal my thoughts with my eyes, but they didn't seem to understand it. Now that things had come to this, it was no longer the time to be careful with my words or the order of events in my explanation.

"Um, listen, Alan."

"What's the matter, Viola?"

As soon as I called his name, Alan, who had been glaring at Phil frostily, immediately turned to look at me with a soft smile on his face. This expression of his had always been the same ever since we were children. Though it was extremely difficult to say, I looked him straight in the eye and continued.

"I love Phil."

For a moment, Alan didn't say anything. Then, in a strangled tone, he managed, "Phi... Lo...?"

"I've fallen in love with Lord Phillip."

A long pause. Then, "What?"

In a heartbeat, Alan's beautiful face stiffened in shock. Then, a moment later, it darkened with despair. Eventually, he covered his mouth with his right hand

and murmured, "This...can't be true. H-He must be blackmailing you, right? Tell me that's the truth."

"No. We had some misunderstandings and miscommunications, but now we're both in love with each other."

"In love...with each other..." Upon hearing my words, Alan looked like he was truly in shock. He repeated my words in a hoarse voice, then turned to look at Phil. "So you're also in love with Viola?"

"Yes. I am."

"Ha! Don't lie to me! How do you explain your attitude toward her over the years, then?"

"I'm telling the truth. I love Viola so much that I wasn't able to speak with her properly. I apologize."

Phil, honest to a fault, was giving a genuine apology with a solemn expression on his face. Rex was next to him, smiling and nodding. Alan looked completely befuddled and he turned to stare at me, eyes wide and begging for more information.

"I wanted to give you the news in person, so I didn't mention this in my letters. I'm sorry for springing this on you like this. But there's nothing to worry about." When Alan didn't reply, I continued, "I'm sorry for making you worry so much over the years. It always made me happy how you would be on my side no matter what. Thank you."

I stared straight at him and, as planned, informed him that I intended to marry Phil in a few months' time. Alan's jewel-like eyes wavered as if he was lost in nostalgia.

"Viola, you said you would marry me when you grew up..."

"Huh?!"

"Phil, please don't look so hurt. He's talking about something I said when I was four."

Both Phil and Alan looked shocked and upon seeing them, Rex started to laugh. I had no idea what to do in this chaotic situation.

“Wow, things are getting really exciting.”

“You’re the only person here who’s excited, Rex.”

Rex was acting like this had nothing to do with him, so I ignored him. All the revelations must have been too much for Alan, because he was looking down at the ground. After a moment, he raised his head and glared at Phil.

“You never even had a proper conversation with her, so just what do you like about Viola? Are you only interested in her face? I agree that Viola’s the cutest girl in the world.”

“Hmm? No, I’m not only interested in her face. I’m interested in her body as well.”

“Do you have a death wish?”

“Pfft... Ah ha ha ha!”

At the same time Phil made a terrible verbal misstep, Rex started laughing so hard that he couldn’t breathe, then he disappeared from my line of sight. Alan had completely lost his temper and his eyes looked like he was ready to kill someone.

I knew, of course, that there was no deeper meaning or strange intentions in Phil’s words. As usual, he simply chose the wrong words. However, anyone would misinterpret our relationship from those words alone so I seriously wished he would think before he spoke. I felt like I had reached the limit of my embarrassment.

“I-In any case, I’m living my life happily so please don’t worry about me!” I exclaimed, trying to end the conversation.

Of course, Alan wasn’t convinced by my pathetic attempt to do so. He looked like he was deep in thought for a moment before he nodded.

“I’ve made up my mind. For the rest of the day, I will observe Phillip to judge if he is truly capable of making you happy, Viola. Is that fine with you?”

“It is,” Phil said with a serious nod.

“Wha...?” Unlike him, I felt a little unsure about this turn of events.

“Man, we came here on a spur of the moment decision, so I didn’t expect anything as interesting as this to happen,” Rex said.

“Your timing is seriously the worst.”

Without a doubt, today was going to be difficult. I was certain of it. With that thought in mind, I let out a small sigh.

Words Are Unnecessary

Afterward, we decided to eat a late lunch together. I quickly had the chef prepare enough food for four people and then we all sat down around the table.

“Alan, how’s Phil supposed to eat if you keep glaring at him like that?”

“Then he simply doesn’t need to eat.”

“Oh, you. Phil, don’t worry about him. Eat as much as you like.”

“It’s fine. My chest always felt like it would burst when I had meals with you, so I’ve never been able to eat a lot.”

“I...see...”

He said it so casually that my cheeks began to heat up. Phil never ate much so I thought that was just how he was. But it seemed that he usually ate more. He cheerily told me that I was cuter than anything when I enjoyed my meal, so he was satisfied just watching me eat.

“I thought it was cold outside but phew, man, is it heating up in here,” Rex said. When no one replied to his jest, he smiled nonetheless and played it off with, “This salad is great.”

Next to him, Alan looked like he was torn as he cut up the main dish. The meat was sliced up so much that it was as if he had a grudge against it, and it looked quite grotesque. In any case, I decided to focus on the delicious food in front of me. But right as I decided that, I saw celery—my worst enemy—inside of the salad.

“Lady Viola, you mustn’t be picky!” The chef always said that. The servants of House Westley did their best to give me all that I asked for and more, but they were strict when it came to discipline. I started to bring the celery to my mouth, smiling like always, when I noticed Phil looking at me as if he wanted to say something.

“Phil, is something the matter?”

“I thought I’d secretly eat your celery for you.”

I didn’t expect those words at all and I blinked in surprise, a soft sound escaping my lips. I had never told anyone outside my family about the foods I disliked, because I was embarrassed at how childish it was. Even Jamie, who always ate lunch with me at school, praised me for how I ate everything that was placed before me.

“How did you know that I don’t like celery? I was always hiding my feelings for it.”

After I asked my question, Phil looked at me like he couldn’t understand what the issue was.

“I’ve spent my whole life watching you, Viola. So I can notice even the smallest change in your demeanor.”

“Ah...”

He declared it as if it wasn’t anything special. I was so embarrassed by how candid he was that I could no longer even register the taste of vegetables on my tongue.

“And there you have it. Did you hear what he said?” Rex said, grinning.

“I didn’t want to hear it...but I did,” Alan replied, his irritation clear.

Phil looked at me like he was the happiest man on the planet. With those three at my table, lunch was a strange and slightly stressful affair.

Because Alan wanted to spend the rest of the day observing Phil, I was a little worried about what the four of us could do together to pass the time. But after we finished lunch, Alan stood up.

“I’m going out for a bit. You, come with me.”

“All right.”

For some reason, he called out to Phil. Phil nodded obediently and put on his jacket.

“Hey, where are you two going?” I asked.

“We’re just going to take a stroll around the neighborhood,” Alan replied.

“May I come with you, then?”

“I’d love to spend as much time with you as I can, Viola, but there’s something I’d like to discuss, man to man.”

Though Alan said that he wanted to take a stroll, he was having the servants prepare a carriage. Where were they going and what did Alan wish to discuss? I was both curious and worried.

“Phil, are you sure you’re all right?” I whispered to him.

“Yes. Everything’s fine, so please don’t make that face.” He smiled at me after he said that. “I was the one who started this mess in the first place. I’m going to do my best for him to acknowledge me as your future husband.”

“I understand... Thank you so much.”

The two of them left the manor without another word. Left in the room, I turned to Rex, who was casually drinking tea.

“Do you think Phil and Alan will be all right alone? Just the two of them?”

“Yeah. Alan just likes you so much that he can be a bit extreme, but he’s a nice guy. I’m sure he’ll understand once he gets to know Phillip better. I think things will actually turn out better if the two of them had the chance to say what’s on their minds.”

“Is that how it works?”

Rex was right; both Alan and Phil were kinder than anyone I knew, and they were both amazing people. There was also the possibility that once Alan knew how kind Phil was, he’d accept him as part of the family. Rex placed his teacup down and stretched both arms into the air before he yawned loudly.

“Welp, let’s relax and take a nap or something while we wait for them. I bet that the two of them will end up pals.”

“Huh? No way.”

Of course, I’d be delighted if things turned out that way. But I just couldn’t imagine them becoming friends, considering Alan’s personality and history with

Phil. However, Rex had a very confident expression on his face.

After that, we moved to my room and Rex fell asleep on the sofa. I wasn't in the mood for a nap. Unable to settle down, I decided to continue the embroidery that I was working on earlier.

After leaving the Westley mansion with Alan, the two of us got into a carriage, which took us to the knights' training grounds. Apparently, Alan knew one of the higher-ups because it didn't take much effort for him to reserve the space. I wasn't sure what to refer to him as. When I tried calling him "Lord Alan" earlier, he got angry at me and said it was gross for me to attach "Lord" before his name.

"Take this."

For some reason, he handed me a wooden sword. I stared at it in confusion, unsure of his intentions, and Alan explained further.

"I've never been the eloquent type. That goes for you as well, doesn't it?"

"Yes."

"My grandfather was a knight and he told me that men should converse with swords rather than their words. I cannot entrust Viola to you if you're weak, anyway."

"Very well," I said after ruminating on what Alan said.

In other words, I simply had to duel Alan and win. As someone who had just as much trouble with words, I was grateful for the opportunity to prove myself in a way that was easy to understand. I immediately took up the wooden sword and put some distance between us. I learned swordplay since childhood so there wasn't any issue. However, it was clear from the way Alan was standing and acting that he had considerable skill as well.

"We'll only do one round. Come at me any time you wish."

With his words as the signal, I tensed up my right hand, which wielded the sword, as well as my legs. Then in the next moment, I ran forward, getting myself up into Alan's space. Our swords clashed, and the dull sound of wood

against wood sounded through the air.

“You—! You’re a lot more aggressive than you look!” Alan exclaimed.

“I simply want you to approve of me.”

I took a small breath and then immediately doled out my next strike. Alan parried my move and upon seeing an opening, he slashed down toward me, his movements sharp and precise. Taking our respective builds into consideration, he was superior to me in terms of his strength and his stamina.

I focused on attacking quickly, getting in as many hits as I could so that my blade could land upon Alan. It seemed like Alan didn’t expect me to be able to attack as much as I did, because it looked like I threw him off his game.

We continued our duel, attacking when we could and defending when we needed to, until finally, the tip of my sword brushed against Alan’s neck. He took a sharp intake of breath, eyes widening in surprise, before a humble smile appeared on his face.

“It’s my loss...”

“Thank you very much for the duel.”

Though I managed to emerge as the victor, I had been moving on sheer willpower at the very end. If we dueled again at a later date, there was no telling who would win. Even so, I was very relieved that I’d won. If I’d lost here and was told that he didn’t approve of my marriage with Viola, she’d surely be hurt and anxious. I was able to understand, albeit only a little, just how important Alan was to her. Eventually, Alan placed his sword down, heaved a deep sigh, and then ran his hand through his bangs.

“Ah, sheesh. Well, a man never goes back on his word... Do you have time later?”

“Yes.”

“We’re going for some drinks.”

“Huh?”

I was taken aback by the unexpected invitation. But I didn’t have the option to turn him down. Afterward, Alan took me straight to the bars downtown.

What's Perpetually Important to Me

Since Alan had only informed Viola that we'd be going out for a bit, he contacted her and told her that we would be out all night so she wouldn't worry. I knew that she was worried for me right about now. I wanted to see Viola but Alan entered a bar that his acquaintance managed, and so I followed him inside. The two of us sat down next to each other at the counter.

Not only was it a membership-based bar, but it was also quite early in the night. So we were the only customers in the establishment, which had a calm atmosphere.

"I know it's a bit late now to ask you this, but are you able to drink alcohol?" Alan asked.

"I can't hold my liquor so I can't drink a lot of it."

"All right. It's not something you have to push yourself to drink."

With that, Alan ordered wine for himself, along with iced tea for me. I stared at his face, which was so beautiful it was akin to a sculpture, and I once again found this whole situation to be very strange. I'd met Alan several times in my youth, but Viola was always there next to us. This was the first time we spoke to each other alone.

"Thank you for waiting. Oh, you're not alone today, I see," a man said as he carried two glasses to us.

"Yeah."

"I've not seen a face as handsome as yours in a very long time, barring Lord Alan's, of course. Please enjoy your stay."

"Thank you very much."

The man smiled, dipped his head, and then disappeared into the back. I picked up my iced tea and clinked the glass against Alan's when he tilted his at me.

We spent about two hours chatting and drinking. Even so, silence reigned

more often than not. From an outsider's point of view, we must've looked like we were on terrible terms. However, it was not a painful way to spend the night at all, strangely enough.

On the other hand, Alan had been throwing back drinks at a very fast pace. It looked like he was *trying* to get drunk. The skin around his narrow eyes was red.

"Viola is the apple of my eye... I think of her as my adorable little sister," he said after a long while, his wine glass in hand. "I still can't forget the first time I saw her."

After that, Alan started to tell me about his past with Viola. Apparently, when he was a child, his closest friend betrayed him in an extremely hurtful manner. On top of that, nothing in his life went well at all and he ended up closing himself off from the rest of the world. It was during that time of his life that he first met Viola, who was still a baby.

"I thought she was an angel," Alan continued. "My brother said that she didn't smile a lot but as soon as Viola saw me, she did. The moment I saw that, all of my troubles disappeared from my mind." He narrowed his eyes as if remembering a treasured memory. His expression when he did so was unbearably gentle. "She was the sweetest thing. The moment I touched her little hand, I knew I would do everything in my power to protect her."

I could tell from his tone just how important Viola was to him. And I knew that Viola greatly valued Alan's presence as well. She'd told me about him many times in the past and she always looked so happy when she reminisced about him. It was to the point that I was deeply jealous of Alan.

"I still haven't accepted you, nor have I forgiven you. No matter how things are now, the truth still remains that your words and actions hurt Viola in the past."

"Yes..."

He was absolutely correct. Because of my personal failings, I ended up hurting Viola. Since he saw the damage I caused up close, it was understandable that he would find me unforgivable and hate me. Eventually, still with his glass in hand, Alan turned to look at me.

“Even so, it was clear from today that Viola likes you very much. It’s truly aggravating, but I want to respect Viola’s feelings. So I won’t say anything more on this matter. Besides, I lost our duel.” After that last sentence, Alan shrugged his shoulders lightly.

“Thank you...very much...”

“I’m not saying this for your sake. Also, Viola’s happy smile was just too cute.” After he said that, he drained the remaining wine from the glass. I picked up the wine bottle next to me and poured some more for him. For some reason, he said, “You’re even good at pouring wine. Pisses me off. Anyway, when did you start liking Viola?”

“Ever since I can remember.”

“And you’ve liked her since then?”

“Yes.”

I answered him honestly and Alan laughed as if I told him a joke. I’d seen him multiple times since I was a boy, but this was my first time seeing him smile like this.

“I’m impressed at your resilience! Viola hated you so much.”

I couldn’t say anything in response. Even now, after she reciprocated my feelings, it seriously hurt to hear someone say that Viola used to despise me. There were still many things in our past that pained me to remember. Upon seeing my expression, Alan smiled, his lips forming a beautiful crescent.

“Ever since Viola was a kid, she’d always tell me that she loves me. We went out together many times, and she used to beg me to give her hugs.”

I remained silent.

“There were a few times when I was heading out the door, only for her to latch onto my leg and beg me not to go.”

I still remained silent. Alan looked proud and victorious. To tell the truth, I felt like I was going to implode from sheer jealousy. I thought back on my past relationship with Viola and compared my memories to Alan’s, then my shoulder slumped. He slapped his hand against my back and laughed.

“Man, this feels great. Maybe, just maybe, I’ve grown to like you a little bit.”

“I’m glad to hear it...”

After that, he continued to brag about his memories with Viola. He poured some more tea in my empty glass and then sighed. “I wanna see Viola. She’s so cute.”

It felt like I was watching myself and how I usually acted, there was an odd sense of familiarity.

“List what you think is cute about Viola,” Alan demanded.

“That she gets embarrassed so easily, but she always bites her lip and pretends that she’s fine.”

“Oh, I agree.”

“The way she clenches her fists and her ears get all red when she’s genuinely happy.”

“I agree. The way she rubs her eyes with both hands when she’s sleepy like she’s a child is also very cute.”

“Oh, yeah.”

For the longest time, I worried that saying these things out loud would creep people out so I kept my feelings about Viola buried in my chest. But now, I was able to discuss them with someone who understood. It was more fun than I’d ever imagined and I was so happy to finally share these thoughts with someone. It seemed that the feeling was mutual for Alan, and I could feel a bond forming between us.

For the rest of the night, we continued to talk about just how cute and precious Viola was.

Fake It to Break It! I Faked Amnesia to Break Off My Engagement and Now He's All
Lovey-Dovey?! Volume 2
by Kotoko

Translated by Stephanie Liu
Edited by Ruuri

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

KONYAKUHAKI NERATTE KIOKUSOSHITSU NO FURI WO SHITARA, SOKKENAI
TAIDO DATTA KONYAKUSHA GA "KIOKU WO USHINAU MAE NO KIMI WA, ORE
NI BETABORE DATTA" TOIU, TONDEMONAI USO WO TSUKIHAJIMETA Vol. 2

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From Now and Forever More

Phil and Alan never returned after they left the house. Around dusk, I received a letter from them, letting me know that they were going out drinking for the rest of the night, and that was the last I heard from them. I worried about whether they'd be all right and before I realized it, it was already morning.

I finished eating breakfast and just when I started to wonder if I should pen a letter, one of the maids told me that Alan was visiting. It was strange that he hadn't run straight to my room. Curious at what could've happened, I told the maid to bring him to me.

"Good morning..."

When he finally arrived, his face was so pale that he looked like he'd seen a ghost. I hurriedly told him to sit down on the sofa and after a quick apology, he stumbled over and settled on the cushion. It seemed less like he didn't come directly to my room and more like he *couldn't*.

"You look like you're about to faint, is everything all right? Are you sick?" I asked.

"I'm fine. I'm feeling a little ill because I finished drinking not so long ago, that's all."

"N-Not so long ago?"

What time did he think he was? Apparently, Alan had been drinking until the early hours of the morning, then dropped by the House Westley manor after returning to his hotel to clean himself up. He was to return to Kilteria tomorrow, so he would spend the rest of the day going around and greeting his other acquaintances. It would be the last time he'd be able to see me until his next visit, so he pushed himself to come over.

"It's rare for you to drink so much."

I never thought Phil was someone who liked alcohol very much either. Just when I was thinking that he might've met some of his old friends after he and

Phil went their separate ways, Alan explained.

“Phillip and I had so much fun chatting that we lost track of time.”

“Wait, you were with Phil the whole time?”

“Yeah. He was drinking tea the whole night but by the time I realized it, he’d somehow switched to drinking alcohol. He was so pathetic while drunk. It was hilarious.”

“I...I see...”

I never would’ve thought that after the two of them left my house a little past noon the other day that they’d ended up spending the entire night together. In fact, they must’ve been with each other until just a few hours ago, when Alan returned to his hotel to freshen up. Truthfully, the sight of Alan looking so happy as he talked about his night out with Phil made me feel like this was all a dream. He’d hated Phil for so long.

It seemed that, upon having an honest conversation with each other, they realized how much they had in common. I was surprised that Rex saw this coming. But two of my favorite people in the world had become friends, so I was very pleased with this result. My worries about their relationship were for naught.

I asked a maid to prepare me some water and I handed the glass to Alan. Then, I sat down next to him.

“Was Phil all right?”

“He looked like he was about to pass out, but I made sure to walk him back home. Don’t worry.”

“Phew. Thank you.”

Phil had unbelievably low alcohol tolerance, so I’d never seen him drunk. I let out a sigh of relief knowing that he made it home safely. When he saw my reaction, Alan’s expression softened.

“He loves you so much that I had to give him my stamp of approval. In fact, he even scared me a little.”

“He scared you? Did you two talk about me?”

“Yeah. You were the only thing we talked about all night.”

“Er...”

Yes, I was probably the only topic that Alan and Phil had in common for their conversation. But you’d figure that they’d eventually run out of things to discuss. It was a little, no, *very* terrifying to try and imagine what they talked about as the sun began to rise. As those thoughts swirled in my head, I noticed Alan staring at me.

“Viola, find happiness in your life. I’ve always loved your smile.”

“Of course... Thank you, Alan.”

He gazed at me with such unconditional love that my field of vision started to blur. I knew that Alan treasured me and that all he wanted was for me to be happy in life.

“Don’t worry. I’ll be by your side.” That was what he’d always said, ever since we were children. In the past, I’d been negatively compared with Phil and came under intense scrutiny. It had been a difficult time for me. But throughout the entire ordeal, Alan remained by my side. I couldn’t even put into words how much relief his presence brought me.

“Alan, I love you.”

“I love you as well,” he said with a happy smile. That was my favorite expression of his. He gave me a rough pat on my head, messing up my hair.

The next afternoon, I held a basket full of fresh fruits in my arms and visited House Lawrenson’s mansion. As I’d expected, even though two days had passed since his night out, Phil was still suffering from a hangover and he looked sick.

“Are you feeling all right?” I asked.

“Somehow. I’m sorry, that was the first time in my life I drank so much alcohol.”

He had apparently drank so much that he couldn’t even remember half the night. Even so, he said that he had a great time with such a cheery look on his face that I felt happy for him.

The news of their duel was rather shocking. It sounded exactly like the kind of stunt Alan would pull. It was also surprising that Phil was able to win against him, considering how skilled Alan was with a sword. Phil really was capable of anything he put his mind to.

“Would you like an apple?”

“Yes, thank you.”

Since he said that he could manage to eat some fruits, I sat down next to him and started to peel the apple.

“Um, I’m truly sorry. I’ll have the maids bring something else...” I murmured after a while as I placed the apple on the plate. It looked forlorn with how small and misshapen it’d become.

I had been peeling it. Or at least, I’d had every intention to. But I had been carving away at the meat as well as the skin. I wanted to cry at how awkward I still was with my hands. However, Phil thanked me once again and picked up both the plate and a fork.

“It’s just the right size for my appetite right now. Plus, apples are Vio’s favorite snack. So long as we remove the seeds, it’s an innovative way of slicing up the fruit to make it easy for her to swallow.”

“Phil...you’re much too kind to me.”

Phil was probably the only person in the entire world who would have something nice to say about this apple. It made me reaffirm how much I loved this part of his personality, as well as how much I found comfort in it. He quickly finished eating the apple and smiled at me, commenting on how delicious it was. Then, he took a drink of water and sighed.

“Has Alan returned to Kilteria?” he asked.

“Yes. He said that he will definitely return for our wedding.”

“I see.”

I remembered Alan saying that he was certain he’d cry and I giggled despite myself. Phil took my hand into his and said my name in a soft voice.

“I’m sorry for how much I put you through over the years. Through my

conversation with Alan, I once again realized how much I hurt you in the past. I took your kindness for granted.”

“That’s not true at all. There were a lot of things wrong with my attitude back then as well.”

“No, the blame lies entirely with me.”

In the past, I had been awkward, unconfident, and self-deprecating. So I couldn’t blame Phil for everything. Even so, he refused to back down and insisted that he was the only one at fault. *He’s only stubborn when it comes to the weirdest things*, I thought as I continued to listen to him.

“I promise that I’ll do everything in my power to make you happy. So happy that it’ll make up for what happened in the past.”

“Thank you. I will do my best to make you happy as well.”

“I’m already so happy that I don’t even know what to do with myself...”

I tightened my hold on Phil’s hand and he smiled, looking like the most fortunate man in the world. I could feel my body warm with affection at the expression.

“This is just a hypothesis, but I think I like you a lot, to an almost extreme degree.”

“Where did *that* come from?”

He said it so suddenly, standing so close to me and without changing his expression, that I wasn’t sure if the emotion ballooning in my chest was joy or embarrassment. What did he mean by “an almost extreme degree”?

“For the first time in my life, I gave voice to all of my feelings for you and I found that I couldn’t stop. I was pretty surprised.”

“Your feelings for me? Like what, for example?”

“How cute you are and what I like about you... If I have to be a bit more specific, the expression you make when you say that you love me is—”

“That’s enough. I understand.”

If I had to continue listening to him, I’d die from sheer embarrassment. For a

moment, I felt like I was going to faint at the thought that he and Alan spent an entire night conversing about me in this way. I seriously hoped they'd refrain from such behavior in the future.

That was when I suddenly noticed how tired Phil looked. He must not have gotten much sleep last night on account of how sick he was.

"If you're sleepy, you can go lie down. I'll spend time with Little Vio."

"I'm sorry. It's not that I'm bored of your company or anything like that."

"I understand, don't worry."

"I thought I hid my fatigue quite well... How could you tell?"

Now that he mentioned it, it was true that Phil's expression was the same as it always was. How did I know that he was tired? I thought about it for a moment and then remembered what he said the day before yesterday.

"I can't stop watching you either, Phil."

I smiled after I said it. For a moment, Phil stared at me, mouth agape, before he covered the bottom half of his face with his hand. His beautiful face slowly turned red.

"That made me so happy, I'm no longer sleepy."

"Hee hee." With a single sentence, I could make him this happy and shy. It made me want to tease him a little. "Would you like to hear me talk about what I love about you?"

"I don't think my body can handle it so please don't... I'll die."

He said it with such a serious face. I grinned, happier than ever.

What's Changed and What's the Same

One night, following the start of the social season, I put on an elegant dress and made my way to the palace. Tonight, there was a large ball held in the palace's event hall, and both Phil and I had received invitations. Despite that, the second prince, who was the host of the party, immediately called for Phil after the party started so we went our separate ways.

"Oh, Viola. You're here too?"

As I stood in the crowd, a sweet voice reminiscent of a tinkling bell reached my ears. I turned around to see my best friend, Lady Jamie Preston. She was wearing a cute pink dress and next to her was Lord Hugo, her lover. Seeing how close they were made me happy.

"I'm going to go spend some time with my friends, so take your time catching up," Lord Hugo said as he dipped his head at me.

"We will, thanks," Jamie replied.

Lord Hugo turned and disappeared into the crowd mingling about the hall. Jamie often boasted about him under the guise of telling me about Lord Hugo, and he was certainly a kind and lovely person.

I'm glad that the both of us found such wonderful partners, I thought as I accepted a glass from one of the waiters. Jamie and I clinked our glasses together as cheers. Apparently, Jamie drank too much the other day and made a fool of herself, so she was holding herself back.

"Viola, you've been really pushing yourself lately, haven't you? You've always been a bit of a shut-in and only participated in the bare minimum of social gatherings. But I've been seeing you a lot more lately. You looked lovely during the Founder's Festival too."

"Thank you. Now that I've decided to marry Phil of my own will, I have to make sure I'm a suitable wife for him."

When I marry Phil, I will eventually become Duchess Lawrenson. In the past, I had been reluctant to marry Phil and attain that title. I kept running away from

my future responsibilities, pretending that they didn't exist. However, now that I'd decided to spend the rest of my life at Phil's side, I wanted to change the way I viewed my future and work hard to better myself.

"That's amazing. I'm sure Lord Phillip's happy about that."

"Maybe. I'm not sure."

"He must be. Looking at you now, it's hard to imagine that you came up with such a crazy lie," Jamie giggled, sounding like she was having fun teasing me.

After I resolved my various misunderstandings with Phil, I confessed to Jamie that I'd lied to her about my amnesia and apologized. But she didn't seem angry or surprised. She'd simply smiled and said, "To tell you the truth, I had a feeling that was the case." Apparently, she'd had her suspicions ever since the class reunion, which we went to in order to meet Lord Hugo. I'd accidentally told her that I found him, and she'd thought it strange. I didn't even realize I'd made that mistake.

"If...and this is a big 'if'... If there's anything that you're troubled with or if there's anything I can do to help, just let me know any time. I'll do anything I can to help you. I'm always going to be on your side."

It made sense now why Jamie suddenly made a serious expression and said that to me that day. She must've been worried about me, since I was living a ridiculous lie. I was grateful to my kind friend, and swore that I would never deceive the people around me like that ever again.

"It's about time for you to start preparing for the wedding, right? I'm looking forward to it," Jamie said.

"Yes, thank you."

There were still six months left until my wedding with Phil. Not only did our parents arrange our marriage the second we were born, but they'd also decided on a date as well. So there weren't a lot of things I had to arrange or prepare at the last minute.

Besides, neither Phil nor I had any particular hang-ups about our wedding so we left it up to our parents. I planned on getting a wedding dress fitted from Madam Rico's, the most popular dress shop in the kingdom, soon. I heard that

we still had quite a bit of time before we'd get seriously busy with wedding preparations.

"I'd thought that I would burst into tears upon seeing you on your big day, but I think Lord Phillip would cry harder than I ever could," Jamie laughed.

"I-I can definitely see that..."

In the past, simply gifting him a necklace that matched mine made him cry. It was more than plausible that Phil would start sobbing loudly during the ceremony.

"Lord Phillip is so earnest and cute! I'm so excited!" Jamie continued, clasping her hands together and giving me a bright smile. Ever since we were in school, she'd held Phil in high regard.

"Lady Viola, Lady Jamie, good evening."

"Oh, my! Lady Patrice, it's been too long."

After that, we chatted with some friends from our school days and then we decided to go around greeting people again. I'd been actively participating in social gatherings so my circle of acquaintances was a lot larger than it used to be. I could recognize even more faces now compared to before.

Eventually, after we finished greeting the majority of the other guests, we decided to take a short break. As we moved to the edge of the hall, we noticed a particularly rowdy corner. I was a little curious as to what was going on. The ruckus was caused by a group of girls squealing excitedly. As I walked past them, I heard someone call my name.

"Oh? If it isn't Vivi!"

"Rex?"

I turned to look at the crowd and, to my surprise, Rex was standing right in the middle of it. As soon as our eyes met, he gave me a blinding smile and then, waving his arm, walked through the crowd toward me. He was as popular as ever, it seemed. I even felt some measure of respect at that.

"I figured you'd come. Hmm? Where's Phillip?"

"He's with Prince Lucas."

“I see. Since you’ve got no friends, I’ll do you a favor and stay by your side.”

“How rude. I’ve got friends.”

“Yeah, it’s true that you’ve been working hard lately. Good job!” Rex smiled after he said that and placed his right hand on top of my head. Even though we were only five years apart, he never stopped treating me like I was just a little girl. At least, that was how it felt to me.

“How’re you and Phillip lately?”

“We’re the same as always.”

“Boooring. I wanna see you two get up to more interesting things.”

“Excuse me?”

He was having fun at our expense. But I couldn’t tell him off. It was thanks to Rex and the advice he gave me at the time that Phillip and I were able to get to this point in our relationship. However, I couldn’t forget the random and teasing suggestions that Rex gave us either.

“I love stories of Phillip doing weird things because he likes you too much, Viola.”

“Yes, I know that.”

“Has anything like that happened recently?”

“No. I’m telling the truth! The only things I can think of are Phil falling sick because he was thinking about me too much and Little Vio only able to say ‘Viola, I love you!’ for a whole week.”

“Er, that’s more than interesting enough. Viola, your standards for what’s interesting or not have become messed up,” Rex laughed. “Man, you two are the best. Phillip’s as awesome today as he always is.”

“Viola, here you are.”

As Rex and I conversed, I noticed Phil walking toward us. Looking at him now, with his body covered up in a black suit, he seemed so much cooler than anyone else in the room. All of the nearby women were staring at Phil, their faces flushed a pale pink. Phil made his way to my side and smiled, looking

relieved.

“I’m sorry that I left you alone for so long,” he said.

“It’s all right. Have you finished speaking with Prince Lucas?”

“Yes. He said that he might have a rather troublesome job for me some time in the near future.”

“Ah, my boss told me something similar the other day. I can take a guess at what the job is, though,” Rex said.

A rather troublesome job that would involve *both* Phil and Rex? I tilted my head to the side as I pondered what it could be.

“Speaking of which,” Rex said as he looked down at Phil’s hands, “Phillip, what’s up with you? You’ve been wiping your hands the entire time. Did you kill someone?”

I started to cough at Rex’s question. Wasn’t there any other way he could’ve phrased his question?

However, truthfully, I’d also been curious about Phil’s strange behavior. Ever since he returned to our side, he’d been rubbing at his hands with a wet towel. He looked down a little sadly and handed the towel to a nearby servant.

“Marchioness Hayden held my hand. More like, she grabbed onto it,” he said after a pause.

“Oof, how tragic. She loves young men, so I’d be careful if I were you,” Rex said, looking at Phil with a pitying gaze before he gave him a pat on the head.

Like Rex said, Marchioness Hayden had a preference for young men and I’d heard my fair share of rumors about her.

“Plus, Phillip, you’ve always been very fastidious about how you treat women,” Rex continued.

“Yeah,” Phil said.

Rex was right. Phil had never enjoyed physical contact with other women. Even in the past when he escorted me around at parties, he would let go of my hand as soon as he could so I’d been under the impression he disliked touching

me as well. It was only later that I learned that, in my case at least, he was simply too embarrassed to hold my hand for very long.

“All right, Viola, go and slap that marchioness,” Rex said.

“She makes me angry but that’s going a bit too far,” I said.

“Phillip’s still popular with the ladies, so you shouldn’t let them think you’re a pushover.”

“Well, yes, but...”

Phil had always been popular, whether it was in school or in high society. Not only that, but it was clear to anyone with eyes that he and I weren’t on good terms. So there were plenty of ladies who tried to approach him. Phil’s attitude was so cold that people referred to him as the Icy Noble, so he dealt with their advances by simply shooing them away. But apparently, there were a lot of girls who *liked* that side of him.

Now that I knew more about who Phil was on the inside, his nickname was so unlike him that it made me laugh. In saying that though, even after our relationship took a turn for the better, there were still many women who wanted to draw his attention to them. It was also true that their existence caused an uncomfortable stirring in my chest.

My expression must’ve reflected how I was feeling, because Phil looked at me, his face resembling that of a kicked puppy’s.

“I’m sorry. I warned her off and did my best to wipe off my hands, so please don’t hate me.”

“Of course. There’s no way I’d hate you.”

Though I was irritated at Marchioness Hayden, Phil didn’t do anything wrong. If I had to assign blame, I’d say I was more at fault because I seemed like a weak-willed fiancée that they could walk all over. It made me reflect on my past actions and behavior, and I once again steeled my resolve to work harder for our future.

Rex tilted his head to the side and hummed as he stared at us. “I dunno how to say it, but you guys seriously seem too normal. Even though you finally

reciprocated Phil's overly complicated feelings after so many years of misunderstandings, you two don't seem very lovey-dovey."

"Mind your own business," I said.

"Be more affectionate with each other! Most couples would be going through their honeymoon phase right about now."

In my opinion, Phil and I were progressing at a great pace in our relationship. However, to tell the truth, Jamie had also commented on how we didn't feel "lovey-dovey" enough. Just what exactly did they mean by "lovey-dovey"?

I stared up at Phil's face in silence. Perhaps he was also of the same opinion as Jamie and Rex? But it was a bit too embarrassing to ask him that directly. For starters, I had no idea how Phil and I should go on dates after we realized our feelings for each other. Though I read lots of romance novels, I wasn't too familiar with real-life relationships.

Of course, since even a child knew more about romance than Phil did, I was confident that when it came to matters of love, I was the expert between us.

"Viola?" Phil said after I stared at him for too long.

"Ah, I'm sorry. I was thinking about something."

In any case, there was no use worrying about this right now. I'd need to find some time soon to discuss this with Jamie. Phil looked like he was still bothered about what happened earlier with Marchioness Hayden, so I held his hand in a tight grip.

Operation: Proposal

“Is coffee all right with you, Rex?”

“It is, thanks.”

After Phillip and I participated in the palace’s garden party together, I had him pass the time before my next errand with me in a café.

“Say ‘ahh,’” a man said next to me.

“Oh, you! It’s too embarrassing to do that in public,” the woman with him said.

“Don’t worry about it. I want to do everything for you, sweetcheeks.”

“Hee hee, oh, Johnny. Ahh.”

“Ha ha, you’re so cute.”

The couple next to us was flirting like crazy. *It’s enough to give a guy heartburn*, I thought as I sipped my black coffee. As I did so, I noticed Phillip, who was sitting across from me, staring at the two of them.

“What, you wanna do that with Viola, Phillip?” I asked.

“Yeah.”

I’d only been joking, but he nodded with such a serious expression on his face that I almost spat my drink out all over the table. I barely managed to stop myself, but I still spluttered.

Upon seeing that, Phillip commented, “The way you cough is similar to how Viola does. Is this because you two are cousins?”

What a bizarre thing to say.

I wiped at my mouth with a handkerchief and then looked back up at Phillip. “Well, I figured you’d be interested in that sort of stuff. Though, Viola isn’t the type to do that.”

Since Phillip loved Viola (a little too much), he probably wanted to pass the time with her in a more romantic way. But I couldn’t imagine Viola acting sappy

with Phillip at all.

“How about when it’s just the two of you?” I asked.

“It’s not much different than when we’re with you.”

“Yeah? By the way, how many times have you two kissed?”

“Three times...”

“Wow. I never knew chastity could wear clothes and drink coffee.”

It’d already been a few months since the two of them became a real couple, and yet, they’d only kissed three times? How wholesome. *Too* wholesome, in fact. In my opinion, it was because Viola had a rather frank personality and she’d only recently started to like Phil. Even so, three kisses was far too little. Since I knew how long Phillip loved Viola for, I couldn’t help but feel bad for the guy.

If Phillip wanted to kiss, I was sure that Viola would welcome it. But the most important issue was that Phillip was absolutely hopeless when it came to matters of romance. He could never give voice to what he wanted. In fact, the main reason behind why they couldn’t kiss was probably Phillip himself.

“Well, this is probably a problem that will resolve itself with time, since you two will start to get used to each other and being in a proper relationship. Is there anything else you’re concerned with?”

“What...should I do so that Viola would like me even more?”

Since I hadn’t been able to give Phillip any proper advice, I asked him for anything else I could help him with. Then, that was what Phillip muttered after thinking for a while.

“I think Viola likes you in her own way.”

“I know that. But I want her to like me even more. I never thought that I was such a selfish person. And here I’d been thinking that it was a miracle Viola even returned my feelings.”

“I see. I think it’s a very natural thought to have. Actually, it’s probably better to feel that way.”

I knew for a fact that Viola liked Phillip. However, thanks to Phillip's long and intense years of one-sidedly loving Viola, and how complicated those emotions became the more time passed, there was an imbalance between Phillip's feelings for Viola and Viola's feelings for him. Phillip was definitely able to feel that discrepancy as well. It was a given that he'd feel antsy about it.

"Hmm, I wonder what we can do about that. Maybe we can show her some of your good qualities, or you can try doing something to make her happy?"

"My good qualities...what makes Viola happy..."

"I'm sure that it'll make Viola like you more if she knows how you've been doing things for her because you thought it'd make her happy."

Phillip nodded and said, "I see." Then, he took out a notebook for his pockets and started to jot something down in it.

Even though we were both guys, he was incredibly cute to me. I felt like simply showing Viola this sweet side would be more than enough. I wanted to be of even greater help to him though, so I started to rack my brain.

"Oh, that reminds me," I said. "The other day, when I met with Viola, she told me that a new volume for her favorite series came out. She was going on and on about a proposal that happened in the story."

"You're talking about Volume 34, page 214 of *A Prince Just for Me* ≡?"

"It's terrifying how precise your memory is. Well, anyway, judging by how she was acting, it looked to me like she's interested in proposals. I know you two have been engaged since you were born, but it's almost time for your wedding, isn't it? I think Viola would like it if you properly proposed to her."

"A proposal... I think you might be onto something."

Phillip's eyes widened and he grabbed the notebook again. I felt like I managed to give some proper advice for once. For all my teasing, I sincerely wanted this adorable couple, whom I thought of as my younger siblings, to be happy.

"Apparently, girls dream of the perfect proposal, where they'd receive the perfect ring," I added.

“I see,” Phillip said. He finished writing in his notebook after some time and raised his head, staring at me with a serious expression on his face. “You gave me a lot to think about. Thank you. I’m going to do my best.”

“Mm-hm. I’m rooting for you.”

I wanted Phillip to do his best and succeed. But as I stared at Phillip and how gung-ho he was about whatever idea he had, I couldn’t help but look forward to an exciting and interesting turn of events. I could practically taste it in the air.

That did make me feel a little bad though. So I made sure to apologize to Phillip several times in my heart.

Spinning and Going Around in Circles

Lately, something was up with Phil. He'd been acting bizarre, like he was particularly uneasy about something. I was currently sitting underneath the gazebo in the garden at House Lawrenson's mansion, and Phil was preparing tea for us. However, his movements were more awkward than usual, and it looked like he couldn't settle down. Right when I was about to ask him what the matter was, he placed a teacup in front of me.

"Take your time to calmly and carefully enjoy this tea."

"Carefully? All right, then. Thank you very much."

This was the first time he'd ever given me directions like this. Unsure of how to react, I nodded anyway. Perhaps this was a special tea? It would make sense if he wanted me to properly taste it and simply chose the wrong words to express that.

With that in mind, I immediately placed my lips on the rim of the teacup, ready to savor the flavor, when I noticed Phil staring at me closely with a serious expression on his face. His gaze was so intense I felt like he'd bore holes into me. Did he put *that* much effort into this cup of tea?

"W-Well, I'm going to drink it now," I said.

Nervously, I slowly poured the tea down my throat. It was delicious, of course, but it was the same amount of delicious that it always was. What was so different about this tea? I wondered that as I carefully drained the cup. In the end though, I was so concerned about how Phil never took his eyes off me that I ended up chugging the entire thing. I placed the empty cup onto the table and for some reason, Phil gasped as if surprised.

"You drank...everything?"

"Huh? Uh, yes?"

"You've got to be kidding..."

He looked so shocked that I started to become perplexed. He told me to drink

it, which was exactly what I did. So why was he staring at me like “I can’t believe you drank it”? Perhaps everything he said up to this point was a prelude for “*Don’t drink it.*”

“Um, was this tea something I shouldn’t have drank?” I asked.

“Well, no, it’s fine to drink. But um, there’s something wrong.”

“Huh?”

The answer was so ambiguous that it only deepened the mystery.

“Oh no, don’t tell me...”

After a moment of thought, Phil hurriedly picked up the cooling cup of tea in front of him.

“What?”

He chugged the whole thing and then took out a handkerchief from his pocket. With a curious expression on his face, he held the cloth in front of his mouth and when he took it away, there was a cute ring sitting in the palm of his hand. What was going on? We stared at each other in silence.

“Er, is this a new magic trick?” I asked.

“Something like that...” he said after a long pause.

“Uh, it sure is amazing. This is the first time I’ve ever seen a trick go this way.”

“Yes, I figured...”

I had no idea what he wanted to accomplish by taking a ring out of his mouth and then slumping his shoulders. What happened to him?

Phil was still behaving strangely the next time we met. His face flushed as if he wanted to say something, and he always did things that I would’ve never dreamed of. It was so bizarre that I couldn’t help but ask if everything was all right. Even though Phil would assure me things were, his words came out slowly, as if he had a hard time pushing them out.

Without a doubt, he was hiding something. But I didn’t know what it was or why he was keeping me in the dark.

“Oh, if it isn’t Phillip, the best magician of our generation!”

“I’m begging you to never call me that again.”

It’d been a while since Rex last invited me to eat dinner with him. Once we arrived at our usual restaurant, he looked at my face, immediately burst out laughing, and of all things, called me a *magician*. It seemed that Viola told him what happened the other day. I heaved out a deep sigh and sat down across from Rex.

“Hey, so, what in the world happened for you to pull a ring out of your mouth?”

“I tried to propose to her...”

“Sorry, it looks like my mind is too feeble to understand the situation from that explanation. I can’t seem to tie those dots together.”

Rex looked genuinely befuddled, so I decided to explain everything to him.

“To tell the truth, I purchased a book the other day...”

After Rex gave me advice at the café on how I could get closer to Viola, I decided to propose to Viola in the most romantic way I could think of. So I purchased a book titled *The Ideal Proposal* \equiv *What Girls Want*. As I studied the book, it recommended a method where you would place a replica of a ring inside of a teacup, only for it to pop up after the other person finished drinking the tea. It was a way to spring a surprise proposal onto someone.

According to the book, girls loved surprises more than anything else. So I immediately put the plan into action. In the end, though, I was too nervous and made a fatal mistake. Not only did I fail in my proposal, but the people around me started to think of me as a magician as well.

“In other words... I made a mistake when putting the ring into the teacups.”

“Sorry, I don’t think that was where you made your mistake,” Rex managed to say before he devolved into fits of laughter, tears beginning to form in the corners of his eyes. “Oh, goodness, my stomach! It hurts! Phillip, you’re awesome!”

The waiter who walked over with our food saw the way he was acting and

looked uncomfortable.

“You don’t need to pull tricks like that,” Rex continued after he calmed down. “You can just take her to a fancy restaurant, watch the stars, and propose to her with your own words and feelings. Even when you’re doing nothing but standing around, you’re cooler than anyone else in the kingdom. So long as you act like a normal person, of course.”

Rex was right. I shouldn’t do things I wasn’t used to. “Just be yourself,” as they said. I reflected on these words and where I went wrong.

“In any case, Phillip, you only need to do what you think is best for Viola’s sake. That’s obviously the best way to go about it.”

Rex’s advice was always straight to the point and from an angle I would have never come up with on my own. I once again took out my notebook and wrote down what he just said.

“Hey, did you try some of the other suggestions you wrote down in that book?”

“Yes, but how did you know?”

“Viola was seriously worried about you. She said that you’ve been acting weird lately. C’mon, tell me what else you tried. I’m gonna be so curious that I won’t be able to sleep at night if you don’t.”

“Sure, I don’t mind telling you.”

I’d failed in all my attempts to propose to her, and yet Viola was so worried about me she went to consult Rex. I simply wanted her to be happy, so I felt bad I was causing her so much anxiety. After that, I regaled Rex with tales of my past attempts and he laughed so hard he never finished his meal.

After I returned home, I went straight to my room. Cedric immediately walked in with Vio in hand. I often left my brother or the servants in charge of Vio while I was away so that she didn’t get lonely. She was popular with the maids and butlers, and they told me that they even argued over who got to feed her or take her on walks.

“Welcome home, Phil.”

“Yes, thank you.”

“I’M SO STUPID...” Vio suddenly interrupted. I stared at her in shock.

“Little Vio’s been saying stuff like that all day,” Cedric said with a laugh as he placed Vio onto my arm. The bird looked a little upset.

It looked like she’d picked up the words I’d unconsciously mutter to myself every time I failed in my proposal. She had trouble remembering the things I wanted her to say and yet, she often memorized my random murmurings and repeated them despite my attempts to stop her. Training a parrot was so difficult.

But I’d heard that it was thanks to Vio that Viola finally believed in my feelings for her. I gratefully ran my fingers over Vio’s warm and soft feathers.

“Oh, yeah, Little Vio was going on about marriage. What have you two been talking about?”

“Is that any of your business?”

“Considering it’s *you* we’re talking about, I’m guessing that you’ve been practicing how to propose to someone by yourself.” I didn’t say anything, and my sharp little brother took that as a confirmation. He sighed as if weary of my hopelessness. ““Will you marry me?’ It’s that simple. Just say it.”

“If I could, then things wouldn’t be so complicated, would they?”

A proposal wasn’t the same as telling Viola I loved her. I unconsciously tensed up with nerves every time I thought about it.

Cedric lightly shrugged his shoulders and shook his head. “You’re as pathetic as ever. Whenever you’re not around Viola, you’re so cool. I remember how you were able to stand up to those old men at the soiree the other night.”

“How could you expect me to ignore what they were saying?”

There were plenty of people in the upper echelons of nobility who valued their bloodline more than anything else in the world. This was especially prominent in families with a long history. A lot of people among them truly believed that high-ranking nobles should only marry other high-ranking nobles.

The other night, while I was at a soiree, an old man complained to me about my upcoming marriage with Viola. He was of the opinion that we weren't suitable for each other, as I was the son of a duke and Viola was the daughter of a viscount. The man seemed drunk. But not only did he insult House Westley, he also tried to pair me up with his own granddaughter. I could no longer hold my tongue at that.

"Shut up," I'd said.

I'd always been the type to quietly listen to my elders, so as soon as the words came out of my mouth, the hall fell silent. But how could I stand by idly while they spoke badly of Viola? When I told the man that I would not stand for further criticism of my fiancée, with no room to misinterpret my words, he looked like he sobered in an instant and tried to play it off as a joke before he scurried off.

"Joke or not, I will never forgive anyone who insults the most important person in my life,' right? Man, I wish I could show Viola how cool you looked that night."

"I'm glad she wasn't there."

Viola had always seemed self-conscious about the gap in our statuses. There was no need for her to hear what the man said, since it would only hurt her in the end.

"Well, that's what I like about you, Phil. I'm sure Viola would agree with me." Cedric smiled after he said that and then he stroked Vio on the head. He bid us good night and then left the room.

Vio reacted to Cedric's "good night" and tilted her head to the side. "Has Viola gone to sleep? Good night!"

"When did you learn how to say that?"

The fact that she could remember things I unconsciously muttered was scary, especially since I couldn't predict when she would repeat them. I gave Vio a few more pets before I returned her to her cage.

Next time, I'll learn from my mistakes and Rex's teachings, and give Viola a proper proposal.

With that thought in mind, I picked up Volume 34 of *A Prince Just for Me* ≡
and sat down in my chair.

Fake It to Break It! I Faked Amnesia to Break Off My Engagement and Now He's All
Lovey-Dovey?! Volume 2
by Kotoko

Translated by Stephanie Liu
Edited by Ruuri

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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TAIDO DATTA KONYAKUSHA GA "KIOKU WO USHINAU MAE NO KIMI WA, ORE
NI BETABORE DATTA" TOIU, TONDEMONAI USO WO TSUKIHAJIMETA Vol. 2

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Change

“A ceremony to celebrate the centenary of our Treaty of Peace and Friendship with the Samarind Empire?” I asked.

“Yes. It should take place three months from now,” Phil replied.

We were sitting across from each other in a café within the capital of the kingdom, having tea together. I had plans to shop with Jamie afterward, and Phil still had work to finish in the palace, so we would have to bid farewell to each other in about thirty minutes. It was unfortunate that we wouldn’t be able to chat for too long.

“During the dinner party yesterday, I was told that the next generation of the upper echelons of nobility should attend the ceremony.”

“Oh, I see.”

Apparently, this was what the prince had wanted to discuss with Phil during the ball the other day. The ceremony that would take place in three months was a very important event for our country.

In the past, we had had an antagonistic relationship with the neighboring Samarind Empire, and war even broke out between us. However, we’d been allies since we signed the Treaty of Peace and Friendship a hundred years ago. On paper, anyway, we were friends.

In terms of strength, though, the Samarind Empire was far more powerful than us. We also relied on their imports for some of our resources. I heard that those two factors contributed to our country having to bow to their demands more often than not. That was precisely why we had to give the Samarind ambassador the royal treatment. The main focus for the ceremony was to improve the conditions of our trade deal, as well as the support we receive from them.

“It looks like I’ll be busy for some time. I might not be able to meet with you as often,” Phil said.

“I understand. Please take care of your health and don’t push yourself,” I

replied.

“I will, thank you.”

Ever since we became a real couple, I started to meet with Phil more. It became a given that I'd be able to spend time with him, so the idea that I wouldn't be able to do so until the ceremony ended was a lonely one. But I knew that the matter was out of our hands and I managed to smile at Phil. My tutor, Miss Patricia, once told me that it was important for a woman to be understanding if they wanted to be the wife of a man with authority.

While Phil's busy, I'll improve my skills as both a wife and a socialite, and work hard on the tasks allotted to me. I wanted to eventually become someone he could count on. This ambition filled me with the resolve to better myself.

“Viola.” He suddenly called my name and I looked up at him. Phil was staring at me with a serious expression as he continued, “There's something I'd like to tell you after we finish the ceremony.”

He stared straight at me, the color of his gaze reminiscent of melted honey. My heart started to beat faster under his keen attention.

“All right. I'll be waiting for you.”

“Thank you.”

I didn't know what he wanted to talk to me about, but I nodded anyway.

A month had passed in the blink of an eye. Phil was so busy preparing for the upcoming ceremony that I hadn't been able to meet with him for days now. He'd written me a letter once, but even in writing I could tell how busy he was, so I simply reminded him to be mindful of his health in my reply to him. I was far more lonely than I had imagined I would be, but I had to put up with it.

On my end, I actively participated in high society gatherings and worked hard on my lessons that would help me be a better housewife. I worked my best on what I thought I could do to prepare myself for marriage. It would take a lot of time and work to become a proper duchess.

Today, I was working on my embroidery with Jamie, who dropped by to visit.

“Wow, Viola, you’ve improved a lot.”

“Really? I’m glad to hear that.”

“Yeah, I’m sure that the thread and pieces of cloth that died so miserably in the past are happy that their sacrifices weren’t in vain.”

I had no idea what to say to that. Jamie was looking down at the handkerchief in my hands with a happy expression on her face. It was hard to tell if I should interpret her comment as a compliment or an insult. Jamie had always been good at embroidery and, lately, she’d been coming over to tutor me on it.

“I’m serious. It’s like you’re a whole different person that I’m surprised how far you’ve come,” she continued.

“Thank you.”

Thanks to all the work I’d been putting into my studies, I felt like my handicrafts were a lot easier on the eyes compared to before. Phil was still holding on to the ugly handkerchief I’d gifted him as if it was some sort of treasure. So I wanted to give him something new and nicer at some point in the near future.

“By the way, do you know what this is?” I asked Jamie.

“An eggplant, right?”

“It’s a parrot.”

The only thing that was the same between what I made and Jamie’s guess was the color. Compared to when people thought my embroidery was a cute worm though, I felt like this was a vast improvement.

We continued to work in silence. Selma, my maid, came in to prepare some tea for us. We decided to take a break from our work and moved to the table.

“Oh, that reminds me, it seemed that someone came by earlier. Has Father returned?” I asked Selma.

“Yes, Viscount Westley came by from the viscountcy. He appears to be very busy today so he returned to his work immediately, but he dropped off quite a few apples before he did.”

“I see.”

My father had been busy lately as well. To try and ease some of his workload, I’d sometimes appeared at social gatherings in his place.

“Lady Viola, what do you think about making desserts this afternoon? You could use the apples to bake a pie,” Selma said.

“That sounds like a wonderful idea. Let’s do that. Jamie, does that sound all right to you?” I asked.

“Yes, of course. I wanted to see how much you’ve improved your baking too.”

Back when we were in school together, Jamie often compared the snacks I made to pig feed. However, lately, my snacks had become fit for human consumption. In retrospect, I couldn’t help but worry about Phil’s health, since he’d eaten the disastrous failures I’d made in the past. I heard that food could affect somebody even years after the fact, so if any side effects were going to occur, they’d start to appear around now.

“I’ll go prepare the kitchen.”

“Thank you, Selma. We’ll be there soon.”

After Jamie and I finished our tea, we went to the kitchen and started to work on the apple pie. It took us three hours to prepare and bake it. When we opened the oven door, a sweet scent filled the kitchen and our hearts began to race.

“It looks really good,” I said.

“Yeah, I’m sure it’ll be delicious,” Jamie agreed.

Since I was the one who made the apple pie, even though it was baked to golden brown perfection, it still looked a little ugly. I took a bite to taste it and it was scrumptious. That was mostly attributed to Jamie and the head chef’s help, though. Right when Jamie and I moved to the parlor to eat the freshly baked apple pie, a maid suddenly handed me a letter.

“Hmm? What’s this?” I asked.

“A letter for you, Lady Viola. From Lord Rex Dowland.”

“Huh, he almost never sends me letters. Thank you.”

Like the maid said, Rex’s name was written on the back of the envelope. Despite how ridiculous his antics usually were, his penmanship was neat and sophisticated. Phil also had nice penmanship. Anyway, it was rare of Rex to send me letters. Usually, he came by to tell me anything he had to say directly. So I could tell from the fact that he had to resort to written correspondence that he, too, was very busy.

I sat down with Jamie and opened the envelope. In the letter, Rex wrote that he was so busy, it felt like he’d been imprisoned in the palace and sentenced to labor. So he wanted me to go to the palace and see him. Since Phil was also working in the palace, I’d be able to see him as well. Rex added at the end of the letter that my visit would undoubtedly make Phil happy.

“What did Lord Rex say?” Jamie asked.

“He said he wants me to drop by the palace.”

I summarized for Jamie the contents of the letter. She smiled happily with an “Oh my” and then grabbed my hand.

“We should go!” she said.

“Huh? Where?” I asked.

“To the palace, of course!”

“Wait, are you serious? Now?”

“Yes. You managed to bake this wonderfully delicious apple pie, so it’s the perfect snack to give them. I’m sure Lord Phillip will be happy to see you. Come on, we need to hurry up and prepare!”

Jamie seemed really excited. Going to the palace now seemed a little too spontaneous. But I preferred to go with Jamie and bring a gift over dropping by alone.

“Thank you. I’d be delighted if you’d go with me,” I said.

We asked one of the maids to wrap up the apple pie for us and started to prepare for the outing.

We arrived at the palace an hour later, the basket containing the apple pie in hand. We told one of the guards that we were here to see Rex and Phil, and he took us to the meeting room they were in. As soon as we knocked on the elegant door, Rex poked his head out with a happy smile.

“Ah, Vivi, you dropped by so soon. I knew I could count on you, my sweet angel.”

“Your sweet angel? This is the first time you’ve ever called me that.”

“Huh? Really? I guess I’ve never said it out loud.”

Though I was worried that Rex was exhausted from his workload, it looked like he still had enough energy to spout his usual nonsense.

“Ah, Lady Jamie, you visited too? You’re an oasis in this man desert,” Rex continued.

“Hee hee, flattery won’t get you anywhere, you know?”

With their conversation in the background, I looked around the room. When he noticed what I was doing, Rex chuckled.

“If you’re looking for Phillip, he’s over there.”

I followed his line of sight and saw Phil giving orders to a group of people, documents in hand.

“He’s amazing. He’s such a great worker that I’d love to have him at *my* usual workplace,” Rex continued.

“Really? I didn’t expect anything less from him.”

“Phillip’s always been impossibly capable at anything he sets his mind to. It’s only when it comes to matters involving you that he turns useless.”

Rex was right. Until the incident with my fake amnesia, I’d been under the impression that Phillip was perfect in every way. Granted, the version I knew now was far more likable. If I remembered correctly, this was my first time seeing Phil at work. Even though I could only see his side profile, his expression was so serious and cool that I found myself staring.

“He doesn’t give me preferential treatment either. Phillip’s so strict, it makes me wanna cry,” Rex sighed.

“Lord Phillip sure looks cool when he’s acting all serious like this,” Jamie said. “And look, Viola can’t take her eyes off him. How cute.”

“Oh, come on, stop making fun of me,” I said.

Though I could feel Rex and Jamie’s warm gazes on me, I continued to stare at Phil in the distance. But then, he suddenly turned to look in our direction and our eyes met. Phil had been completely expressionless, however, he smiled the instant he saw me.

The change was so sudden and so dramatic it made my heart skip a beat. Even the men around Phil looked shocked. Phil placed the documents he was holding on to the table and walked straight toward us. When he stopped in front of me, he rubbed at his eyes for some reason and blinked a few times.

“Phil?” I said.

After I called his name, he gently placed his hand on my shoulder and murmured, “You’re really here.”

What kind of reaction is that?

“I’m sorry,” he continued. “I didn’t think that you would come. I feared that my desire to see you was so bad that I started to hallucinate.”

“Ah ha ha, you’re so weird.”

It seemed that Rex never told Phil about the letter he wrote me. It made me ridiculously happy how he missed me so much that he mistook me for a figment of his imagination.

“I truly wanted to see you more than anything else in the world,” he murmured before he rested his head on my shoulder.

Since it was more than just us in the room, it was quite embarrassing, to tell the truth. It was also very rare for him to touch me like this in front of others.



But perhaps his uncharacteristic behavior was a testament to just how exhausted he was.

“I wanted to see you as well,” I said after hesitating for a brief moment.

He wrapped his arms around my back as if he was clinging onto me. It had only been a month, but I also felt like much more time had passed. So I knew exactly how he felt, and thus, couldn't bring myself to shrug him off.

“Um, I've brought you a snack too. It's a homemade apple pie. I hope you enjoy it.”

“Thank you. That's very thoughtful of you.”

“Ah, but I can't hand it to you like this, so could you...”

As I said that, I gently pushed at Phil's shoulder but he didn't let me go. No matter how many times I tried to extricate myself from his arms, he refused to budge so I gently cupped his face in my hands and lifted it from my shoulder. However, the moment I let go, he lowered his head again.

“Phillip, you're like a baby with how your neck muscles can't support your head. How adorable,” Rex laughed upon seeing the state Phil was in.

“My, oh my,” Jamie said, looking at us with an awfully gentle look in her eyes.

Their reactions made the situation even more embarrassing than it already was. I finally managed to pull Phil off of me after a few more minutes and as soon as I did so, I handed him the basket containing the apple pie.

“It doesn't look very good, but I guarantee that it tastes good,” I said.

“Thank you. I'll treasure every single bite I take.”

“Good. You're welcome.”

I was a little embarrassed at how happy my gift made him. I definitely had to make something again and give it to him. As soon as I decided on that, the sound of knocking echoed through the room.

“Come in,” Rex said.

A man entered the room and though no one said anything, I could tell we were all confused by who he was. His sharp features and dark skin were striking, and the air he gave off did not feel like someone from this country. The man offered us a deep and elegant bow before he smiled softly.

“Hello, everyone. It’s a pleasure to meet you all. My name is Warren, the attendant of the princess of the Samarind Empire. Is Lord Phillip Lawrenson present?”

“The Samarind Empire’s...?”

Everyone in the meeting room started to murmur among themselves at the sudden appearance of the foreign princess’s attendant. The fact that for some reason, the man named Warren asked for Phil off the bat was also strange. In the midst of all the confusion, Rex remained calm and quickly jumped into action. He bowed back to Warren and immediately gestured for him to sit in a nearby chair.

“I’d heard that the princess was going to come to the ceremony as the ambassador for Samarind. However, if my memory serves me correctly, she’s supposed to come a month from now,” Rex said.

“Yes, that was the original plan. However, the princess insisted that she wanted to bring forward those plans...”

Bringing forward plans that were supposed to take place a month from now is a fairly difficult task, isn’t it? Judging by how exhausted the man’s expression was, I could tell that he must have worked very hard to make this happen for the princess.

“I see. By the way, what business do you have with Phillip Lawrenson?” Rex asked.

“Well, the princess said that she would love to meet with him,” Warren explained. “In fact, meeting him was the reason that she wanted to arrive a month in advance.”

“Huh?”

At those words, Phil, standing next to me, looked surprised. Rex, Jamie, and I couldn’t hide our shock either. *What kind of relationship did Phil have with the princess from a neighboring country?*

“I’m truly sorry for the trouble it’ll cause you, but could you make some time later?”

“No—”

“Of course, I’ll have him drop by later.”

Phil had been about to reject on instinct, but Rex interrupted and replied for him. The attendant looked relieved and smiled.

“Thank you so much. I look forward to seeing you later.” He bowed once again before he left the meeting room.

As soon as the door closed with a soft noise, the room was filled with silence. No one knew what to say or how to act after such a sudden turn of events. Unsurprisingly, Rex was the first person to break the silence.

“Man, that was a surprise, wasn’t it? Phillip, what’s your relationship with Her Highness?”

“I don’t know her at all. I’d never even met her.”

“Yeah, right. She brought forward her plans just for you, you know? Something must’ve happened between you two in the past.”

“I’m telling the truth. I don’t even know her name, let alone what she looks like.”

It looked like Phil was serious when he said he had no idea about her, and he tilted his head to the side. But judging by what Warren said, it was clear that the princess, at the very least, had affections for Phil.

“Hey, Lord Phillip! Don’t mess around. Cheating is unforgivable,” Jamie said.

“That’s a given,” Phil replied. “Besides, any woman other than Viola looks the same to me.”

“I don’t think that’s something to be proud of.”

“Well, Phil *is* the last person you’d need to worry about when it comes to cheating,” Rex laughed.

“Viola, please believe in me,” Phil said.

“Of course. I don’t suspect you of anything,” I replied.

I didn’t think he was cheating at all, nor did I doubt his feelings for me. I was confident in how deep his love for me was. However, I was also sure that I

shouldn't be too arrogant and take advantage of those feelings.

"In any case, the princess is an honored guest and an ambassador, so don't be rude to her. Remember to pay her a visit later," Rex said.

"Fine..." Phil sighed with a small nod, though it took him a long time to agree. His face made it clear that he was not looking forward to it. "For now, I'd like some time to rest so that I can focus on eating this apple pie."

"Ha ha, you're right. Let's all take a break," Rex agreed.

It looked like Phil wasn't thinking about his upcoming meeting with the princess at all. He was cradling the basket containing the apple pie to his chest so carefully, it was like he was holding a baby.

"Hee hee."

The laugh tumbled out of me from the sheer relief at how he was the same as always. However, there was a bad feeling in my chest. It was like a premonition that something would happen, or that something would change. Unfortunately, my intuition was always only accurate in times like this.

The Princess's Favorite

“This is Her Highness Adele Mira Samarind, the third princess of the Samarind Empire.”

After I savored the apple pie that Viola made, I walked her and Lady Preston to their carriage outside. Then, I visited the room for honored guests with Rex. The attendant who had visited the meeting room earlier introduced us to the princess and the person who greeted me was such a surprise that I only barely managed to bite back my sound of surprise.

“Greetings, Phillip. My name is Adele. I’ve wanted to meet you for the longest time!”

Princess Adele sat on the sofa, an elegant smile on her face. Her long blonde hair and big pink eyes made a lasting impression. However, what was surprising about her was that she wasn’t a woman. Rather, she was a child, about five or six years old. Her hands were balled in her lap and she was staring at me, eyes sparkling like jewels.



It appeared that not even Rex, who was standing next to me, saw this coming. He was staring at Princess Adele with obvious surprise on his face. However, no

matter how old she was, she was still the princess of a large and powerful empire. I bowed my head and opened my mouth.

“Princess Adele, it is a pleasure to make your acquaintance. My name is Phillip Lawrenson.”

“Oh, my! Even your voice is lovely!”

Princess Adele giggled excitedly in a childish manner. Well, she *was* a child, after all. In any case, Princess Adele seemed beside herself with joy, and the woman next to her smiled and stroked her hair.

“I’m glad that you’re enjoying your meeting with him,” the woman said before she turned to look at me. “I’m sorry for how sudden this all is. My name is Luna Mira Samarind. I am the second princess of the Samarind Empire, as well as Adele’s older sister. Thank you for having us.”

It appeared that the ambassador was the second princess. Princess Adele, who was five years old, simply accompanied her on her trip. Princess Luna looked to be the same age as me and she had what most would consider a beautiful face. However, in my opinion, Viola was the cutest person in the entire world.

“She’s been looking forward to meeting you since we told her we’d be coming here for the ceremony,” Princess Luna continued.

“Why me?” I asked after a pause. I had no idea why the princess would be interested in me. While I *did* visit the Samarind Empire last year, I didn’t recall seeing or meeting with Princess Adele.

“Warren, you know what to do,” Princess Luna said.

“Understood.” The attendant nodded at Princess Luna’s order and then he took out a picture book. “Once upon a time...”

He suddenly began to read the picture book to us for some reason. At the same time, next to me, Rex lowered his face. His shoulders were shaking slightly and it was obvious that he was stifling his laughter.

Though I had no idea where any of this was going, I was sure that there must be an important meaning behind Warren’s actions, so I held my tongue and

continued to listen. The picture book's story was a common fairy tale following a princess and a foreign prince overcoming various trials and tribulations together before they finally found happiness.

"And then the two lived happily ever after. The end."

Warren finally finished reading the story. Even after hearing the whole thing, it still felt like a normal picture book to me. I didn't know how to react, so for the time being, I copied the princesses and clapped my hands.

"That was a deeply moving tale," Rex said. He didn't seem to mean it.

"Isn't it simply lovely?" Princess Adele said.

"It is. So, what does that picture book have to do with me?" I asked.

"Oh, dear, Phillip, you haven't noticed yet? The prince here looks just like you."

After she said that, Princess Adele pointed to the prince on the cover of the book. I had to admit that we shared the same hair and eye color, but I couldn't tell if we looked identical or not.

"Around this time last year, my hat was blown away by the wind but you picked it up for me! It's just like how the prince and the princess met in this story, isn't it?" Princess Adele continued.

I did remember that happening, though I didn't know whose hat I'd picked up. I hadn't been thinking too hard about my action at the time. Never in my wildest imagination did I expect the hat to have belonged to the third princess, though.

"From the moment I saw you, I couldn't help but think that you're the exact image of a prince."

It appeared that I reminded Princess Adele of the prince from her favorite picture book. She may be the princess of a powerful empire, but she was still only five years old. It wasn't surprising that she'd still view the world through rose-tinted glasses.

"To tell the truth, this is my first time traveling abroad!" Princess Adele continued. "I hope we can be friends, Phillip."

She gave me a bright and innocent smile after she said that. Though I was still a little unsure of the situation, I could only nod my head and say, “Yes, so do I.”

“Man, Prince Phillip, you sure are a lady-killer.”

“I’m not a prince.”

The moment we left the room, Rex turned to me with a huge smile and placed his hand on my shoulder.

“Considering you have Viola, I worried that the princess was in love with you and that we’d have to deal with a really problematic love triangle. I guess I was anxious over nothing.”

The princess in question was a five-year-old kid. It was clear that Princess Adele didn’t have any romantic feelings for me and simply wanted to be my friend. If she was someone closer to our age, then things might’ve been a lot more troublesome, like Rex feared.

“Kids are so cute, dreaming of princes from fairy tales,” Rex said.

“Yeah.”

“Phillip, you’re not a fan of kids?”

“I neither like nor dislike them. I simply don’t know how to interact with them.”

However, Princess Adele’s smile earlier sort of reminded me of how Viola used to smile when she was younger. That was why I couldn’t help but nod when she told me that she wanted to be friends.

“Speaking of which, I heard that until last year, the third princess of the Samarind Empire was sick and stuck in bed. Those rumors were probably about Princess Adele.” After Rex said that, he turned and looked back at the door to the room for honored guests.

“Thank you for picking this up. This is a very important hat to me.”

I vaguely recalled the girl I handed the hat to in Samarind had been in a wheelchair. She’d seemed so energetic earlier that it was hard to believe she’d

been sick.

“That’s probably why they decided to listen to Her Highness’s request, even if it’s a bit selfish. She’s made a full recovery now, but she was probably telling the truth when she said that this is her first international trip. So make sure you play nice.”

“All right...”

After hearing that story and after seeing how brightly she’d smiled at me, there was no way I could be cold to her. Besides, it was part of our job to act as their tour guides while they were here.

It’s going to get even busier tomorrow. With that thought in mind, I returned to the meeting room. However...

“Phillip, let’s go for a walk together! Oh, and here’s a snack! And let’s eat dinner together tonight! That’s a promise, all right?”

It didn’t get busier the next day. Instead, it got busier only several hours after meeting her and I had to spend the rest of my day at Princess Adele’s side.

The Beginning of the Misunderstandings

“Heyo, Vivi.”

One night, a week after Jamie and I visited the palace, Rex suddenly appeared at my house. Exhaustion was evident on his handsome face. As soon as he sat down on the sofa in my room, he let out a deep sigh.

“Ahh, I’m so tired. Seriously. I don’t wanna be a human anymore.”

“What do you intend on becoming, if not a human?” I asked.

“I wanna become a parrot whose only job is to bully Phillip,” Rex replied. When I didn’t say anything in response to that, he continued, “Doesn’t it sound super fun?”

Rex always acted in such a breezy and lackadaisical manner, so it was rare to see him so weary. I could tell that the past few days had been extremely busy for him. There were quite a few maids under my family’s employment who were fans of Rex, they’d surely be sad if they saw him in this state. That was why I decided to pour him some tea myself. I chose leaves that were supposed to be good for recovering from exhaustion.

After I prepared the tea, Rex took a sip and said, “Huh? It tastes normal.”

His surprise was rude. Not even I could burn tea or make it explode. All I could do was render it flavorless sometimes.

“Thanks for the tea,” he said.

“You’re welcome. Has work really been that difficult lately?”

Rex nodded multiple times. “The old farts higher up on the ladder have been saying that they want the younger generation to take center stage in this year’s ceremony. But in truth, they’re just pushing the work onto us because it’s more convenient for them. I’ve been slacking off whenever I can, but you know how serious Phillip is. He takes on any task they give him, so I’m worried that he’ll explode from the stress soon.”

Like Rex said, Phil was usually a very earnest person. I worried that Rex’s

prediction would come true and Phil would end up collapsing from overwork.

“You know, Phil was supposed to come today. But the princess grabbed him before he could,” Rex continued.

“The princess?”

“Yeah. They’re probably eating dinner together by now. You haven’t heard anything about Her Highness?”

“I’d heard that he was busy spending time with her...”

Like I’d thought, the princess really liked Phil. In a letter he wrote me a few days ago, he’d mentioned that he was really busy not only with his usual work, but also with guiding the princess around the kingdom.

“The princess—still—Truthfully, I—From dusk till dawn, I have to be in the palace and—always with the princess and—That’s how I’ve been spending my days. I’ve been busy with her and work—”

Granted, on the day that the aforementioned letter arrived, a storm had caused a small flood in the carriage containing it. The water had blotched out the ink, erasing parts of Phil’s words. Even so, I was able to grasp the general idea of what he wanted to say, so I didn’t think too hard about it.

“Actually, those two are really funny together. I really wanna show you their interactions, Viola,” Rex said.

“The princess seems like a very cheery person.”

“Yeah. She and Phillip are both as innocent as children, with hardly any common sense between them. Her Highness is super cute.”

Rex often said that all women are cute, but it was very rare of him to compliment a specific woman with that word. Considering he used the word “innocent,” the princess must be a very straightforward and adorable lady.

For this visit, the princess arrived as an official ambassador for the Samarind Empire. Since this could affect the future relationship between our countries, we couldn’t afford doing anything that would offend her. There was still a little over a month and a half until the ceremony. Considering how much work Rex and Phil had to put in during that time, I couldn’t stop worrying about their

health.

“Is there anything I can do to help?” I asked.

“Your most important job is to raise Phillip’s spirits. He keeps complaining about how much he misses you. Well, he complains, like fifty times a day, so I don’t even respond to him anymore.”

“Hee hee. Tell him that I want to meet him too.”

“All right. We should be able to get a day off next week, so give him as many hugs and kisses as he requests then. I’m gonna get some shut-eye, ’kay?”

After Rex said that, he collapsed onto the sofa and within seconds, I could hear the slow and steady breathing of sleep. I knew he was exhausted, but I didn’t realize just how tired he was until now. I carefully placed my jacket over Rex and then started to pen a letter to Phil.

“I hear that the princess ambassador of Samarind is as beautiful as a goddess, and that she’s very trendy. Everything she wears is from the latest styles abroad.”

“Oh, my, I didn’t know that. Maybe I should ask my husband to buy me some of the same clothes as Her Highness.”

That was the conversation I overheard from the table next to us. Selma and I were in a café that we’d decided to rest in after shopping one afternoon. It seemed that the topic of the conversation was the foreign princess.

“I hear that she’s very smart, as well as being a shrewd politician. But despite everything, she’s still incredibly humble.”

“She sounds like a wonderful woman.”

The women next to us weren’t the only people interested in gossip about the princess. She was the talk of high society lately as well. Everyone in the kingdom had their eyes on the beautiful, noble, and perfect lady.

“Apparently, she’s still single. Perhaps she’ll find someone for her in the kingdom.”

When I heard one of the women next to us say that, I felt my heart skip a beat. I wasn't doubting Phil's feelings. However, the thought of him spending so much time with such a beautiful and perfect woman—a woman who had a very high opinion of Phil as well—made an uncomfortable feeling churn in my chest.

Selma must've noticed something wrong because she smiled at me and said, "Lady Viola, would you like to go look at some new dresses after this? Tomorrow's your long-awaited date with Lord Phillip, so why don't we doll you up even more than usual?"

"Yes, thank you. To tell the truth, there's a new dress I'm interested in looking at."

Tomorrow, Phil would finally have a day off, and we'd decided to go on a date. He must've been tired after so many days straight of work, but he insisted that he wanted to see me on his break. That wish made me happier than anything else.

I'll only think about Phil tomorrow and enjoy our time together.

With that resolve in mind, I stabbed my fork into the cake, garnished with a large strawberry.

Long Time No Date

The following day, Phil came by the manor to pick me up, and we sat in House Lawrenson's carriage together. As soon as he saw me, he repeated "You look so cute today" so many times that I flushed with embarrassment. Even so, it made me happy, and glad that I'd put in extra effort in my makeup and clothing.

"I feel like I haven't seen you in years," Phil said.

"I feel the same way. Thank you for coming to see me, even though you've been so busy."

"Whether I can see you or not is a life-or-death matter for me. I truly missed you." After he said that, Phil pushed his face against my shoulder.

Though it wasn't proper, my hand had been resting on the chair, but he picked it up and enveloped it in his large, warm hand. My heart skipped a beat at the sensation. It was rare of Phil to seek affection like this. I was a little curious about his relationship with the princess, but it didn't seem like a good idea to talk about work on his day off, so I held my tongue.

Instead, I gently threaded our fingers together and Phil huffed out a quiet laugh.

"You've cured my exhaustion," he said.

"But, you really *are* tired, aren't you? Wouldn't it be better if we relaxed together in the mansion as usual...?"

"Thank you for your consideration. But there's somewhere I'd like to visit today."

On my end, I obviously enjoyed going out with Phil. But more than that, I was worried about his body, since he'd been working for so long without a single rest day I wondered where he wanted to go that was so important he'd push himself like this.

Despite my curiosity, Phil didn't answer any of my questions about our destination. Though I thought it weird, I simply turned my attention to the

changing scenery outside the window.

“You wanted to come here?” I asked after a short silence.

“Yes, that’s right,” Phil replied.

We’d ended up somewhere called a menagerie. It was built in the capital’s largest park, and it was a place where you could see a variety of animals. I’d heard that this was a popular spot among the nobles, but this was my first time actually coming here.

“I figured you’d enjoy visiting here,” Phil continued.

I wondered why he would think of that, until I realized something.

“You really enjoy Vio’s company.”

“LITTLE VIO!!!”

“You...really enjoy Little Vio’s company.”

“I really like Little Vio because of how cute she is, and I’ve always been partial to animals. Dogs are a particular favorite of mine, but my mother’s allergic to them and so we can’t keep any in the house...”

It must’ve been because we had that conversation the other day. In Phil’s mind, I was always his first priority. I was so happy and filled with my love for him that I couldn’t stop my lips from stretching in a smile.

“Yes, I’m really happy you took me here. Thank you so much.”

“I’m glad to hear that. Shall we go in?”

“Let’s.”

And so, we walked in, side by side. There was a surprising number of couples in the menagerie. All of them were holding hands or linking arms with each other, and they were physically very close. As for Phil and I, though, we were so far apart that you could fit a kid between us, and we weren’t touching each other at all. It felt like my empty right hand wanted something to hold.

Until now, I’d almost never reached out myself to hold his hand. The last time I did so was probably right after I started pretending to have amnesia.

Back then, I'd been embarrassed about touching him too. But it was incomparable to how flustered I felt about it now. Now that I was romantically interested in Phil as a man, the thought of touching him was far more embarrassing and nerve-racking. But he was always the one doing his best for us. So I decided that I should try being more assertive too.

In saying that though, I had no clue as to the timing. Would it be all right to touch him out of the blue? I was such a novice in terms of romance that all I could do was reach out slightly with my right hand and then pull it back. Rinse and repeat.

If I don't do something soon, the day's going to end. With that thought, I took a small but deep breath, and then slowly scooped up his left hand in my right. My heart was pounding so fast from nerves that it felt like it'd pop right out of my chest. I was sure that Phil wouldn't dislike his hand being held, but I was still anxious.

As soon as I squeezed the hand I was holding, Phil stopped walking. I stopped as well and looked up at him. His mouth was hanging agape as his eyes darted from my face to our joined hands.

"Did I unconsciously hold your hand just now?" he asked.

"No. I was the one who held your hand. I wanted to walk with you like this."

How could you make that misunderstanding? I couldn't help but giggle a little at how silly Phil was. In contrast, Phil's face started getting redder and redder. Eventually, he used his free hand to cover up his mouth.

"I cannot describe how happy I am right now," he said after a beat. "If you don't mind, I would like you to hold my hand in yours for the rest of our lives."

"Hee hee, is this a newfangled way of proposing to someone?"

It was just a joke, but Phil looked incredibly shocked for some reason and made a choked sound. "Actually, forget I said anything... Well, that's not right either..."

Though he'd looked taken aback for a while, it seemed that holding his hand made him happy. We started to walk off together, sharing each other's warmth.

Fake It to Break It! I Faked Amnesia to Break Off My Engagement and Now He's All
Lovey-Dovey?! Volume 2
by Kotoko

Translated by Stephanie Liu
Edited by Ruuri

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

KONYAKUHAKI NERATTE KIOKUSOSHITSU NO FURI WO SHITARA, SOKKENAI
TAIDO DATTA KONYAKUSHA GA "KIOKU WO USHINAU MAE NO KIMI WA, ORE
NI BETABORE DATTA" TOIU, TONDEMONAI USO WO TSUKIHAJIMETA Vol. 2

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An Unexpected Reunion

There were many animals, big and small, in the menagerie that I'd only read about until now. I walked amidst the various enclosures, leading Phil by his hand. Even though I didn't mean to, I was getting really excited.

"Phil, look! I never thought that it would have such a long tail... Oh, look at how big and fluffy its ears are! It's adorable!"

"Yeah."

"And this bird here has such lovely red feathers."

"Yeah."

"Are you listening to me?"

"Yeah."

"You aren't, are you?"

"Yeah."

I stared at him in silence, and he simply looked back at me. No matter what I said, Phil only replied with "Yeah" like he was zoning out. I tugged at his hand with a "Sheesh" and he apologized quietly as if startled.

"Is this not very fun for you?" I asked.

Perhaps he was so exhausted that he didn't even have the energy to enjoy himself?

I stopped walking with that thought in mind and upon seeing me do so, Phil looked a little panicked.

"It *is* fun for me, truly. Uh, it's just that..."

"Just that?"

"Viola, you're so cute when you're excited that I only have eyes for you. You're simply too precious. I don't know what to do with myself."

The breath caught in my throat with an audible squeak. I didn't know what to

do with myself either, being told with such a strong tone and serious face. I looked down at the ground to hide how hot my cheeks felt. The only thing I could whisper was, “I see.”

The both of us were blushing fiercely and staring downward in front of a cage. Right when an uncomfortable silence started to stretch between us, I heard a conversation sound out near us.

“Hey, look over there. Those two are the same color as that crimson bird.”

“Oh, stop that, Nigel. It’s not polite to say whatever comes to mind.”

“You’re the last person I want to hear that from.”

Phil and I looked up at the familiar voice and name. To our surprise, we saw Lady Natalia and the red-haired boy we’d met in the park in the past.

“Huh? You two are...” the boy said.

“Oh my. If it isn’t Lady Viola and Lord Phillip! What a surprise,” Lady Natalia said.

“I agree,” I said. “I didn’t expect to see you here, Lady Natalia.”

It was a little surprising to see her in a place like this. But Lady Natalia cheerily revealed that she wanted to see the elephants, and I smiled at how cute she was acting. Though Lady Natalia often spoke in a harsh manner, she was a very kind, gentle, and sweet person at heart.

“Do you know these people?” the boy asked.

“Yes, I do. Nigel, I should be asking you that question. How do you know them? You’re not old enough to attend gatherings, are you?”

I had been curious as to why these two were here together. However, upon closer inspection, not only did they share the same hair color, but they also looked very similar. Their big and slanted eyes, in particular, were the same.

Could they be...? A hypothesis started to form in my mind.

“I once invited them to stay at our hotel,” the boy explained. “I heard that they’d ended up staying in one of the suites.”

“Oh, yes. Thank you so much for your hospi—”

“T-The two of you stayed in a hotel together?! How indecent! You two aren’t even married yet!” Lady Natalia exclaimed.

“Huh?! No, wait, we’d honestly only planned on eating at the hotel, but we were forced to stay because—” I tried to finish, but Lady Natalia interrupted me.

“Lord Phillip, I cannot believe you! D-D-D-Don’t tell me you two really slept together...”

“Together?” Phil said with a frown. “All I did was go to sleep with Viola in my arms.”

“W-W-W-Wha...?!”

“Please, wait a second. Seriously this is all just a huge misunderstanding,” I hurriedly said.



It was true that on that day, I ended up falling asleep on the couch and in a way that looked like he was hugging me close to his chest. However, why did he

have to describe it like that? It was bound to create a misunderstanding. And lo and behold, Lady Natalia had gotten the wrong idea. Her face was bright red and her entire body was shaking.

“Lady Natalia, really, that’s not what—” I tried to explain, but Lady Natalia shook her head.

“I don’t want to hear your excuses!”

As usual, once Lady Natalia got an idea in her head, even if it wasn’t what happened, there was no stopping her. Next to me, Phil hadn’t noticed what was so wrong about what he said. He tilted his head to the side.

“What’s the matter?” he asked.

On my end, I wanted to ask him, “What’s the matter with *you*?”

“Adults are so gross,” Nigel said before he started to cackle. He seemed like a much more mature person than Lady Natalia.

“It really is a misunderstanding,” I tried again. “The weather was really bad that day.”

“I see. So you used the weather as your excuse...” Nigel said.

“Were you listening to me at all?”

I could feel my head starting to hurt from how the two of them absolutely refused to listen to reason. I didn’t even feel like explaining the truth anymore. So I decided to ask them what I’d been curious about since we ran into each other.

“Um, what’s the relationship between you two?”

“Hmm? We’re cousins,” Nigel said.

“Cousins...”

That would explain why they looked so similar to each other. I never expected the boy that we happened to run into in the past would be the younger cousin of a former classmate, especially a classmate we were quite familiar with.

It sure is a small world.

“The two of you do look alike,” Phil said.

“Right? Their eyes are exactly the same,” I replied.

As we conversed, Nigel stared at us with his large catlike eyes.

“You guys seem a lot more lovey-dovey than the last time we met.”

“Is that so?” Phil asked.

“Yeah. The air around you feels lighter. You two used to feel really awkward.”

When we first met Nigel, I was still pretending to have amnesia. That was when I was unaware of Phil’s feelings for me, or why he chose to lie to me and say that we were madly in love with each other.

A kid’s natural instinct really wasn’t something to underestimate. There was also the possibility that we simply acted so awkward together that even a child who didn’t know us could see through it. Then, I remembered how Phil lied to Nigel during our initial meeting and said we’d already had our first kiss. My face grew hot.

“You two look like a normal, happy couple now,” Nigel concluded.

“I see,” Phil replied.

Nigel’s assessment made me feel happy, yet embarrassed. It was very hard to calm down while feeling this way. When I glanced up at Phil, I saw a similar shy smile on his face as well.

“I-In any case, you two should have a more celibate relationship until the wedding! Let’s go, Nigel,” Lady Natalia said.

“Yeah, see you guys soon!” Nigel exclaimed. “We should have a normal hangout next time.”

“Yes, that sounds lovely,” I replied.

Even though the two of them were like a force of nature, I couldn’t help but smile when I saw them walk away with their hands linked together, chatting and bickering the entire time. For now, I could only pray that Lady Natalia’s wild misunderstanding will clear up sooner rather than later.

“We should get going too,” Phil said.

“I agree.”

We reached out for each other at the same time and walked off again, hand in hand.

“I Love You”

After we bid farewell to Nigel and Lady Natalia, Phil and I continued to have fun walking around the menagerie and looking at its wide collection of animals. But after a while, Phil suddenly stopped. When I followed his line of sight, I saw that he was staring straight inside of a cage.

“It’s adorable,” Phil said.

“This thing...?”

“Yes. It looks like you.”

“Like me?”

What he was pointing at after he said those words was a purple snake that looked like it was venomous. The only thing that was similar between us was the color scheme. But perhaps that was really how I looked like in Phil’s eyes? It seemed that Phil was seriously taken by the reptile, because he was happily staring at it through the bars of the cage.

“Maybe I’ll try keeping one in the manor as a pet,” Phil said.

“I’m begging you, please don’t do that,” I hurriedly said.

Eventually, I will also live in House Lawrenson’s manor. I started to worry that if I didn’t stop him now, the manor would eventually become filled with purple animals. I firmly told him that Little Vio was more than enough to serve as the purple animal in his home, then pulled his arm to the next exhibit.

The next location we stopped at wasn’t an exhibit, but instead, it was the petting corner. Apparently, the animals in the corral were used to humans, and you could actually touch and feed them. I didn’t usually have the chance to interact with animals other than Little Vio, so I was really happy to be here.

I entered the petting area and immediately, several tiny rabbits hopped toward my feet. I felt my heart clench in my chest at their cuteness. I quickly purchased a basket full of carrot sticks and shredded cabbage, and gently fed it to the nearby rabbits.

“Hee hee, there’s no need to push. There’s plenty where that came from,” I said.

The rabbits looked so cute, and yet they ate with immense gusto. I couldn’t help but giggle a little at that. Then, for some reason, Phil made a face like he was trying not to cry.

“Phil?” I asked. Curious as to what the issue was, I stopped feeding the rabbits.

He stared at me and eventually, his expression softened and his eyes curved gently with his smile. “I love seeing you laugh, Viola. I’m happy that I got to see it so much today. Thank you.”

My vision clouded over slightly at his words and how truly happy he seemed. I should be the one thanking him.

“I’m grateful that you brought me here today. I’m so happy that I can enjoy such a wonderful experience.”

“I see. I’m gla—”

But as soon as Phil opened his mouth, a goat suddenly appeared from out of nowhere and slammed into him. He disappeared from my line of sight.

“A-Are you all right?” I asked.

“Yeah... Sorry.”

“Ahh!”

He’d been pushed to the ground so I leaned down to try and help him up, but this time, another goat charged at me from behind and I fell on top of him. The sign outside the petting area claimed that only gentle and well-behaved animals were in here, but in my opinion, the menagerie needed to take that sign down immediately.

I giggled, and as soon as I did so, I heard Phil start to laugh. It was just too funny how quickly that emotional atmosphere between us dispersed. We continued to laugh together for a while longer, staring at each other the entire time.

After a while, it was noon and we decided to have our lunch in the park's garden. It was a lovely place, with plenty of colorful blossoms in bloom. Phil and I sat down next to each other on one of the vacant benches. Then, a servant from House Lawrenson, who seemingly materialized from thin air, handed us the lunch boxes I'd given them this morning. They were so perfect at all of the tasks they were entrusted with, from fishing to taking care of Little Vio, that they never failed to astound me.

"As promised, I made us lunch," I said.

"Thank you. I'm looking forward to tasting it," Phil replied.

Though I didn't know the specific location we'd be going to today, I'd heard that we'd be spending the day outside. So I woke up early and, along with my family chef, made lunch for us. Granted, since I wasn't very good at cooking, I mostly served as the chef's assistant and didn't handle any major tasks. Despite that, Phil still thanked me with a happy look on his face.

"You've made the sandwiches so fun to eat. I don't know when and where the fillings will fly out from, so it's a very thrilling experience," Phil said. "And thanks to how this egg dish seems to have fallen apart in the frying pan, it's been cooked all the way through."

I wasn't sure what to say for a second, then I sighed. "I'm sorry that I'm forcing you to find things to compliment about this."

My ugly food was scattered here and there in the beautiful lunch box. Phil was doing his best to find something positive to say about everything, but it was obvious he was pushing himself to do so. Hearing him compliment the taste and saying how happy he was still made me happy though, and I could feel affection welling up from within.

"Phil."

As soon as I called his name, he immediately asked, "What's the matter?" in a kind and gentle voice.

"I love you."

In the face of his unconditional support, I desperately wanted to tell him my feelings at this moment. Normally, I'd get much too embarrassed to say the

words. But they came out with surprising ease.

Phil's eyes widened in surprise, but after a second he let out a heavy sigh and looked down.

"I'm so happy I could die... In fact, I feel like I *did* die."

"Hee hee, don't do that."

I remembered that we had a similar conversation in the past.

"I love you as well," Phil said. "Thank you."

Seeing him say that, his face bright red, made me feel some belated embarrassment about my own confession. Unsure of what to say, we stared at each other, and a slightly awkward silence stretched between us.

"Um... If you'd like, I have some after cookies and tea we can have as dessert."

I couldn't handle the silence anymore and took out a tea set that I'd brought with me. Phil nodded and thanked me before he slowly reached his hand out.

"This cookie is so refreshing," he said.

"That's some leftover cabbage I was feeding to the rabbits," I replied.

He'd lost more of his composure than I thought, because he made an unbelievable mistake just now with the food.

"I was so happy that I couldn't even tell the difference between the two flavors," he said.

"Oh, you."

Despite my worries over Phil's digestive system, I still smiled happily. Once we finished our dessert, we observed the beautiful flowers and the people passing us by, chatting cheerily the entire time.

"Taking care of a child is a lot more work than I expected..." Phil suddenly murmured.

Where did that come from? Why's he suddenly talking about children? I was confused until I noticed that there were a lot of parents with their children around us. He must've been reminded of something upon seeing them.

“Yes, that sounds about right,” I said. “Children are so small that they have to have an adult protecting them. You could also say that childhood is the time when they’re allowed to be selfish, and let the adults spoil them.”

I remembered my parents spoiling me rotten when I was a child. Even now, when I thought back to the days of my youth and all the love my parents showered upon me, my heart felt warm.

“I see. That makes sense.”

“Hmm?”

Oddly enough, Phil looked like my reply solved some conundrum he had. He murmured, “Thank you. I’ll give it a try.”

Putting a Name on Happiness

After we finished our lunch, we looked around the botanical garden that was on park property. It felt like the day passed by in the blink of an eye.

Time really flies when you're having fun.

"Thank you for today. I had a great time."

"I enjoyed myself today as well," Phil replied. "Thank you."

"No, no, I should be thanking *you* for taking me here."

We headed back to the carriage conversing like that when we heard a sudden scream.

"S-Someone catch that thief!"

"Huh?"

We looked up and saw a man running toward us, a woman's purse in his arms. Everyone, including me, froze up in shock. Phil, who had been standing next to me, was the only one who leapt into action.

"Dammit! Let me go, you little—" the thief yelled.

"Stay still," Phil ordered.

To our shock, Phil caught the man and had him in a hold in a matter of seconds. He moved so efficiently and everything happened so quickly that I found myself staring at him in awe.

"Um, Phil, are you all right?"

"Yes. It doesn't seem like he has any knives or other weapons, but this is still very dangerous. Please step back."

"I understand."

He calmly pinned the man to the ground, which caused the audience around us to ooh and ahh. The guard eventually made his way over to us and after he thanked Phil, he took the thief away.

“That man was so cool!”

“Wasn’t he? What a lovely gentleman.”

A parent and child near us were talking to each other about Phil.

They’re right. Phil earlier was really amazing. He was like an entirely different person from the man who was just blushing while nibbling on cabbage.

The new side to him that I’d never seen before made my heart beat faster, and I hurried over to his side.

“Phil, are you hurt anywhere?”

“No, I’m not. Sorry to keep you waiting. All that’s left to do is to return this to its rightful owner.”

After he said that, he handed the stolen bag back to the victim.

“Thank you so much! I don’t even know how I can begin to repay you!” she exclaimed.

“It’s fine. Don’t worry about it.”

The woman hugged the purse close to her chest as if it was a treasured item and offered us such a relieved smile, I felt it as if it was my own emotion. A soft smile played on Phil’s lips as well. After a little bit, Phil said he wanted to wash his hands and get the sand off of his clothes. Meanwhile, I sat down on a bench with the woman. She looked like she was around my grandmother’s age, and I could tell from her clothes and her mannerisms that she was a noble.

“It’s been so long since I went on a walk by myself, so it’s hard to believe things turned out like this... There’s a protective charm in this purse that my grandchild gave me, so I’m truly glad that I got it back.”

“Oh, is that so? I’m happy that nothing was damaged.”

It looked like the woman was unharmed as well. I let out a small sigh of relief.

“Are the two of you lovers?” the woman asked.

“Yes... Yes, we are.”

Phil was my fiancé so it was a little hard to decide if he still counted as my “lover.” Even so, I nodded confidently and as I did so, I felt a warm, fuzzy feeling

in my chest that was impossible to calm.

“Not many people can move so quickly and decisively in such dangerous situations,” the woman said. “It’s because there’s no benefit to them. In fact, I’d say that the cons far outweigh the pros.”

She was right. Only a handful of people in this world would’ve instantly jumped into action like that.

“That’s why I think your beloved is a very brave and wonderful person,” the woman concluded.

The words reaffirmed for me just how amazing Phil was, and I savored how wondrous my life was right now, to be treasured by someone that great.

“Viola.”

Once Phil returned, the woman and I stood up.

“Thank you very much,” she said with a polite and elegant bow. “I hope you two have a very happy rest of your lives.”

“Thank you. Have a safe trip home.”

After she walked off, we once again started our journey back to the carriages. When we got there, Phil escorted me into it and we sat down next to each other. As if it was the natural state of our being, our hands were still connected.

“Phil, you were so cool earlier.”

“Thank you. I’d learned a wide variety of self-defense techniques since I was a child, and I was finally able to put it to use.”

I’d been with Phil for so many years now, but this was the first time I heard about that. There were probably lots of other things I didn’t know about Phil.

“Phil... You’re really amazing. I have to do my best as well.”

Phil could do anything he set his mind to, and I knew that I could never match up to him. But I wanted to work hard in my own way. As that determination burned in my chest, he suddenly tightened his grip on my hand. I looked up at him and met his eyes, which were so close to mine. Before I could even consciously realize it, I’d completely forgotten to even breathe, so enraptured

by his beautiful amber gaze.

“Thank you,” he said.

“What?”

“You’ve been working really hard lately for me, right?”

He must’ve been talking about how I was assertively making appearances at high society gatherings. This was a responsibility that all noble daughters had to deal with, so it wasn’t something so grand that it required gratitude like this. Even so, I was extremely happy that Phil acknowledged my work.

“I’m not anything special at all. But I’ll continue to put in effort so that I can live up to you, Phil.”

I smiled after I said that and, to my surprise, Phil pulled me against him in an embrace. My heart started to beat faster as I soaked up his gentle warmth and sweet scent.

“Thank you,” he said. “And I’d like to say that earlier, I was really happy.”

“You were happy?”

“Yes. I was overjoyed when you said that I was your lover.”

It seemed that he’d overheard the conversation I had with the old woman. I felt my cheeks heat up at how I’d taken the initiative and called him my lover in my response to her. But if Phil was happy with my answer, and he agreed with me, then that was all that mattered. We continued to sit in the carriage and converse about this and that, but then Phil suddenly stopped responding.

I tried to take a peek at his face, which he’d lowered, but it looked like he’d fallen asleep. I wasn’t sure when that happened. Even though he was exhausted from constant work, he still took me out to have fun. His stamina might’ve been at its limit.

Phil was snoring softly, and his body swayed with the movements of the carriage. I figured that he would hurt his neck if he continued to sleep in that position, so I gently tugged on him until he fell toward me. He ended up resting his head on my lap and I started to run my fingers through his soft dark blue hair, hoping that this was more comfortable for him.

“Thank you for everything. Truly,” I said.

He always did his absolute best for my sake, so I hoped that I was able to return something to him, even if it was only a little bit.

Eventually, Phil opened his eyes, and was so shocked and confused at how he was resting his head on my knees that he fell onto the ground. But that’s a story for another day.

A Distance So Close Yet So Far

It had been a week since my date with Phil. As usual, I was sitting in a carriage, wearing a dress that was specifically for soirees. I stared out the window, resting my cheek in my hand, and absentmindedly watched the changing view outside.

The end of August signaled the peak of the social gathering season, and there were balls and soirees every day. This would be the fifth day in a row that I'd be participating in one, and even I was starting to get tired. However, the soiree tonight would take place at the palace, and it was one that would be attended by almost all of the noble families. I had no other choice but to go.

"I can't let my guard down... I have to do my part," I said to myself.

With the reminder that Phil was working hard too, I slapped my hands against my cheeks to pump myself up. The moment I arrived at the palace, I quickly joined a circle of noble ladies that I'd gotten close to.

"Lady Viola, you always work so hard. It's adorable," one of them said.

"I wonder if we ever worked as much as you did, once upon a time," another one sighed.

All of the ladies here were married to men from the upper echelons of nobility. I was nowhere at their level in all aspects, but they taught me a lot of things about how to make it in high society. Ever since I became an active participant in these events, my social circle grew much wider to the point that I often received invitations to tea parties.

After I walked around the party and greeted people, I took a small break in the resting room and fixed up my makeup. Once I did so, I started to return to the hall, then I heard someone call my name from behind me.

"Good evening, Lord Cyril and Lady Laura," I said.

"Good evening, Viola," Cyril said.

"Oh, Lady Viola! It's been far too long. I'm glad to see you've been doing

well,” Lady Laura said.

The two of them were dressed in formal clothing. It seemed that they were fashionably late, only having just arrived. The last time I saw Lord Cyril was about a week ago now. Since he was to take over House Crane, he was also actively participating in various noble gatherings.

“Would you look at that?” Lady Laura said. “Your memories really have returned. I’m happy for you.”

“Yes, they have. Thank you, I’m grateful for how you helped me during that period.”

The last time I saw Lady Laura was when I was still pretending to have amnesia, which was quite some time ago now. She took my hands into hers and smiled delightedly. I felt my chest clench with guilt at the sight and I apologized profusely in my heart as I gripped her fingers tighter.

“Huh, Viola, you’re alone today too?” Lord Cyril said.

“Yes. It seems that Phil’s busy today.”

“From the looks of it, he’ll likely continue to be busy for a while longer. I sometimes help out at the palace too and I think that Phillip’s really amazing, even if I’m loath to admit it.”

Phil was a reliable leader for the younger generation of nobles. Apparently he could perfectly accomplish any task he was given. Despite his somewhat cold attitude toward other women, he was also able to form good interpersonal relationships in the workplace. In my opinion, Lord Cyril was just as perfect a man as Phil was, so it said a lot about Phil’s competency that Lord Cyril had complimented him like this.

All I had to do was make an appearance at social gatherings, and yet I was complaining about how tired I was. I once again reminded myself that I had to do my best.

“Oh my. Cyril, aren’t you also always alone if I can’t make it to one of these gatherings?” Lady Laura said. “Despite the fact that lots of ladies invite you to dance with or spend time with them.”

“It’s far easier to be alone, that’s why,” Lord Cyril replied. “I know that I should start thinking about things though.”

Lord Cyril would inherit the title of Marquess Crane and the power that came with it, so it was about time for him to start thinking about marriage. Considering I knew that he liked me in the past, I couldn’t say anything careless in this situation so I simply watched over them in silence.

“Well, this is hardly a conversation to be held in a hallway! Lady Viola, why don’t you come with us to the dance hall?” Lady Laura said.

“Yes, let’s.”

With my hand still in the lovely Lady Laura’s, the three of us walked down the hall while chatting. As we did so, I heard a familiar voice sound out.

“Sheesh, I’m late now thanks to you, Phillip.”

“Wouldn’t it have been better if you asked someone else for help, if all you’re going to do is complain about me?”

“Oh, don’t be so mean. Besides, isn’t it more interesting if the main character arrives late?”

I looked in the direction of the voices and saw Phil with a woman. She must be the princess of the Samarind Empire. Her wavy golden hair flowed behind her like a veil, and she was so beautiful that I could mistake her for a fairy. Even her voice and laughter, which sounded like the tinkling of bells, was adorable. Though I was a woman as well, I could feel my heart skip at the sound. I’d never seen a more elegant person in my life.



It seemed that we were standing in their blind spot, and Phil didn't notice me here. When Lord Cyril and Lady Laura saw me stop walking, they paused as well.

I watched as Phil and the princess made their way to the dance hall, but I couldn't say anything. I didn't think that Phil would come to today's gathering, nor did I ever imagine he'd come with the princess.

"Viola, are you all right?"

When I looked up, I saw Lord Cyril staring at me with a worried look on his face.

"Yes, I'm fine," I replied hurriedly.

"So you really didn't know that Phillip would be here today."

"No."

We may be engaged to each other, but there was no need to report every single soiree or gathering we went to. I never told him my plans either, so it wasn't uncommon for us to run into each other at a party.

I knew it was part of his work, but the sight of Phil escorting another woman felt like a stab to the chest. I never knew that I was such a petty person, and the revelation made me a little sad.

"I'm sorry about that. Let's go," I said after managing to form a smile. With the Crane siblings in tow, I entered the dance hall as well.

As expected, the foreign princess was the star of the show, metaphorically, and she was all anyone could talk about.

"She's so beautiful, she's like a goddess."

"I agree. I can understand why the emperor of the Samarind Empire loves her so much."

I could hear snippets of similar conversations from all around us. I looked at the princess again. Even though it was my second time beholding her, she was still so gorgeous that I stopped breathing for a second. Phil, an incredibly handsome man himself, next to her only added to her radiance.

"Don't Lord Phillip and Princess Luna look so cute together?"

As soon as I heard someone say that, I felt another sharp pain in my heart. But unconsciously, I had been thinking the same thing. I could feel myself getting

seriously sadder but I slapped my cheeks with my hands.

Stop that. Get a grip.

“Lady Viola, don’t listen to those people. They’re just saying whatever comes to mind. I doubt they even have the brain power to realize what they’re saying,” Lady Laura huffed.

“Right. Thank you.”

Lady Laura must’ve overheard them as well. Though she looked angry, she chose to comfort me instead of confronting them.

“Yes, that’s right,” she said. “I had the sweetest and most delicious juice the other day here. I’m going to get one of the servers to bring us a few glasses.”

The offer must’ve been made out of consideration for me. She walked off in a hurry, the bottom of her dress flouncing with her movements. I thanked her for her kindness in my heart as I watched her disappear into the crowd.

“She’s such a sweet and gentle person,” I said.

“Thank you. I’m sure Laura would be happy to hear that too,” Lord Cyril said.

We continued to chat as we waited for Lady Laura to return. Since we were in the same dance hall, I should probably go and greet Phil later as well. However...

“Huh?”

I felt someone staring at me and so turned around. To my surprise, I locked eyes with Phil, even though he was standing some distance away.

At the same time, I saw his almond-shaped golden eyes widen as if in surprise. Not even Phil could’ve predicted that I’d be here. After a moment, the princess next to him noticed my existence as well. Then, I saw her smile happily and start to approach us.

“Lord Phillip, here are some documents I’d like you to look over.”

“All right. Give me a moment.”

“Thank you.”

I'd been working at the palace since morning, as usual, when I received some documents from the son of an earl, who also happened to be an old classmate of mine. As I looked through the papers, I heard him open his mouth.

"Speaking of which, I met Lady Viola yesterday."

"You met Viola?"

"Yes, at House Ranaman's soiree. I often see her at gatherings these days."

"I see..."

Thanks to all the work on my plate, I hadn't been able to meet with her or even communicate with her via letters. But I was relieved to hear that she was doing well. After I returned the documents I looked over, he lowered his head and returned to his seat.

Lately, Viola's been going out of her way to participate in social gatherings. She used to hate participating in those kinds of events, but I heard from Rex that the reason she's starting to change is for my benefit.

Back when she pretended to have amnesia, I legitimately believed that I could handle everything myself and she didn't have to lift a finger. All I needed from Viola was her presence at my side. That was all I ever asked for. However, her wanting to work hard for me and House Lawrenson made me happier than simply having Viola next to me. My chest filled with warmth every time I thought of how she was doing her best to live up to her future position as Duchess Lawrenson, and I loved her even more than I already did.

"I want to see you, Viola..."

Every time I thought of her, I wanted to meet her. I decided that I'd write a letter to her later and cleaned up the mountains of papers on my desk. Then, a light knocking sound rang through the room.

Before any of us could say anything, the door opened and I heard light footsteps rushing toward me. I didn't even have to look up to know who was standing in front of me.

"Phillip, let's eat some snacks together! I received some delicious chocolates!"

"I appreciate the offer, but I'll eat some later."

“All right, I understand. Then I’ll just sit right here for now.”

Princess Adele smiled after she said that and then she plopped herself down on the chair right next to me. She always listened to the adults around her and could read the room better than any other five-year-old I knew.

“Make sure you don’t dirty the documents with your snacks,” I said.

“Sheesh. Please don’t treat me like a child.”

“Aren’t you a child though? You’re five years old.”

“Hmm, I suppose you’re right,” Princess Adele said, looking convinced of my argument.

After spending the past few weeks with her, I learned that not only was Princess Adele still very young, she was also a little bit of an airhead.

“Phillip, can we eat dinner together today as well?”

“I’m sorry, but I thought I’d go home earlier than usual today.”

“I see...”

Princess Adele looked down at the ground sadly. Seeing her like that made me start to feel a little guilty. Apparently, Princess Adele was the apple of Emperor Samarind’s eye, which made sense considering she was his youngest child. The king even told us not to do or say anything that would put Princess Adele in a bad mood.

Even though I wasn’t a friendly person at all, the princess often came to visit me whenever she had free time, but all she would do was watch me work with a cheery look on her face. It was impressive that she hadn’t gotten bored of it yet. I could even feel myself finding her more and more adorable the more I saw her.

“And then, Luna was like...”

I was listening to the princess talk while nodding and working, but a knock sounded out again. This time, the door only opened after someone called for the person to come in. The person who entered was Princess Luna.

“Adele, I knew I’d find you here. Phillip’s busy, so don’t do anything that’ll add

onto his workload.”

“Okaaay.”

After Princess Luna lightly scolded Princess Adele, she turned to look at me.

“Oh, that reminds me. Hey, Phillip, I’m sorry to impose, but could you go to tonight’s soiree with me?”

“Do you remember what you yourself said a minute ago?”

“And that’s precisely why I said ‘I’m sorry to impose.’ I was suddenly told that I *had* to participate in this one.”

Princess Luna didn’t look like she was sorry at all. She took a small piece of chocolate from Princess Adele and popped it into her mouth. Apparently, she would feel a lot better going to tonight’s soiree if I was with her because we were close to each other in age.

“Actually, I’ve already gotten permission from your king so don’t worry about work.”

“Luna, that’s so unfair! How come you’re the only one who gets to participate in a party with Phillip?!”

“Because by the time the party starts, good children like you should already be in bed. Maybe once you’re older, you can attend one with him.”

“Okay... Tell me a bedtime story before you go.”

“Yes, of course. Adele, you’re such a good girl.”

Nothing about this made me less worried at all. Even though I was the one who had to go to the party, I didn’t get a say in it either. It looked like it’d be midnight by the time I could get home. I didn’t know how many times I’d sighed already, but I was about to add another one to the tally when a cheery voice rang out.

“Princess Luna, am I not enough for you?”

Rex strolled, a brilliantly blinding smile on his face and several documents in one hand.

Thank goodness, Rex. You saved me.

However, despite my relief, Princess Luna immediately shook her head.

“I don’t want to go with you, Rex. You’re really shady.”

“That’s mean. There’s no man more honest than me in this entire kingdom.”

“Besides, do you even realize how many women were staring at me the last time I went to a ball with you? All right, Phillip, you better start dolling yourself up in a few.”

“Fine...”

Not even Rex could help me out of this mess, and so it was decided that I’d be going to the soiree. However, one of the jobs that the king gave me was to support the princess in social gatherings. I might be able to worm out of this in the future, but I had to go at least once.

“I’m looking forward to going to the party with you,” Princess Luna said before she, along with Princess Adele, left the meeting room.

“Must be tough to be so popular with the ladies. Sorry that I couldn’t be of more help,” Rex said.

“It’s fine. You didn’t do anything wrong,” I replied. “I’m going to die soon if I don’t get to see Viola...”

I want to see her face. I want to see her and talk to her. If I could be greedy, then I want to hug her. I wonder what she’s doing right now? I hope she’s thinking about me, even if only a little.

My feelings for her filled my chest as I continued to think about her.

“I’ll try to organize the schedule and workload so that you’ll have some time off again soon,” Rex said.

“Thank you.”

“Now then, back to the grind.”

I nodded at Rex’s words and then went back to work, at least until I had to begin preparing for the soiree.

Fake It to Break It! I Faked Amnesia to Break Off My Engagement and Now He's All
Lovey-Dovey?! Volume 2
by Kotoko

Translated by Stephanie Liu
Edited by Ruuri

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

KONYAKUHAKI NERATTE KIOKUSOSHITSU NO FURI WO SHITARA, SOKKENAI
TAIDO DATTA KONYAKUSHA GA "KIOKU WO USHINAU MAE NO KIMI WA, ORE
NI BETABORE DATTA" TOIU, TONDEMONAI USO WO TSUKIHAJIMETA Vol. 2

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I met with Princess Luna in the evening after I finished preparing myself.

“Sheesh, if it wasn’t for Adele, I wouldn’t have needed to show up at one of these social gatherings,” she said.

Since Princess Adele had wanted to see me as soon as possible, Princess Luna had to visit earlier than she’d expected as well. Despite her words, it looked like she really adored Princess Adele, because Princess Luna didn’t seem *that* dissatisfied with the current circumstances.

When she was in front of Rex and I, Princess Luna talked and acted very casually. But as soon as she was in the public eye, she transformed into an entirely different person. She acted the part of a perfect princess, complete with a brazen attitude. Her ability to do so was likely the reason the emperor trusted her with the important role of ambassador.

“Now that I think about it, this is the first time we’re spending time alone,” she said.

“I suppose you’re right.”

I hadn’t spoken much to Princess Luna because I normally had my hands full with Princess Adele.

“Thank you for always taking time out of your day to play with Adele,” Princess Luna continued. “She really likes picture books.”

Like Rex said, it appeared that Princess Adele had been stuck in bed due to illness until just last year. During that time, picture books served as her main source of comfort. Hearing about her past made it even harder to turn down Princess Adele whenever she invited me to spend time with her.

“Now then, shall we go?” Princess Luna asked.

“Yes, let’s,” I replied.

With that, the two of us entered the ballroom. I immediately felt everyone’s stares. It seemed that Princess Luna’s overpowering regal presence was simply that hard to ignore. As we spent time together in the ballroom, people kept coming up to us to speak with Princess Luna. I supported her at her side but then, I suddenly stopped.

“Phillip? What’s the matter?”

I stopped because I saw *her* amid the crowd. There was no way I wouldn’t be able to recognize *her*.

Why’s Viola here?

Though I was curious about her presence here, it wasn’t like it was a rare occurrence. Viola had been making an effort to socialize with the rest of high society, after all. However, my mind started to panic when I saw Cyril next to her.

Have they been alone together this entire time? What were they talking about?

Even though I knew that she liked me and not Cyril, I couldn’t stop my thoughts from spiraling. I was with Princess Luna due to work, but I was still here at a party with another woman, so I knew that I didn’t have the right to talk. And yet, I couldn’t stop staring at the way Viola and Cyril were standing next to each other.

“Uh, hello, Earth to Phillip! What’s wrong?”

Upon noticing that I’d froze while staring straight at Viola, Luna curiously followed my line of sight. Eventually, she noticed Viola as well.

“Hey, is that girl over there your fiancée? I’d like to speak with her as well. Let’s go.”

“Wait! I mean, please wait.”

Despite my attempts to stop her, the princess made a beeline for Viola. I hurriedly chased after her, praying in my heart that Princess Luna didn’t say anything unnecessary. She slipped through the crowd, despite how many people there were, and by the time I finally reached them, she was already in the middle of a conversation with Viola. As soon as Viola saw me, she offered me a small smile.

“Good evening, Phil. What a coincidence.”

“Good evening. I didn’t know you came as well,” I replied.

“Hello, Phillip. It’s been about a week since I last saw you,” Cyril said.

Cyril occasionally helped out with the ceremony preparations and whenever he was around, work would progress smoothly and quickly. I murmured an agreement as a storm of emotions brewed in my chest.

“I’m truly grateful to Phillip,” Princess Luna said.

“Oh, really?” Viola replied.

It was a relief seeing Viola and the princess chatting with smiles on their faces.

“I should get going,” Viola said.

“All right. I’m glad that I got to meet you and I hope to see you soon,” Princess Luna said.

“Would you like me to walk you to your destination?” I offered.

“No, I’m fine. Phil, stay by Her Highness, please,” Viola replied.

She curtsied elegantly and then walked off. I was so happy that I got to see her and talk to her, even if it was only for a short while, that my expression unconsciously softened. When she saw the face I was making, Princess Luna giggled.

“Not even stone-faced Phillip can maintain his stoic expression in front of his girlfriend, I see. Hee hee, it was so obvious how happy you were. Your entire voice changed.”

“Was it that easy to tell?”

“It was so funny how you changed into a completely different person. She’s very sweet and most importantly, she’s cute. I really like her.”

“Isn’t she so cute?”

“So you *can* respond quickly. You should compliment me as fast as you did just now in the future.”

“I’ll do my best...”

Without any idea at how, at this very moment, Viola had greatly misinterpreted the situation, I started to plan out our next date in my mind.

Rumors

Several days passed since I happened to meet Phil and the princess at the soiree.

“Lady Viola, are you *sure* you can do this by yourself?”

“Yes. Today, I plan on returning as soon as I hand him the letter and snacks.”

I’d decided to deliver food to Phil today as well, and I turned down my maid when she offered to come with me. I got off the carriage that had parked right in front of the palace, then I walked through the grounds, hoping that Phil would enjoy what I’d made.

“Ah.”

That was when the ribbon I used to tie my hair suddenly slipped loose. I quickly picked it up and then sat down on a nearby bench, setting the basket next to me. Even though I wouldn’t be able to spend more than a few minutes with him, I still dressed up because I wanted Phil to find me cute. A part of it was also because I saw just how beautiful Princess Luna was. I wanted to head to the meeting room after fixing myself up as best as I could, so I started to tie my hair into a loose braid. That was when I heard two people start conversing from behind me.

“Man, did you see Lord Phillip and Her Highness today? They were so cute.”

“Right? Everyone is so on edge in the meeting room, but looking in their direction makes me feel better.”

I glanced over at them. It seemed that the two men behind me were Phil’s coworkers in the meeting room, and they were the heirs of upper-class nobles. They were resting on the bench behind mine. Since they were talking about Phil and the princess, it seemed that Rex wasn’t the only person who enjoyed watching the pair.

“I saw Phil and Her Highness walking around hand in hand yesterday. It was adorable.”

“Huh?”

The word slipped out and I hurriedly covered my mouth with my hand. To my relief, they didn't seem to notice.

Phil and the princess were walking around hand in hand?

I couldn't believe it, and yet, I could feel my heart starting to pick up speed. I was completely frozen like a statue, but I could still hear their conversation.

“Last week, I saw Her Highness fall asleep while hugging onto Lord Phillip. Lord Phillip was doing his best not to wake her up, so he kept working despite how uncomfortably he had to sit. I'm a man too, but seeing the way Lord Phillip acted got *my* heart racing.”

Whaaaa...?

I didn't know that Phil and the princess were *that* close. I couldn't help but feel like that was a bit too much physical contact between a man, especially one with a fiancée, and another woman. I felt a stabbing pain in my heart and I couldn't move, as if my body was pinned to the spot.

“Lord Phillip bought Her Highness some snacks today, and she was so happy. If Lord Phillip hadn't stopped her, she would've brought the snacks back to the Samarind Empire with her.”

“It warms my heart just imagining the scene.”

I was starting to suspect that the “Lord Phillip” they were talking about was a completely different person from the “Phillip Lawrenson” I was familiar with. *That* was how unbelievable their stories were.

No, I simply don't want to believe them.

Besides, Phillip hated women touching him more than anything in the world. I was the only person he was fine with, but that was because he liked me. I couldn't imagine that he allowed the princess to touch him for that reason though, because I knew how earnest and straightforward Phil was.

I knew all of this. But the bubbly feeling I had earlier was completely gone. I couldn't see my face, but I knew I was making a horribly dispirited expression. Phil was more sensitive to the changes in my emotions than anyone else, and I

knew that I'd worry him if I were to meet with him now. He was busy enough with work, I didn't need to add to his stress by making him anxious.

With that thought in mind, I stood up with the basket in hand, and returned the way I came.

"Welcome back, Lady Viola. You came back very quickly."

"Yes, I did."

I didn't want my maid to worry either, so I hid the fact that the basket was still full. As we headed home together in the carriage, I gently rested my head against the window.

"There's no way Phil would cheat on me," I murmured to myself.

Phil was so honest about his feelings for me that it felt rude to even question him. I knew how much he loved me too. But still, the uncomfortable emotions stirring in my chest refused to fade away.

Time Spent With a Little Friend

“Hi there! I want to go to the menagerie with Phillip too!”

“Sorry, Phillip. I accidentally told her about your trip.”

After I ate lunch and returned to the meeting room, I saw Princess Adele and Rex standing before me. Princess Adele’s eyes were sparkling as she looked up at me, and behind her, Rex was poking his tongue out with an expression that said “Oops!” Unlike Princess Adele, he didn’t look cute at *all*.

It seemed that he told her about the trip to the menagerie I had with Viola the other day. Princess Adele seemed really interested in it, and she was grabbing onto my sleeve, repeatedly talking about how much she wanted to go.

“Apparently, she had a huge fight with Princess Luna this morning. She looked so down that I was desperate to come up with a fun topic to talk about,” Rex whispered in my ear before putting his hands together in a gesture of apology.

“I see...”

It was true that while Princess Adele had a smile on her face, she didn’t seem as energetic as usual. It was rare for the two of them to fight, since they were so close. Instead of spending time pondering about that, I bent down so that I could directly meet Princess Adele’s eyes.

“I’ve read a lot of picture books about animals, but I seldom have the chance to see a real one,” Princess Adele said. “Can we go?”

“All right. We’ll go sometime soon.”

“When’s ‘sometime soon’?”

“It’s some time in the near future.”

“Rex told me that when adults say that, they’re actually saying no.”

I didn’t respond, instead glaring up at him. It seemed like Rex had the habit of telling Princess Adele things that she didn’t need to know. Behind her, he gently knocked his fist against the side of his head in a gesture of apology, and then poked his tongue out again.

Yeah, he's still not cute.

"Please, can we go?" Princess Adele asked again.

I was a little surprised. Princess Adele would usually listen to reason, so it was rare that she refused to budge. It wasn't that I didn't want to take her to the menagerie, I simply had too much work. I told her that and she nodded.

"All right, I understand!" she exclaimed before she left the room.

Fifteen minutes later, her servant, who looked exhausted, walked in with Princess Adele at his side. In contrast to how he looked, Princess Adele had a wide smile on her face.

"Now, let's get going! I asked His Majesty to give us permission to leave. Don't worry about work! Warren will fill in for you."

Do I really not have anything to worry about? With that thought in mind, I looked over at Warren.

"I'll do my best," he said tonelessly.

He'd been cleaning up after the princess's messes so often that he seemed older than when we first met.

"I'm gonna go get ready, so can we meet up in about thirty minutes?" Princess Adele asked me.

"All right," I replied.

I no longer had any reason to turn her down, so I nodded at the princess as she excitedly ran out of the room.

"Wow, things sure moved fast. Are you sure you're okay?" Rex asked me.

"Yes. Going to the menagerie is far better than continuing to do desk work here."

I lightly stretched my arms over my head after I replied to Rex. As long as nothing affected my day off tomorrow, when I could finally spend time with Viola, I didn't care what happened. I gave orders for what work should be done in my absence, and then started to prepare for the outing.

“Hey, Phillip, what kind of person is your fiancée?”

“She’s an angel. She’s the cutest person in the whole world.”

“I figured! Luna met her the other day and she said that your fiancée is very adorable. Is she really like a princess?”

“Yes. She’s the cutest person in the whole world.”

“Wow, she sounds amazing! I’d love to meet her too.”

Princess Adele and I conversed in the carriage until we finally arrived at the menagerie.

“The larger animals are in the back.”

Since this was my second time, I guided her around smoothly as we made our way around the park. Of course, the princess was in a disguise, and there were plenty of bodyguards around us, so it was safe. By the time we had a rough look at the whole park, the princess had a satisfied expression on her face.

“Phillip, thank you for taking me here. It was really fun!”

“I’m glad to hear that.”

“I really liked the purple snake. I plan on asking my father for one just like it when I get back to Samarind.”

“Oh, really? To tell you the truth, I want that snake as well.”

I gave up because Viola told me not to keep it, but I still couldn’t help thinking about it. The princess really had an eye for beauty. I picked her up, since she was starting to look tired.

“Wow, I’m so high up! Is this how a big animal feels? What a great day today is.”

“That’s good.”

She must’ve really enjoyed herself, because she looked so happy that a smile formed on my face. Afterward, the princess requested that we take a different way home, which was what we did on our way back to the palace. She pressed herself right against the window, staring curiously at the sights. Like this, she looked every inch like an ordinary child. Then, the princess pointed at a

particular manor.

“That building is so big and fancy. The people there must be rich.”

“That’s where I live.”

The manor was familiar to me, but not to the princess, who was looking at it with keen interest. When she heard what I said, she looked surprised.

“Oh, my! I’d love to go to your house, Phillip!”

I wasn’t thinking when I replied to her and I was hit with an intense regret. If I told her that was where I lived, so of course the princess would say something like that. Anyone could’ve seen this coming. I told her that since this was so last minute, she couldn’t, and she looked down at the ground.

“I really can’t? I’ve never been to my friends’ house, so I wanted to go...”

There was no way for me to turn her down again after hearing her say that with such a sad expression on her face. I didn’t know that the princess apparently considered me one of her friends.

After a pause, I slowly said, “The day’s winding to an end, so we can only have a cup of tea before I have to take you back to the palace.”

“Yes, I understand. Thank you!”

I was left with no choice, so I told the coachman to head to House Lawrenson’s manor instead. Princess Adele’s face blossomed with a jubilant smile. Despite everything, I seemed to harbor a soft spot for her.

If I brought home a foreign princess without warning, that would only invite panic amid my family and the servants. I racked my brain to come up with a way to tell them without freaking anyone out, when Princess Adele offered a suggestion.

“Tell them that I’m the daughter of one of your acquaintances so that they don’t worry too much about anything.”

It was probably because she had these moments, when she felt more mature than her five years, that made me want to let her be a kid. Since people would worry if we were gone for too long, I decided that we would have tea and then return to the palace as quickly as possible.

The Start of a Tragedy

“So this is your room, Phillip? It’s exactly as I’d imagined!”

As soon as the princess entered my room, she started looking around inquisitively. Though the servants were surprised that I suddenly brought home a child, they quickly told me that they’d prepare snacks for us that a little girl would enjoy. The fact that they were actually talking about the princess of a foreign nation was beyond their wildest dreams.

I told Princess Adele that she could do whatever she wanted, and after she thanked me, she started to explore my room. Suddenly, she stopped right in front of the shelves by the window.

“Hey, Phillip, what’s this ice bucket doing here? Do you drink wine?”

“That’s, um, for wearing.”

“For wearing? I didn’t know that different countries used buckets differently as well. I learned something new today.” After she said that, she picked up the bucket and then placed it over her head. “Like this?”

Seeing her stand there, ice bucket over her head, filled me with immense guilt. I simply hadn’t been able to throw it away after I wore it during my conversation with Viola. I apologized in my mind that I not only gave misinformation to the princess of a powerful nation, but I also inadvertently made her look so ridiculous. But at this point, it would be more embarrassing to correct her, so I kept silent.

In any case, the promise was that we would have a cup of tea and then we’d go back. Right when I was about to start the preparations for tea, I heard a knocking on my door. I figured it was the servants with the snacks, so I quickly called for the person to come in. Then, I was once again hit with an extraordinary sense of regret.

The person who walked in, Vio perched on their shoulder, was none other than Cedric. Everything about his visit—from the timing to who else was currently in my room—was terrible.

“Ph-Phil, what’s with that creature behind you?”



The entire time Cedric spoke, he couldn't take his eyes off of Princess Adele, who still had the ice bucket over her head. Her pink dress emerging from

underneath the bucket, along with her small limbs, certainly made for a bizarre sight, so I could understand his shock.

“Oh? Is someone here?” I heard Princess Adele say.

“My little brother,” I replied.

“LITTLE VIO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

“Dearie me, what a strange voice your brother has. And he’s such a cheery person, unlike you, Phillip.”

“That wasn’t my brother.”

Things were starting to get out of hand. I excused myself before I gently removed the bucket from Princess Adele’s head.

“I’m having so much fun with all these unique experiences,” she said as I did so.

She was so innocent that I felt even worse at how I led her astray.

“Phil, who’s this little girl?”

“She’s the daughter of an acquaintance. I was taking care of her today.”

“Wow, that’s not something you see every day,” Cedric muttered before he stared at the princess curiously.

“You must be Phillip’s younger brother. You look as handsome as he does! My name is Adele.”

“My name is Cedric. This is Little Vio.”

Despite Cedric’s surprise at the fact I was taking care of a child, he politely returned the princess’s greeting. That was when Princess Adele’s gaze shifted to Vio, who was still perched on Cedric’s shoulder.

“My, what an adorable little bird!”

Please, I’m begging you, don’t say anything unnecessary.

The only thing I could do was pray and watch.

“Viola, I love you!!!” Vio squawked.

“Hello there, Little Vio. You look so cute while you’re talking,” Princess Adele

said.

“Viola, so cute!!!”

“Is your name short for Little Viola? Phillip, you must really adore her.”

It looked like Princess Adele mistook Vio’s name for “Viola.” Thanks to that misunderstanding, she probably thought I was the kind of person who would spend my days telling my parrot that I loved it and that it was so cute. Cedric looked like he wanted to say something but I waved my hand at him, gesturing for him to stay silent.

In any case, we just had to have one cup of tea and then we could go back to the palace. I hurriedly prepared some milk tea as I replied, “Ah, yes, that was her name, I think.”

“Hee hee, you’re such a nice birdie.” Princess Adele likely had never experienced such close contact with a parrot, because she was conversing with Vio, still on Cedric’s shoulder, keenly. “Talking with such a little bird is so much fun.”

“Yes. It’s easy to tell a bird something that you might have trouble saying to someone else.”

“Something you have trouble saying to someone else...” Princess Adele murmured.

Princess Adele sat down on the couch and Cedric placed Vio on her arm. He taught her the best way to stroke the parrot’s feathers and eventually, the princess let out a heavy sigh.

“Will you listen to me, Little Viola? I actually really like Luna...”

It seemed that she had regretted fighting with Princess Luna. Vio tilted her head to the side lightly and listened in silence. While the two of them conversed, I continued to prepare the tea. Right when I was about to call out to them to tell them it was ready, Cedric pressed his pointer finger to his lips.

“Shhh!”

I wondered what happened, and followed Cedric’s line of sight.

“Adele?”

It turned out that he was looking at the princess, snoozing away on my sofa. I had noticed the sudden silence, but it seemed that she was fast asleep, probably because she had so much fun. Her face, slack in sleep, made her look like nothing more than an ordinary little kid, and I smiled at her. Vio must've wanted to let her sleep as well, because she had quietly moved to perch on the arm of the sofa and she was peering down at Princess Adele without saying anything.

"She's a cute kid," Cedric said.

"Isn't she? Here, if you want some tea, you can have a cup."

"Thanks, I'll have some."

"I'll take Adele back."

"All right. Thanks for the tea."

It wouldn't do for the tea I'd prepared for the princess to get cold, so I offered it to Cedric instead. Then, I carefully picked up the princess and returned to the carriage so that we could go back to the castle.

Our First Fight

Ever since the day I happened to overhear a conversation about Phil and the princess at the palace, I spent my days with a heavy weight in my chest. Even now, as I sat in the carriage on my way to House Lawrenson's manor, I'd sigh if I let down my guard for even a moment.

The princess I met at the soiree the other day was a lot more lovely than I ever imagined. She was beautiful from afar, but breathtaking up close, yet she talked to me as if we were peers.

The thought of such an amazing person liking Phil, as well as the idea of them spending so much time together, was like a bad taste in the back of my mouth. I also couldn't stop thinking about the conversation from the other day, where I learned that they had apparently also held hands and hugged each other.

"It wouldn't be so bad if I ask him about it, would it?" I murmured to myself.

I was Phil's fiancée. That should give me the right to ask him a few questions about his relationship with the princess. What I heard the other day must have been a misunderstanding of some sort. I decided that I'd ask him directly about everything so that I could feel better. I could still see my moody expression reflected in the window of the carriage, and I smacked my palms against my cheeks. This was one of Phil's rare days off, so I wanted to spend it by having fun with him, after I figured out the truth of the matter.

Get it together, I told myself and forced myself to smile.

We eventually reached the manor, and Phil greeted me with an ecstatic look on his face.

"Thank you for coming to see me. I missed you."

He looked so happy that I could practically see flowers in the air around his face. Seeing him smile made me want to as well, and we headed to his room with our hands linked together.

"I worked so hard every day, looking forward to when I'd be able to see you again," he said.

“Thank you. I’m sure you’re exhausted after so much work. But at least it’s getting closer to the day of the ceremony.”

“Yes, there’s only one month left. I’m going to continue doing my best. After the ceremony ends, I want to spend some time relaxing. Maybe we can go fishing together.”

We were conversing while walking down the hall. Ever since our first fishing trip when I pretended to have amnesia, we regularly made our way to the river to fish. He was the same as always, and seeing him act like this made me sigh in relief. We eventually reached his room and walked in. Little Vio was in her cage, as usual. After I got permission from Phil, I took her out of the cage and let her perch on my arm.

“Hello, Little Vio.”

“Play tag with me!”

“Tag?”

She was saying some weird words, but she was still as cute as ever today. After I gave Little Vio a few head pats, I sat down on the sofa at Phil’s invitation. He immediately went to prepare tea for us.

“Is milk tea all right for you today as well?”

“Yes, thank you so much for everything. I also made some snacks that would pair well with black tea.”

I brought cookies today. They were the ones that Phil complimented the other day, and that I had improved on.

“That sounds delightful,” he said, looking so happy that I could feel myself growing warm as well. “Rex was praising you and how far you’ve come as well.”

“How far I’ve come?”

“He said that the apple pie you brought the other day, as well as the tea you prepared, was really good.”

“Oh, I didn’t know he said that. I’m glad to hear it.”

There was a gentle air in the room as we talked about this and that. But I was

waiting for the chance to ask about the princess. I knew that this would probably be my only chance to bring her up, so after I clenched my fists, I opened my mouth.

“Um, Phil, there’s something I’d like to ask you about.”

“What’s the matter?”

“It’s about the princess...”

“The princess?”

Even after I brought her up, Phil’s hands as he poured hot water over tea leaves didn’t twitch. His expression remained the same. He’d always been terrible when it came to hiding things, so if there was something he was guilty about, he couldn’t possibly remain this calm. That gave me a sense of relief, so I continued to speak.

“The other day, I overheard people saying that you and the princess were holding hands, and that she was hugging onto you.”

“Oh, yes, that did happen. I forgot about it.”

“Wha—?!”

To my shock, Phil spoke in a casual tone, without a hint of shame in his voice. No matter the circumstances, a man with a fiancée shouldn’t be holding hands with a woman, or letting her cling onto him. I thought that Phil had enough common sense to know *that*, at least. I fell silent, and Phil continued to speak as if nothing was wrong.

“We went to the menagerie yesterday too. Since it was my second time, I was familiar with the park.”

“Um, wait, you went with the princess?”

“Yes. Someone told her about how we went the other day, and she begged me to take her there.”

I couldn’t help but feel that it was a bit insensitive of him to take another woman to a spot that we’d gone on a date at not too long ago. But maybe I was just being petty. I did my best to bite down on the anger starting to rise up inside of me. He was still smiling as he prepared our tea, but instead of looking

at him, I stared down at my hands, which were balled up in tight fists over my knees.

I had no idea what was going through Phil's head right now. That was when something shiny caught my eye. Curious as to what it was, I reached out and picked it up, but what I saw made the breath catch in my throat.

"H-Hair?"

To my surprise, there was a beautiful and long strand of golden hair resting on his sofa. To my memory, none of the women in House Lawrenson had hair this color or length. Not only that, but I recognized this hair.

"I found another woman's jewelry and hair in his room, and that was how I found out he was cheating on me! Can you believe his nerve?!"

At the same time, I remembered what Jamie said in the past, after she found out about her lover's affair. My heart started to pound, and my fingertips grew cold. Phil, of all people, would never do this to me. I knew that in my heart, but I still couldn't get rid of the alarms ringing in my head.

I was frozen on the sofa, the hair I'd picked up in hand. That was when Phil finally noticed me.

"I'm sorry. I'll have someone clean that up. It's probably the princess's hair."

"What?"

Why in the world would the princess need to come into this room?

I was at a loss for words, and yet Phil still acted like everything was perfectly fine.

"After we went to the menagerie, she insisted on coming here to spend some time, so I took her here. She ended up falling asleep on the sofa, so that was probably where the hair came from."

"Wh-Whaaa...?"

"Viola? The tea's hot, so please be careful."

I was no longer able to hide my shock. Upon seeing that, Phil tilted his head to the side. Then he placed two teacups onto the table and sat down next to me as

if it was a given. He was acting so calm and so brazen about everything that I no longer had any clue as to what was right and what was wrong.

“Is something the matter? Do you feel sick?” Phil asked as I remained silent.

He leaned down to peer into my face, and there was a sincerely worried expression on his face.

I wasn’t all right at all. Not only did he take the princess—just the two of them—to a spot that was perfect for couples, but he also invited her to his room. No matter how I looked at it, it didn’t feel right. This seemed beyond the realms of what’s considered professional responsibility.

“Sometimes people cheat without realizing they’re cheating, you know. He didn’t seem to feel guilty at all.”

Once again, Jamie’s words rang through my mind, and my chest began to throb with pain. But even so, there was the chance that this was all just a big misunderstanding. Right when I thought that, Little Vio on my arm suddenly let out a heavy sigh and then she opened her beak.

“I actually really like Luna...”

That was what she said, clear as day, looking right at me as I stared down at her in shock.

I actually really like Luna.

By “Luna,” she must mean “Princess Luna.” And even if Princess Luna came to this room, I doubted that she would say something like that to Little Vio. My heart felt tight, as if something was constricting it, and my entire body felt cold.

I slowly took a deep breath, picked up the cup of milk tea before me, and drained it in one gulp. It wasn’t as if the *tea* did anything to me. After I placed the tea back down on the saucer, I looked up at Phil.

“Thank you for the tea. I’m going to go home.”

“Viola?”

I picked up my bag and stood up from the couch before saying, “I’m sorry for taking up your time.”

Upon seeing the way I was acting, Phil hurriedly stood up as well.

“What’s the matter? You only just arrived.”

“I’m sorry. I want to be left alone.”

I tightened my hold on my bag and without stopping, I hurriedly walked toward the door.

“Wait! What’s wrong?”

There was a seriously panicked look on Phil’s face. He ran after me and grabbed my arm. In reality, his question was hardly enough to encompass the sheer wrongness of the situation. I felt like I was about to burst into tears. I feared that if I spent any more time with him, I’d say something terrible to his face.

“I apologize if I did something to offend you,” he said.

“Everything you’ve done has offended me.”

“I’m sorry, I don’t know what you mean. Can you tell me what I did? I’ll make it right.”

He stared at me as if pleading for me to talk to him. I did nothing wrong, and yet seeing that look on his face made me feel guilty.

Why can’t he figure it out? Yes, sometimes, Phil is remarkably slow on the uptake. But this time, he surely has to have some idea as to why I’m acting this way?

“Viola?”

I love you so much, Phil. All this time, I kept thinking about you and worrying about you. And while I was doing that, you were going on dates with the princess and inviting her to your room? That’s a step too far.

“Phil, you idiot! Cheater! You’re terrible!”

“Ch-Cheater? Wait, I think you misunderstand—”

“It’s not as if I’m a right match for you anyway.”

“Where did that come from?”

Phil looked perplexed, and the expression on his face told me that he genuinely had no idea what was going on. I was in the same boat. I didn't know what was happening, and I didn't want to know.

"I want to cool off for a bit. I would like us to spend some time apart."

"Some time apart? That's the last thing I want, please, Viola, wait."

"I'm sorry."

Phil looked seriously hurt, and seeing him made my chest clench in sympathy. But even so, I bid him good luck with his work and then left the manor.

Fake It to Break It! I Faked Amnesia to Break Off My Engagement and Now He's All
Lovey-Dovey?! Volume 2
by Kotoko

Translated by Stephanie Liu
Edited by Ruuri

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KONYAKUHAKI NERATTE KIOKUSOSHITSU NO FURI WO SHITARA, SOKKENAI
TAIDO DATTA KONYAKUSHA GA "KIOKU WO USHINAU MAE NO KIMI WA, ORE
NI BETABORE DATTA" TOIU, TONDEMONAI USO WO TSUKIHAJIMETA Vol. 2

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You Only Notice Once It's Gone

I heaved a heavy sigh and Jamie offered me a sad smile.

"You've been sighing a lot today, Viola."

"I'm sorry. I don't mean to."

"They say that every time you say, you let out a piece of happiness, you know."

I visited Jamie's house in the afternoon to spend some time with her, but I couldn't stop thinking about my argument with Phil from last week. As a result, more sighs than words passed through my lips.

"Your fight with Lord Phillip must've been an awful shock," Jamie said.

"It wasn't really a fight. It was..."

It was more like I was the only one getting mad at Phil, who seemed perplexed the entire time. I wouldn't necessarily call that a fight.

I'd told her that Phil and I had a disagreement, and left it at that. Jamie was someone who treasured her friends deeply. If I told her the entire situation between us, I knew she would get mad and try to push her way into the palace.

"I want to cool off for a bit. I would like us to spend some time apart."

"Some time apart? That's the last thing I want, please, Viola, wait."

Ever since that day, I hadn't met with Phil, nor had I reached out to him. Just once, he'd sent me a letter. However, I didn't open it and simply left it on the table.

"I've got to say, I'm really surprised. I thought that Lord Phillip was the kind of person who would apologize his heart out if something happened between you two."

"Yeah..."

"In the first place, I don't think I've ever seen you angry, Viola."

Though I'd known Phil for a very long time now, I'd only gotten mad at him

once—when I overheard him insulting me and I told him that I hated him. Back then, Phil and I weren't on the best terms. We were engaged, yes, but a large part of me considered him a stranger rather than my betrothed. Even so, it was shocking and hurtful to hear him talk about me that way.

"It's not that I'm angry. I'm just really sad..."

The reason behind the disagreement was different this time. But now that I'd fallen in love with Phil, the pain in my heart was far worse. It felt like there was a weight in my chest and I couldn't stop thinking about him, even if doing so made me even sadder.

I couldn't stop sighing, nor could I focus on any of my tasks. Normally, even if something sad or painful happened, I could move on and go about my day. I wasn't the type of person who would let it continue to affect me. However, that was probably because I was used to giving things up. Back when I thought Phil hated me, I thought it was a given since nothing about me made me a suitable wife for him.

This time though, it was impossible for me to think of things that way and let bygones be bygones. It was a painful reminder of just how important Phil had become for me.

"Lord Phillip's probably sulking in bed around now, isn't he? Or is he so busy these days he doesn't even have time to hide in his room?"

I could very easily imagine how Phil was doing at this moment. But I didn't want to see him anymore, at least while the princess was still in this country. For the three weeks until the ceremony ended, I wanted to live quietly and avoid seeing him. I didn't want to hear about Phil or the princess anymore.

"But why did the two of you even start arguing?" Jamie asked. "Lord Phillip loves you so much, and he always puts you first."

"I can't really explain it, but a lot of things happened... Besides, I don't even know *why* Phil likes me so much in the first place."

Jamie hated cheaters above all, so I couldn't discuss this with her. And even though he got a little strange when it came to matters involving me, Phil was a perfect human being. He had everything and could do anything. So I simply

couldn't understand why someone like him would like me. However, I remembered him saying that he realized his feelings when he saw me crying.

"Why don't you just ask him that? Viola, I'm sure you want to hurry and make up with your beloved Lord Phillip too, right? The threads you keep choosing are all the same color as his hair and stuff."

I couldn't say anything back because Jamie was right. Even though I wanted to be mad at him, I was still embroidering a handkerchief that I planned on gifting him. It was likely that I could *never* hate Phil, no matter what he did or said.

I'll ask him why he likes me after we solve all the problems between us.

With that resolution in mind, I continued to move the needle.

"I want to disappear..."

"Didn't you meet with Viola last weekend? I thought I'd be seeing you all happy today."

I must look incredibly gloomy right now, because Rex tilted his head to the side. He had been away from the palace for about a week to handle another job so this was the first time in a week I was seeing him. As for me, I'd been wallowing in despair ever since the day I last met Viola. There was no such thing as hope in this world.

I was in no state to do anything, but I still had plenty of work waiting for me. In fact, the work simply kept piling up. I was doing my best to sit in front of the documents and move my hand. To put it lightly, my life was absolute hell.

"I think Viola hates me now..." I said.

"Huh? What? What happened? What'd you do?" Rex asked.

"I don't know why, but she got mad at me and called me a cheater."

"Uh, how did *that* happen?"

Rex stared at me like he couldn't believe what he was hearing. Truthfully, I was in the same boat. When she came to my house that day to spend time with me, she looked sad and then suddenly went home. She got angry and even

accused me of cheating on her. I couldn't even begin to fathom where that came from.

Of course, I didn't cheat on her. However, Viola was one of the gentlest and kindest people I knew. Considering how mad she got, I most certainly wronged her in some unforgivable way.

Before she lost her temper, we were talking about the princess. But Viola said she liked children. She'd said that they were important and that we should take care of them. So I didn't think that the princess had anything to do with it.

"Phillip, you were cheating on her?"

"Of course not. I didn't even have time to and even if I did, I wouldn't want to."

"Yeah, I know. I was just asking. But then that means either Viola heard some rumors that made her think you did, or you made her suspect you with your words and actions."

I didn't reply, lost in thought. These past few months, I'd spent every bit of my free time meeting with Viola. The only time I spent with another woman was the other day when I went to the soiree with Princess Luna. But I'd met Viola at that party as well, even if it was by coincidence, and nothing happened that would have led her to believe I was cheating on her.

The only other person I spent a lot of time with was Princess Adele, but I couldn't imagine that Viola would suspect me of cheating on her with a five-year-old girl. I couldn't figure out the reason behind Viola's anger and cradled my head in my hands.

For the longest time, I'd lived life thinking Viola disliked me. In the past, when she told me that she hated me right to my face, I was so upset that I genuinely thought I would die. However, I soon became used to it. Now that I knew the happiness of Viola telling me she liked me and seeing her smile at me, I finally learned how scary and painful it was having her despise me.

"So, what are you gonna do now?" Rex asked.

"I don't know what I should do," I sighed. "She hasn't replied to my letter and I don't have the time to go meet her."

Besides, she told me that she wanted to spend some time apart. Since she even ignored my letter, she likely wouldn't welcome my presence if I suddenly visited her in her home. The last thing I wanted was for our misunderstanding to get worse, or for her to hate me even more.

"In any case, I want to tell her that I'm sorry," I said.

"But you don't even know what you did wrong," Rex pointed out. "I hear that apologizing to someone when you don't even know what you're apologizing for is a surefire way to make them mad."

"To be frank, I'm angry about the situation too," I admitted after a pause.

I honestly had no idea why I was being suspected of infidelity. I'd always been devoted to Viola and I never paid attention to any other woman. I set down the pen I'd been using to sign documents and then practically collapsed onto the desk, pressing my face into the wood.

"All right, all right," I heard Rex say. "I'm sorry for being so mean to you. I'll go check things out for now, so perk up."

"Will you really do that for me?"

"Yeah. Leave it to your big bro."

Apparently, Rex planned on going to meet Viola soon and he would try asking her about what happened then. Rex was certainly the most reliable person to have as a friend in times like this. I thanked him from the bottom of my heart.

"Sorry. I'm truly grateful for your help."

"No problem. For now, let's finish up work. We won't be able to go home anytime soon at this rate."

After he said that, Rex pointed to the mountains of documents piled up on the table.

"This is from Rex?"

"Yes. It seemed like an emergency."

In a blink of an eye, two weeks passed since I last saw Phil. While I was

enjoying afternoon tea in the parlor with my mother, Selma handed me a letter that Rex had apparently sent me.

Since the day we had our argument, I hadn't contacted Phil, nor had I met him. I was the one who decided to put some distance. Yet every day, my desire to meet him, as well as my anxiety, grew stronger. This was the longest I went without seeing or communicating with Phil since I pretended to have amnesia. Back then, aside from our monthly meetings, we didn't even have the bare minimum of correspondence.

"T-Today... Later...?" I muttered.

I hurriedly opened up Rex's letter and saw that he wanted me to go with him to a soiree tonight. He was practically begging me to do so. Normally, Rex didn't appear before high society with a woman. This was so that he could avoid any unnecessary drama. However, some parties required its attendants to bring a partner. I was usually the one who accompanied Rex when he went to those. With the exception of Lady Natalia, no one would suspect us of anything untoward since we were related.

"Mother, I apologize. There's been a change of plans. I'm to attend a soiree with Rex later so I'm going to go and get ready for it."

"Oh dear, I see. Can you tell Rex that I said hello and that he should come have tea with us some time soon?"

"Yes, of course."

My mother had always treated Rex extremely well. It was likely thanks to my mother spoiling him that he'd ended up the kind of person who would brazenly visit my house without even announcing himself beforehand.

There wasn't much time left before the party. Since I owed a lot to Rex, I had no choice but to return to my room and quickly ask the maids to help me with my preparations.

Not on the Same Wavelength

I put on the dress that I bought the other day, as well as clipped on a hair accessory that matched it.

“You look very beautiful. I knew that this dress would look good on you, Lady Viola.”

“Thank you. I’m glad that I bought this hair accessory as well.”

I looked at myself in the mirror and checked that everything was all right. Then, I ordered for the maids to leave my room. My matching necklace with Phil shimmered from around my neck. I gently placed my hand upon the necklace and sighed softly.

I wonder if Phil is with the princess again right now? What if in the time I spend avoiding him, he ends up falling for her?

As those thoughts swirled in my head, I let out a sigh.

“It’s so painful...”

Though I still had my reservations, I couldn’t help but want to see him again. Since it was about time to leave, I stood up before my vanity and headed toward the foyer.

As soon as I arrived at the site of the party, someone patted me on my shoulder. I turned around and saw Rex wearing a suit. He looked as extravagant and fashionable as he always did, and I could see people were staring at him. Since there were more people than I’d expected at this soiree, I was worried we wouldn’t be able to find each other. So it was a relief that I was able to meet up with him so soon.

“Vivi, sorry I called you out so suddenly. Thanks for making it.”

“Of course. You seem as busy as ever, but are you doing all right?”

“Not really, but I’ll have more free time soon so I’ll do my best.”

I went around with him to greet the nobles, but all I needed to do was stand there and smile. I felt like this was the perfect opportunity to pick up some tips from Rex, who was skilled in the art of conversation.

Eventually, Rex said, “Let’s chat a bit while we rest,” which I nodded to. We moved to stand near the walls of the ballroom.

As soon as we got to a nice and private spot, Rex smiled and said, “So, I hear you had a fight with Phillip?”

I wasn’t surprised. I already expected that Phil told him everything and that Rex would ask me about what happened.

“It’s not really a fight...” I replied.

“Phillip looked like he was about to die. Watching him even made me feel bad.”

“I see...” My chest clenched upon hearing that.

“So, why did you think that Phillip was cheating on you?”

Rex’s voice was so gentle, as if he was trying to soothe an upset child. Hearing him talk like that made me want to cry a little bit. I balled up my hands in tight fists and took a second to sort out my thoughts, then I opened my mouth.

“I heard rumors about Phil and the princess.”

“Rumors? What kind?”

“That they’re really close, that they hold hands, and that they hug each other.”

“Uh-huh.”

“Not only that, but I heard that the two of them—*just* the two of them—went out together and then Phil invited her to his room afterward.”

“Oh, yeah, I heard about that. Her Highness was really happy about that.”

Rex nodded like he wasn’t surprised to hear that and I was lost for words, staring at him in shock. Maybe I was just an extremely petty person, and what Phil did was within the realm of reason for most people?

Uh, no, a man with a fiancée shouldn’t be doing that kind of stuff. That’s

highly inappropriate. I mustn't let him persuade me like this.

"And then?" Rex prompted.

"I heard Little Vio say that she liked the princess, so..."

"I knew that for all he pretends he doesn't care, Phillip likes to dote on the princess."

"Dote on?"

"Dote on" seemed a rather impolite way to describe how one would treat a princess. It wasn't like Rex to be so disrespectful. "For all he pretends he doesn't care" was also an odd thing to say. Rex was smiling a little, and it was clear that he was happy about something.

"So, what about him cheating on you?"

"Er, I just finished talking about him cheating on me."

"Huh?"

"Huh?"

Rex stared at me with such confusion that I felt perplexed as well. He usually goofed off a lot, but he was actually someone with a lot of common sense. Since he was reacting with such shock, I started to worry that I really was just making a big deal out of nothing.

"Am I just being petty? Is this within the realm of reason?"

"Petty? Realm of reason? Sorry, wait a second." Rex pressed a finger upon his brow and started to think. After a few minutes he said, "Let me get this straight. So, Viola, you're feeling jealous over Phillip and the princess?"

"That's right."

I nodded enthusiastically and in response, Rex's ice-blue eyes widened as if he was surprised. His reaction made me wonder if I was really being that weird, and I shifted uncomfortably.

"Is it really so strange?" I asked.

"No, well, I think it's perfectly fine... I was just surprised that you liked Phillip so much."

“Well, of course I do.”

“I see, I see. It’s kind of cute that you’re jealous of a girl that small. But I have to say, I feel pretty bad for Phillip that you think he’s cheating over something like this and spending time away from him.”

“Hmm?”

“A girl that small,” “think he’s cheating,” “I feel pretty bad for Phillip.”

I couldn’t help but feel like there was something off about Rex’s words. The princess I met the other day looked like she was about my age, in fact, she was even taller than me by a little bit. “A girl that small” didn’t feel like an apt descriptor for her.

Despite my clear confusion, Rex looked a little exasperated as he continued, “I’m telling you, Phillip has no interest in little girls.”

“L-Little girls?”

Where did that come from?

Clearly we were on two entirely different wavelengths, so I raised my hand to tell Rex to wait a second.

“I don’t think we’re having the same conversation at all,” I said.

“Huh? Aren’t we talking about Princess Adele?”

“Princess Adele?”

I’d never heard that name before. Like I figured, we weren’t talking about the same thing.

“I’m talking about Princess Luna,” I said. “Is there another princess?”

“Huh?” Uncharacteristically, Rex sounded like he was taken aback and then he murmured, “Don’t tell me... Ahh, all right, I see what’s going on here.”

He nodded as if he was convinced of something before he continued, “Is this a thing that happens to normal people? I guess if this misunderstanding was gonna happen to anyone, it’d happen to Phillip.” Then, he started to guffaw as if he couldn’t hold it in anymore. “He was so sad that even I felt bad for him. Well, I feel bad for you too, Viola.”

I had no idea what he was talking about. As I stared at him, unable to comprehend, Rex reached out and messed up my hair.

“Viola, I think you’ve greatly misunderstood something.”

“Misunderstood something?”

Just what did I misunderstand?

More importantly, I was curious as to who Princess Adele was. As I waited for Rex to continue, I heard the sound of a familiar voice.

“Rex, here you...are...”

I looked over to the direction of the voice and saw Phil. It’d been two weeks since I last saw him, and he froze the moment our eyes met. I didn’t think that he would also show up in a place like this.

I glanced over at Rex and he said, “Took you long enough.”

It seemed that Rex knew in advance that Phil would be here. Now that I thought about it, tonight’s invitation was far too sudden. I could guess that Rex invited me to try to make me talk to Phil.

“Viola,” Phil said, saying my name like a prayer as he walked straight toward us.

The breath hitched in my throat and I lowered my head. I didn’t know what to say, all I could do was look away.

“I want to talk to you. Alone,” Phil continued.

“I...”

Unlike the other day, I couldn’t run away. Phil reached out and grabbed my arm in a tight hold, preventing me from moving. I looked up at him and saw a hint of sadness behind his blank expression.

“Rex, I’m going to be gone for a little bit,” he said.

“All right. Take your time and talk things out. I’m pretty sure that it’s all just a big misunderstanding and some miscommunication. Do your best.”

Rex waved his hand at us and smiled. Phil tugged my arm and, unable to fight against his strength, I followed him out of the ballroom.

Something That Will Never Change

The two of us walked down the quiet hallway, with my arm still firmly held in Phil's tight grip.

"Phil, please let go of me."

"No. If I do, you'll run away."

It felt like the first time since I reciprocated Phil's feelings that he talked to me in such a cold way. He power walked without looking back at me, and all I could do was try to keep up with him. For the first time, I realized that he always slowed down his pace to match mine.

We eventually entered one of the sitting rooms. I tried to escape while Phil was closing the door, but he pushed me up against a wall.

"P-Please let go of me," I tried again.

"Never."

I felt trapped under his bright golden gaze, and I couldn't look away.

"Are you angry with me?" I asked after a few moments to work up the nerve.

"Yes. With myself, for making you look as if you're about to cry." After he said that, Phil stroked my cheek and leaned in so close that our noses were almost touching. "Truthfully, I'm angry with you as well."

"Huh?"

In the next second, he pressed his lips against mine in a biting kiss. All of the kisses that we'd exchanged to this point were gentle, as if we were just brushing our lips together. But this kiss felt almost like a stranger's, and I could feel his anger in how aggressive it was. He pulled away and he stared at me, his eyes burning like molten gold.

"I love you so much, yet you really think that I would fall for another woman?"

"Ah..."

He truly was angry at me. I could feel it with my whole body. Now that I thought about it, I'd been with Phil for the past nineteen years, and this was the first time that he was directing anger born from something other than jealousy at me. Multiple emotions waged war in my chest, and my field of vision began to blur.

"But..."

"No matter what happens, I will love you and only you. For as long as I live, that will never change."

His straightforward words and earnest voice sank into my heart. I could feel, to a painful degree, how much Phil loved me, and I wanted to cry even more.

"I-I love you as well, Phil. That's why I'm in so much pain..."

After I said that, Phil's entire body relaxed.

"I'm glad to hear that," he murmured. "In any case, let's both calm down and talk things out. I assure you, I'm not cheating on you."

"All right..."

After I nodded, Phil gently led me by the hand to the sofa in the middle of the room. We sat down next to each other. I even felt a sense of nostalgia at the feeling of him by my side.

"For starters, who did you think I was cheating on you with?"

"With the princess. I heard that you invited her to your room as well."

As soon as I said that, his serious expression instantly turned into one of confusion. In retrospect, Rex had the exact same reaction.

After a few moments, Phil said loud and clear, "I'm not interested in little girls."

Rex had said this earlier as well. I found it strange that we *still* didn't seem to be on the same wavelength and I tilted my head to the side.

"Er, what do you mean by 'little girls'?"

"Do you not consider a five-year-old to be a little girl?"

"Five years old?"

Yes, a five-year-old would definitely count as a little girl. However, that wasn't the problem here.

"The princess I saw at the soiree the other night looked every inch like someone our age..."

"Soiree?" Phil murmured. But then his eyes widened and he stared at me. "Don't tell me, you've mistaken Princess Adele with Princess Luna?"

Rex *also* mentioned a Princess Adele earlier.

"Who's Princess Adele?"

"The princess I'm always spending time with is the third princess, Princess Adele. She's five years old."

"You've got to be kidding me..."

"The day I met you at the soiree, I was with Princess Luna. However, that was the first and only night I spent with her alone, and she's not interested in me at all. Of course, I have no interest in her either."

I didn't know what to say. I didn't expect things to turn out this way.

So in other words, I was jealous of a five-year-old girl, and I accused Phil of infidelity when all he was doing was spending time with a child?

Relief filled me at the same time my face grew hot from embarrassment and shame.

"I-I'm so sorry. I... I can't believe what a misunderstanding I..."

"I apologize. I thought I was being clear when I told you about my work. It's not your fault."

Unlike Princess Luna, who was the ambassador, Princess Adele came in an unofficial capacity. Considering her youth, she wouldn't show up in high society gatherings either. Those two reasons were why most people didn't know that Princess Adele was visiting the country.

"However, you must have read my letter about her if you replied to it."

"The letter got rained on and there were parts of it I couldn't read because of that. But I thought I could grasp the general idea of what you were trying to say,

so I didn't ask you about the details..."

We stared at each other in awkward silence. I felt like an idiot for stressing out so much about this misunderstanding. I felt so much sadness and emptiness that I ended up feeling nothing at all.

After a moment, Phil covered his mouth with his hand and once again murmured, "I'm sorry. It's true that if I had done to Princess Luna what I did to Princess Adele, it would count as infidelity."

"Oh, but that's not what really happened. It was all because I didn't do my due research."

"No, it would be irrational to expect you to confirm the contents of my letters when they were filled with nothing but idle chatter."

It wasn't out of the ordinary to take a five-year-old to the menagerie, nor was it strange to invite them to one's room. Now that I thought about it, I told him the other day that children should let adults spoil them. That was undoubtedly part of the reason Phil was so lenient with Princess Adele. If I'd only paid more attention to what he was saying, or asked him for more details, then this misunderstanding would've never happened.

"I'm truly sorry," Phil said. "I'm sorry I made you feel insecure."

"I'm sorry as well."

"If I heard that you were going out with another man or inviting him to your room, I don't have confidence that I'd be able to stay sane."

After he said that, Phil gently pulled me into an embrace. It'd been much too long since I felt my beloved's warmth or scent that tears welled up in my eyes.

"I learned that I love you far more than I thought I did. You're so important to me. I wouldn't be able to continue living without you."

He was such a large part of my life now that it was unthinkable how I'd wanted to break off our engagement only a few months ago.

"Really?" Phil asked after a minute.

"Yes," I replied.

As soon as I said that, Phil buried his head against my shoulder, clinging onto me like a child would. His soft dark blue hair brushed against my neck, tickling me.

“I love you, and only you, as well. When you told me that you wanted some time apart, I thought I’d been swallowed up by darkness.”

I felt bad thinking about how painful these past two weeks must have been for him. Phil told me that he didn’t want me to apologize and he strengthened his hold on me.

“I don’t think I’d be able to survive if you hate me again in the future. I’ll die.”

“Ha ha, I’d never hate you.”

I didn’t think that I would be able to dislike Phil ever again. Besides, I learned from this experience that he would never do something I didn’t like.

“Thank you. Also, if possible, I’d like to see you at least once a week. I’ll have withdrawal symptoms otherwise,” Phil said.

“Sheesh, what are you talking about?”

We promised that we would make time for each other after the ceremony ended. Phil held out his pinky at the word “promise” and he looked so cute that I started to giggle. I wrapped my pinky around his and as I stared at our linked fingers with a happy feeling in my heart, I heard him call for me.

“Viola.”

And as soon as I looked up at him, he once again pressed his mouth against mine. Unlike the kiss from earlier, it wasn’t anything more than our lips brushing against each other, but my heart started to pound faster.

“U-Um...”

“I won’t hold myself back anymore.”

It seemed that this misunderstanding and the earlier kiss changed something inside of him. My heartbeat was roaring in my ears and I stared up at him, unsure of what to do. Then, his too-beautiful face drew closer to mine again.

“Please, let me be the only man in your sights for as long as we live.”

Upon hearing his words, I nodded and closed my eyes.

“Of course.”

What Happened the Day I Fell in Love

We'd managed to make up without incident, so we returned to the ballroom to where Rex was.

"Oh, welcome back. Judging by the looks on your faces, you two managed to resolve your conflict. That's great news," he said.

"Right. Thank you," Phil replied.

After that, we explained to him the misunderstanding that led to our miscommunication, only for Rex to laugh so hard he began to cry. From an outsider's perspective, our story was probably unbelievably ludicrous.

"You guys looked so serious while you were fighting, and *that* was the reason behind it? You two are hilarious."

After hearing Phil's explanation, I could understand the reason behind Little Vio's "I actually really like Luna..." I could've never guessed that they were Princess Adele's words. It really seemed like coincidence after coincidence was miraculously strung together to cause this disagreement.

"I seriously thought you were legitimately jealous of a little kid, Viola. And you kept calling it 'cheating' so I just chalked it up to you *really* liking Phillip. Then—"

"I'm begging you, please stop talking," I interrupted.

"Honestly, I wish that really was the case," Rex concluded.

Hearing my misunderstanding laid out like this was seriously embarrassing. I could understand why Rex would laugh at me, and I couldn't blame him. I still wished he wouldn't, though.

"Well, in any case, I think we all learned a valuable lesson. Some things can only be communicated with words. Seriously though, I'm glad that the two of you made up."

After he said that, Rex patted the two of us on our heads.

The party was still ongoing, but once we finished greeting our acquaintances, we decided to go home early. I felt really tired all of a sudden, and Phil looked

like he wasn't faring any better. We left the ballroom with our hands intertwined, and got into a carriage. We sat next to each other as if it was a given we would. Phil leaned back against the seat and let out a heavy sigh.

"I can't feel any more strength in my body... Until you said that you like me, I didn't even feel like I was alive."

Apparently, since he wasn't actually cheating on me, he'd always felt like this misunderstanding would clear up eventually. But, he couldn't help but think, "What if Viola hates me in the meantime? What if she starts falling for another man?" His thoughts were in an endless spiral of anxiety and pessimism. He hadn't even been able to sleep or eat as much as usual, and upon hearing that, I felt horrible for everything I put him through.

"In any case, I learned my lesson. I won't write you a letter if it's storming."

"I agree. I'll also ask you what you wrote if there's ever smudges on your letters again."

"Yes, please."

The moon and stars glowed ethereally from outside the window. It'd been far too long since I was able to enjoy such calm and quiet, and I could also feel the tension escape from my shoulders. Then, I decided to ask him something that'd always been on my mind.

"Um, Phil, why did you start liking me?"

I'd been dying to ask him this ever since my conversation with Jamie the other day. Phil looked surprised at the sudden query, but he sat up straighter and turned to look straight at me.

"I never told you about it, did I?"

"No, you haven't. I've been curious about it."

"If I recall, it was when we were seven years old..." Phil closed his eyes as if lost in his memories and then he started his story.

From the moment I was born, I had a fiancée.

I must have found her amethyst eyes beautiful even before I was capable of conscious thought. I didn't know the reason, but I always felt relaxed in her presence and rejoiced when I could meet her. That was the kind of person she was to me.

"Listen, Phillip. Viola is your soul mate. You must treat her well and make sure she's happy."

"A... Soul mate?"

"That's right. I'm sure that Viola will make you happy as well."

Long ago, a goddess saved our family and that same goddess chose Viola as my soul mate. Apparently, so long as I was with Viola, my entire family and I would find happiness. As a child, I didn't fully understand those words. But when I thought about marrying her in the future, I felt a ticklish warmth in my heart.

"Hello, Lord Phillip."

"Hello."

"What should we do today?"

"We can do whatever you want."

"I see. Then, would you like to spend the day reading some books?"

However, whenever I found myself standing in front of Viola, I'd become incredibly nervous for some reason. So nervous that I could hardly form words. Mysteriously enough, this only happened when I talked with Viola.

Every time I acted coldly in my conversation with her, Viola looked a little sad. Despite that, she always tried to speak with me, determined not to give up. I couldn't understand. It wasn't as if it was any fun spending time with me.

"Viola, you're the same as always!"

"Oh, Rex!"

If I was as sociable and cheery as Rex, would I be able to put a smile on Viola's face too? I couldn't stop thinking about things like that. I was unbelievably pathetic and frustrated at myself for my own flaws. Curious as to why I couldn't

do anything properly in front of Viola, and only Viola, I decided to go to my mother for advice.

“How come I can’t speak properly to Viola when I can converse with anyone else?”

“Ha ha, Phillip, so you’ve reached that age in life, huh?” My mother made an oddly happy face and patted my head before she continued in a gentle voice, “It’s because she’s special to you.”

“Special?”

“That’s right. I think it’s because you can’t stop thinking about her. I’m sure you’ll figure it out in time.”

That was all my mother said. No matter how many times I pressed her for more answers, she didn’t say anything more than that.

One day, we were invited to a noble’s son’s birthday party. Halfway through, I lost sight of Viola. This was a rather rare occurrence, since she usually spent gatherings at my side without saying a single word. Worried, I left the party and searched for her. It was only when I visited the gardens that I found her, crouching in the shadows of a tree.

“Viola?”

When I called out for her, her head shot up and she stared at me. When eyes met hers, I saw that they were rimmed in red and fat tears were pouring out from her big amethyst eyes.

“What are you doing over here?” I asked.

Viola rubbed her eyes with the back of her hand. I immediately regretted that I wasn’t able to ask her if she was okay or otherwise display my worry for her. It was my first time seeing her cry and I was simply too shocked.

“I don’t really like people seeing me cry...” Viola replied haltingly before she forced her lips into a smile.

The sight of her expression was like a knife through my chest.

“Did someone do something to you?”

The thought of that made me furious. I normally didn't feel anger toward anything or anybody, but it felt like I became an entirely different person when faced with Viola. I desperately wanted to take away any hurts or worries from her life. I handed her a handkerchief. Instead of accepting or rejecting it, she simply smiled as if she didn't know what to do.

“Thank you so much...”



After that, I wasn't sure what to do. So I decided that I would leave without a fuss.

“Would you like me to leave you alone as well?” I asked.

But Viola shook her head slightly.

“No. We’ll be spending the rest of our lives together. I’m fine with you here, Lord Phillip.”

My heart skipped a beat at her words. She said that we would be together for the rest of our lives, as if it was a matter of fact. Was I special to her in the same way she was special to me? Anticipation and excitement started to well up in my chest at that thought.

“That’s because she’s special to you.”

It was an odd feeling. I was happy and excited, yet there was a slight pain in my chest. I could feel the vague emotion that had been brewing inside of me start to take shape.

I must be in love with her.

That was why my emotions were all over the place when I stood in front of her. That was why I couldn’t do anything right in Viola’s presence. Ever since I was a toddler, I’d felt this way and I finally had a name for it.

By the time I realized it, I’d pulled her into an embrace.

Fake It to Break It! I Faked Amnesia to Break Off My Engagement and Now He's All
Lovey-Dovey?! Volume 2
by Kotoko

Translated by Stephanie Liu
Edited by Ruuri

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

KONYAKUHAKI NERATTE KIOKUSOSHITSU NO FURI WO SHITARA, SOKKENAI
TAIDO DATTA KONYAKUSHA GA "KIOKU WO USHINAU MAE NO KIMI WA, ORE
NI BETABORE DATTA" TOIU, TONDEMONAI USO WO TSUKIHAJIMETA Vol. 2

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I must be in love with her.

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"Lord Phillip?" Viola asked confusedly after a few moments.

At the sound of her calling my name, I came back to myself and hurriedly put some distance between us. Normally, we barely even spoke to each other. So she must've been surprised that I hugged her out of nowhere. I immediately apologized and, in a panic, pretended that I was trying to chase away a bug from her shoulder. It was not a very believable excuse, but Viola seemed to accept it.

After that, we sat down next to each other in silence. By the time she finally stopped crying, someone came to fetch her. I wasn't able to say anything considerate, nor did I even comfort her. Even so, she thanked me before she left. Her kindness reaffirmed my love for her.

Later, I heard that a group of noble daughters had insulted her directly, so I warned them to never approach Viola again. It was effective, as they seemed to behave themselves after I told them off. Since the day I realized my affections for Viola, my emotions only became more and more intense.

"Are you looking at Viola *again*?" Rex said once. "I'm surprised you aren't tired of seeing her face, considering you two have been together since you were babies."

"I could never get enough of her. The more I look at her, the more I realize how cute she is."

From how she did her best in everything she put her mind to despite how awkward she was with her hands, to how cute and kind she was, everything that made Viola *Viola* was precious to me. I loved every single part of her.

"If only you could say all that to Viola instead," Rex sighed.

"I agree..."

The stronger my feelings got, the harder it was to speak in front of her. I must've been clinging onto my unshakable position as her fiancé. It was precisely because we would be together for the rest of our lives that I figured we could take our time to bond. I had no idea how much my attitude would hurt her, nor did I realize that it would cause such a deep misunderstanding in the near future.

"Even though I realized my desire was to keep you safe and happy, all I've ever done since then is hurt you," Phil concluded.

This was the first time I learned about Phil's past feelings about me, and I could feel my heart swell with emotion. I could vividly recall the time that Phil mentioned, when he hugged me under the tree. At the time, I didn't realize that he loved me because I had been so thoroughly convinced that there really *had* been a bug on my shoulder.

"I love you. I love how you always do your best even if things don't go well, and how cute and kind you are."

His earnest words penetrated the deepest parts of my heart and my vision blurred.

"The only times I feel anything are when they have to do with you."

The intensity of the love he had for me—the love he still has for me—burned. I could feel it like an open wound.

"I could never think that you're not a perfect fit for me. So, I want you to stop thinking that way. I like you just the way you are."

"O-Okay!" Tears poured down my cheeks. I still didn't like crying in front of other people, but that hardly mattered when it was Phil who was before me. "I love you too, Phil."

Now, I truly loved him, this man who didn't want or need me to change. "Thank you for liking me, even after all this time."

We were only together like this now because he decided to come up with a ridiculous lie in the face of my faked amnesia. It was all thanks to the affections

he'd always held for me.

"Thank you for liking me, even though I'm like this," Phil said after taking a deep breath.

"Of course."

He reached out and held my hand in his. I could feel his warmth in my palm and I soaked it up, savoring the sensation of happiness.

Operation: Proposal (Again)

Six months later, the ceremony ended as a grand success. Now that Phil no longer needed to work as much, we were able to return to our peaceful everyday lives.

“You did amazing work,” I said. “It was a lovely ceremony.”

“Thank you. I’m glad that we pulled it off without incident.”

Granted, things weren’t completely over just yet. Phil still had some work that he needed to finish, but it was far less stressful compared to the months that led up to the ceremony. I’d been an invited guest, so I was present for the event. I found it to be a wonderful and emotional affair. Princess Luna did an amazing job performing her duties as royal ambassador that I found myself looking up to her, even though we were the same gender and around the same age.

Today, I was sitting in a gazebo in the palace’s garden. It was situated in the corner, surrounded by beautiful flowers.

“You must be Phillip’s fiancée. It’s very nice to meet you. My name is Adele.”

“Yes, I am. My name is Viola Westley and it’s very nice to meet you as well.”

Princess Adele clasped her little hands together as she looked at me, and her big pink eyes, framed by her long eyelashes, sparkled. Princess Adele had wanted to meet me. So in order to fulfill her request, the two of us, along with Phil and Princess Luna, decided to have tea together.

I could see the similarities between Princess Adele and Princess Luna, and she was such an angelic little girl. The thought of me being so jealous of a five-year-old, especially one as cute as the princess, made me feel embarrassed and sheepish.

“Oh, my! That’s the same name as the parrot in Phillip’s house! Hee hee, he must like you a lot if he named his parrot after you.”

“Y-Yes, so it seems...”

Hearing someone say it flat out was really embarrassing. However, it was much worse for Phil. I could see him next to me, covering his face with one hand. Princess Luna was giggling as well, clearly enjoying herself.

“I’ve wanted to meet you for so long. I’m glad I got the chance to,” Princess Adele said with a bright and adorable smile on her face.

“The pleasure is all mine,” I replied, smiling back at her. It was hard not to after seeing her honest joy.

Afterward, Princess Adele showed me the picture book that had the prince who resembled Phil and even I had to admit that the similarities were uncanny.

“I’m really sorry about all this,” Princess Luna said with an apologetic smile. “Adele was always with Phillip, so he didn’t have much time to spend with you. Once we return to Samarind, I’ll definitely get my father to sign off on the imports and the economic support for your country.”

“Thank you so much.”

“The two of you will get married soon, yes?” Princess Luna asked as she stroked Princess Adele’s hair.

“Yes, in three months’ time.”

“Then I do hope you’ll come to Samarind for your honeymoon! We’ll welcome you with open arms.”

“That sounds lovely! I’ve always wanted to visit Samarind.”

I’d actually never set foot outside of the country, not once. After I expressed the desire to visit Samarind, Phil said that we could go wherever I wished. The four of us enjoyed our tea together until it was time for Princess Adele’s nap. Princess Luna took her sister back to the palace.

“Princess Adele is such an adorable little girl,” I said. “I can understand why you were compelled to fulfill her requests.”

“Yeah,” Phil nodded. Then, he made a slightly bashful expression. “She sort of reminded me of you when you were younger.”

“Huh?”

“So she seemed a lot cuter to me.”

I didn't think that I was anything like that cute little princess, but it made me happy to hear Phil say that. Then again, he *did* say that the venomous-looking purple snake at the menagerie reminded him of me as well. So I felt a little conflicted about taking his compliments at face value.

Since Phil still had work to finish in the palace, I decided to go back home. He escorted me all the way to the entrance, but right before I got in the carriage, I heard him call my name. I turned around and met Phil's eyes. There was an oddly serious expression on his face.

“If possible, could you make time for me two evenings from now?”

“Yes, of course.”

“Thank you. I'll contact you about the details soon.”

“All right, I understand. I hope work goes smoothly for you today.”

I remembered that a while ago he'd said that he wanted to discuss something with me after the ceremony ended. I got into the carriage, wondering what it was he wanted to talk about, then left the palace grounds.

It was evening two days after my afternoon tea at the palace with Phil, Princess Luna, and Princess Adele. I was preparing for my meeting with Phil, with a large number of maids surrounding me to help. The restaurant that Phil had reserved for tonight was one of the most famous venues in the capital.

Since members of the royal family often visited this restaurant, I figured I should make myself as presentable as possible. The maids were so enthused about the task that I found myself a little taken aback. Even just choosing a single piece of jewelry took such a long time that I thought their behavior was quite strange.

“Do the accessories matter that much? Anything that goes with the dress should be all right,” I said.

“Lady Viola, what in the world are you saying?! This is a once-in-a-lifetime event!”

“Once in a lifetime?” I tilted my head, wondering what they meant by that.

But the maids didn’t pay me any attention as they were too busy running around the room, arguing over what I should wear. Finally, after an inordinate amount of time, I heard one of them say that their preparations were finished and I looked up at the mirror. The reflection that greeted me looked a lot more mature and extravagant than my usual appearance.

“I look lovely,” I said. “Thank you.”

“Of course, of course. Lord Phillip won’t be able to take his eyes off you,” one of the maids exclaimed.

“Isn’t that how he always is?” another replied.

“Oh, stop that.”

Despite my words, I couldn’t help but smile in response to my maids’ excitement. At this point, it was common knowledge within the manor that Phil was in love with me.

“Viola, have fun tonight.”

“Please give Lord Phillip our regards.”

Even my parents seemed awfully happy for some reason. I waved goodbye to everyone and then set off in the carriage.

Operation: Proposal (Again) 2

Phil greeted me and we sat in the carriage together as we headed off to the next location. Once we arrived, Phil escorted me off the carriage and we entered the restaurant. As soon as I walked in, a strong sense of déjà vu stopped me in my tracks.

“Viola?” Phil asked. “Is something the matter?”

“I feel like I’ve been here before.”

“Our families came here fifteen years ago after our engagement ceremony.”

“Ah...”

Now that he mentioned it, I had a vague memory of that. I savored the slight sense of nostalgia and continued to walk further into the restaurant. Once inside, we enjoyed a meal so delicious that every bite was a new surprise. I was full and happy.

“It was delectable,” I said.

It was a multicourse meal that consisted of all my favorite foods, and I could tell that this was due to Phil’s consideration. I was also happy about the fact that we were able to enjoy a nice meal together.

“I’m glad to hear that,” Phil replied. “They have different courses depending on the season, so we should come here again.”

“Yes, let’s. Thank you so much.”

I was also delighted by how we were able to make plans for the future, as if it was a given that we’d still be together.

“Let’s go outside for a little bit,” Phil suggested.

“Yes, that sounds like a good idea.”

Phil led me by the hand to a spacious and beautiful garden. The flowers were illuminated by the gentle moonlight, creating an ethereal and stunning view. It was so romantic. As I walked through the garden, I noticed a large fountain. This

was the only place I could vividly remember.

“If I remember correctly, this was where you and I—” I started, turning around without thinking too much about it. But then my gaze met Phil’s as he stared at me with a soft expression.

He slowly took my right hand in his and then got down on one knee. He looked just like the prince in the picture book Princess Adele showed me the other day, and I felt my breath escape me in a quiet exhale.

“Viola.” My heart started to beat faster when I heard the deep affection with which he spoke my name. “I love you.” Upon hearing his confession, my breath stopped. I could do nothing more than stare at him in shock.

When Phil saw my expression, he smiled gently. “I would like to ask for your hand in marriage. I want us to spend the rest of our lives together.”

It was when he said those words that I finally realized he was proposing to me. My marriage to Phil was something that had been decided for us from the moment we were born. Which meant that getting married to him was a given, much in the same way that a child would eventually mature into an adult. That was why the idea of him going out of his way to propose to me had never crossed my mind.

My breath hitched in my throat as I tried to respond. I never knew how happy I would be to hear Phil say, with his own words and of his own will, that he wanted to marry me. I didn’t know that being proposed to was such a joyous event. Tears silently fell from my eyes.

“When I’m with you, I seem to become a bit of a crybaby,” I sniffed.

“I’m sorry. Did I do something to offend—”

“Hee hee. These are tears of happiness.”

He was playing the part of a prince so perfectly only seconds ago, and yet at the sight of my tears, he started to panic. It was this part of him that I treasured more than anything in the world. I reached out with my left hand and enveloped his, then crouched down so that we were on eye level. It felt like I’d spoken to him just like this in the past.

“I love you as well, Phil,” I said. Even though it was my first time professing my love for him in such a direct manner, the words came out a lot easier than I’d imagined. “I want to live with you for as long as we live.”

I tightly squeezed his hand with both of mine, and Phil used my grip on him to tug me close, pulling me into an embrace. His shoulders were shaking slightly and it didn’t take me long to realize that he was crying.

“I’m sorry... I never thought that I would get to hear you say that.”

“Ha ha, it looks like you turn into a crybaby too.”

“I apologize. I must seem awfully lame.”

I slowly wrapped my arms around his shoulders and shook my head slightly. I’d seen for myself just how cool Phil could be. And besides, my love for him encompassed everything that made Phil “Phil,” including his imperfections.

After a little while, the two of us moved to sit on a nearby bench. The silence was broken only by the sound of a gentle breeze and the soft murmur of the water in the fountain. It was comfortably quiet.

“I’d like you to have this,” he said after a moment, carefully placing a ring on my finger.



“Thank you so much. I can’t even put into words how happy I am right now.”

The ring fit perfectly around my finger, and it shimmered so brightly that I

couldn't help but look at it. It had a sleek design, yet the diamond shining in the middle was incredibly beautiful. It was hard to look away. Though, I felt like I'd seen this exquisite ring before.

"This ring seems familiar to me."

Phil didn't say anything, though he made a slightly awkward face and I tilted my head. However, upon hearing him tell me about the fake ring he'd tried to put in my tea, I felt affection swell up in my chest. That didn't stop me from laughing at him though.

Until Death Do Us Part

It was on a sunny spring day that Phil and I had our wedding ceremony. I was in the dressing room of the Sevilla Cathedral, a pure white dress on my body. Selma had just finished checking over my appearance.

I'd known ever since I was a child that this day would eventually come. I'd even done my best to try to imagine it, but my reflection in the mirror was so much prettier and happier than anything from my fantasies.

"Selma, thank you for making me look so beautiful."

"L-Lady Viola, you look so lovely..."

"Hee hee, don't cry. You're going to make *me* cry as well."

Selma sniffed as if she could no longer hold it in, and fat tears rolled down her cheeks. She'd been by my side since I was a child. The sight of her tears made my eyes grow hot as well. Because Selma put so much effort into dolling me up, I tried my hardest to fight back my tears. It wouldn't do for me to cry and ruin my makeup.

"I'm so sorry," Selma cried. "Lady Viola, I love and treasure you. I'm so happy that I'm able to see you in your bridal gown."

"Thank you. I love you as well."

My parents and friends were already waiting for me in the cathedral. When my parents came to see me earlier, they cried upon seeing me, and I ended up crying along with them. The maids managed to disguise my puffy eyes and red cheeks with makeup. I didn't even know how to start thanking them for that.

Even though there was still some time left before the ceremony started, I couldn't help but feel a little nervous that I hadn't seen Phil yet. He should've finished his preparations before I did. That was when I heard a knock on the door.

"Come in," I called.

"Oh, Viola! You look really pretty."

“Thank you, Rex.”

Rex, Phil, and even Little Vio entered the room. I had never heard of a parrot attending a wedding, and there apparently wasn't a precedent for it. But for us, Little Vio was irreplaceable so we asked for special permission to allow her presence. Little Vio, perched on Rex's shoulder, was also dressed up for the occasion with a cute little pink ribbon around her neck. I smiled at the sight of her.

Rex walked toward me and sat down in a nearby chair. He looked impeccable in his suit and, though it was a lot less flamboyant than his usual garb, he stood out so much it was as if *he* was the one getting married today.

“Thank you for coming today as well, Little Vio,” I said.

“Viola, so cute!”

“Hee hee, thank you. You're really cute today too, Little Vio.”

I gently stroked her on the head and she happily exclaimed, “Little Vio, cute!” Honestly I'd been slightly nervous but thanks to Little Vio, I felt like I was able to relax a little.

“Wow, it really is a little emotional, seeing you in your bridal gown. No joke, I feel like I'm about to cry,” Rex said. It made me a little embarrassed to hear his honest praise. If the day ever came when Rex got married, I was sure to cry at his ceremony as well.

“You used to be so cute as a kid, Vivi. You were so little but you kept saying that you would eventually be my bride. But now you're getting married to someone else, huh...”

“Don't just make up memories that never happened.”

I had never told Rex that I wanted to be his bride—Alan was more than enough. Incidentally, Alan was also waiting for us in the cathedral. While still thinking about Rex and Alan, I turned to look at the other star of the day, who was standing at the entrance of the dressing room.

“Phil?”

He was staring at me, frozen like a statue. In his white and gold tuxedo, Phil

looked so handsome that I could stare at him forever. He usually wore black, dark blue, and gray. So a white suit completely changed his entire impression. Though it wasn't a color he usually wore, he looked so good in white that he took my breath away. That much was evident considering how picturesque Phil looked even though he was simply standing there.

"Phil, are you all right?" I asked again.

His narrow eyes widened as if he was taken off guard and he covered the bottom half of his face with his right hand. "I'm sorry," he said after a moment. "You were so beautiful that I forgot how to breathe."

"You're going to die if you don't breathe. But thank you, Phil. You look amazing as well." I smiled at him.

Phil lowered his face, his cheeks bright red. "Oh no. I'm going to cry."

"It's much too early for that!" I laughed.

Phil was serious though. It was only when Rex guided him to a chair that he finally sat down.

"Phillip kept saying weird things like how he can't believe how happy he is and asking me if this is reality or not. He even thought that he must've already died. I was so worried for a moment about what would happen. The wedding ceremony was seconds away from losing its groom."

"Wha..."

Could you still call it a wedding ceremony if there wasn't a groom? In any case, I was glad that Phil safely got it together and made his way over here.

"You're so cute. You're the cutest person in the entire world. You look so lovely that even the goddess of beauty is sure to envy you."

"Jeez... You're exaggerating so much."

"I'm telling the truth. I could spend the rest of my life looking at you."

Of course I was happy to hear that, but having him stare right at me with a serious expression while complimenting me nonstop was embarrassing even for me. I'd have to apologize to the goddess of beauty on his behalf. That was when I noticed Rex staring at us with an incredibly serene and gentle look in his eye.

“Seriously though, congratulations. I’m really glad to see how happy you two are, considering I’ve spent almost my entire life by your side.”

“Rex...”

I knew now that Rex treasured the both of us in his own way. Though he played things off as a joke, it must’ve greatly pained him to see us at odds. His presence and advice had helped me when I was pretending to have amnesia.

“Thank you, really,” I said.

“No biggie. If you really want to thank me, then continue to regale me with all your funny stories,” Rex said with a sly smile. Then, he stood up, “Okay, I’m gonna get going. I’ll be waiting with the other guests.”

“All right. Thank you.”

“I should be thanking you, Vivi. See you.”

“Viola, I like you!” Little Vio squawked, and I laughed in response.

We saw Rex and Little Vio out, then Phil and I sat down in the chairs again. Now that it was just the two of us, I suddenly felt a little shy. I heard Phil say my name and I looked up at him.

“I’m so happy that we were able to welcome this day together. Thank you.”

“I should be the one thanking you,” I replied with a smile. It was hard to keep a straight face upon seeing the pure joy in Phil’s expression. “I’m sure our past selves would be surprised if they could see us now.”

“I agree. I probably wouldn’t be able to believe it, thinking that I’d gone mad.”

His words made me giggle, but I probably would have the same reaction.

Phil’s gaze drifted over to the clock and he murmured, “It’s about time. Viola, let’s go.”

“Yes.”

We stood up, hand in hand, and walked down the long aisle to the chapel where everyone was waiting. With every step I took, I thought back to all the moments in our past.

“I hate you, Lord Phillip!”

"I hate you too..."

"It's because we were in love with each other."

"Wha—?"

"Ever since I can remember, you were the only one for me. If you told me to die, then I would gladly do so this very second. That's how deep my love is for you."

"Why do you like me this much?"

"I don't know the reason. But at this point, I can't live without you, Viola."

"I've always been in love with you... That is the truth."

Even though we'd had so many misunderstandings and so many conflicts up to this point, it was thanks to those obstacles that we were able to reach where we were now. Nothing about our past was pointless, and everything must've happened for a reason. With that thought in mind, I tightened my hold on Phil's hand and looked up at him. Our eyes immediately met and he smiled bashfully. My entire heart swelled with affection.

"Phil, I love you."

"I love you as well, more than anything in the world."

We smiled at each other, our thoughts drifting to our happily ever after. We then walked through the door, to where all of our beloved friends and family were waiting.

So That I Can Proudly Stand at Your Side

“You want me to play the part of the goddess in this year’s Founder’s Festival?”

“Oh, yes. We would all be most grateful if you would accept the role, Lady Viola,” my mother’s friend, a marchioness, smiled as she held my hand. She had an exceptionally tight grip, as if she was trying to will me to nod my head.

The Founder’s Festival was an event that happened once per year in order to celebrate our kingdom’s National Foundation Day. Stalls would appear along the roads in the capital, and a huge stage would be set up in the square. Everything from plays to concerts would take place at that stage. It was an event that I’d always looked forward to, ever since I was a child.

“I’m truly flattered, but I don’t think I’m up to the task of playing the goddess...”

Whoever played the goddess at the Founder’s Festival was essentially the face of the entire event. According to legend, a goddess founded this kingdom. The person playing her would need to wear her robes, dance onstage, and speak with the children who attended the festival.

I remembered when I went to the Founder’s Festival as a kid, I handed some flowers to the woman playing the goddess that year. Though I was terribly nervous the entire time, I could still recall how much I’d admired her beauty. Apparently, the goddess role went to one of the younger daughters from the higher echelons of the nobility, and whoever was chosen was considered a role model of all noble daughters. So I couldn’t understand why I had been chosen, since I was the daughter of a mere viscount. I wasn’t very good at dancing either, so there was no way I’d be able to perform in front of a large audience. No matter how you looked at it, I was not the right fit.

I tried my best to convey all this to the marchioness, but her smile didn’t budge.

“Don’t worry Lady Viola, you’re a textbook example of a proper noble

daughter. And you'd be considered a duchess, thanks to your upcoming marriage to Lord Phillip."

"B-But..."

In reality, I'd heard that the goddess role was a lot of work. I guessed that was the main reason as to why none of the noble daughters wanted to do it, so they had no choice but to come to me.

"Um, I'm truly sorry, but I really can't dance."

"It's all right! We'll make sure to find you a good teacher."

"I'm sure there are noble daughters who are far better suited for the goddess role than I am..."

"That's not true. Lady Viola, you're the perfect match for this role."

"But, I..."

"Please, don't be so modest! Lady Viola, you..."

I did my best to reject the offer, but the marchioness refused to back down. After about thirty minutes of going around in circles, I could no longer think of an excuse, leading to my defeat.

"If you'll have me, I'll gladly accept the role..." I said slowly and dejectedly.

"Thank you! I knew you would, Lady Viola."

In my periphery, I could see my mother making an apologetic face at me. In contrast, the marchioness had clasped her hands together with a cheery smile on her face, seemingly not noticing how I'd slumped my shoulders.

The next day, Phil came over to my house and I told him about how I was going to play the goddess during the Founder's Festival. He furrowed his brow after I finished my story.

"A bodice?"

"A goddess."

Considering how badly Phil misheard me, he must have also been of the opinion that I would've never been approached for the role. After I very clearly and firmly corrected him, his golden eyes widened.

“Viola... A goddess?”

“Yes. I’ll do my best.”

Tomorrow would be the first day getting tutored on my dancing and I already wasn’t looking forward to it. But even so, I held up my fists and smiled, pretending like I was really excited to start. I didn’t want Phil to worry.

Phil murmured something, but I could only catch a few of his words.

“Phil? Did you say something?”

“No, nothing,” he replied with a shake of his head. He still looked like he wanted to say something though, but I had no idea what the matter could be. “Who’ll play King Aristide this year?”

“I hear that Lord Tillet will.”

King Aristide was the first king of our country and, much like with the goddess role, a noble son had to play his part during the Founder’s Festival. However, whoever played the king needed to be twenty-three years old, which was the same age King Aristide was when he was crowned.

This year, Lord Tillet was the one who was chosen. He was the son of a duke, and was popular among the noble daughters for his good looks and social skills. He was everything that I wasn’t, and the thought weighed on me even further. During the Founder’s Festival, the pair who played King Aristide and the goddess shared a dance together. Unlike the dances that you might need to perform at a social gathering, the Founder’s Festival dance didn’t require the performers to get very close to each other. We *did* need to practice though, since it was more like acting than dancing.

I heard that many noble daughters started to volunteer for the role of the goddess after hearing that Lord Tillet would play King Aristide. Though the marchioness assured me that she turned everyone down, I wished that I could get someone else to act as the goddess in my place.

Phil was looking down at the ground for a little while but then he slowly turned to look at me. “Do your best. I am rooting for you.”

“R-Right. Thank you very much.”

He doesn't usually say things like that, and his voice was awfully flat. Is he all right? Despite my worries, I smiled at him.

Over the following days, I spent all of my free time practicing for the Founder's Festival, as well as helping with the preparations. I didn't usually exercise in my everyday life, and the lessons were so difficult that I suffered from muscle pains every day.

"Lady Viola, are you all right?"

"Y-Yes, I am. Thank you so much."

Lord Tillet was a surprisingly kind person. I slowed down everything so much because I kept making mistakes, and yet he never looked annoyed or irritated. He simply continued to practice with me with the patience of a saint. Apparently, he'd known about me even before we were paired up for the Founder's Festival, so he treated me in a very casual manner.

"I think Phillip'll be really happy to see you."

"Hee hee, I sure hope so."

"You're very beautiful, after all."

"No, that's not..."

"I'm telling the truth."

Since both Lord Tillet and Phil were sons of dukes, they'd known each other since they were children and were close friends. During practice, the countess—who once played the goddess during her youth—acted as my dance instructor. With her help, as well as Lord Tillet's, I was starting to become better at dancing.

"Lady Viola, you look lovely. I'm sure everyone will be delighted to see you."

"Thank you. I'll do my best!"

The reason I was putting so much effort into practice was mainly because this was an incredibly important role. But it was also because I heard that if I did well as the goddess this year, it would improve my reputation in high society. I'd heard rumors that people made disparaging comments toward Phil due to my lower status. I did not want him to feel bad because of me so I'd decided to put

my everything into practice.

“Let me try again from the top,” I said.

The next day, I’d made plans to meet with Phil in the afternoon. However, I was late because my mother and the other noble ladies came to check up on how my practice was going. This wasn’t the first time that I was late for a meeting and I felt really guilty about that.

“I’m sorry, practice took longer than I expected.”

“No, it’s fine. Was it all right for you to come here?”

“Yes. Lord Tillet let me end practice early.”

Sometimes, it felt like the countess could speak for days without ever needing to stop. Because Lord Tillet took it upon himself to converse with her, I managed to arrive at the meeting spot only a few minutes late. I couldn’t thank Lord Tillet enough.

“I see...”

After that, we sat next to each other on the couch as usual and conversed. However, I couldn’t help but worry about how Phil seemed like he wasn’t feeling well. It was clear that he was pushing himself to respond to me. There was a strange awkwardness in the air, reminiscent of when you’re left alone with a friend of a friend.

“Um, today, we practiced one of the more famous scenes from the story books. Lord Tillet taught me how to use a sword, so I think I’ll be able to put on a convincing performance.”

“I see...”

Phil didn’t say anything beyond that, so I wasn’t sure what to say either, which caused an odd silence. I started to seriously worry about Phil and how he didn’t seem to be paying attention. Silence was our status quo back in the day, but now it felt terribly awkward. I couldn’t stand it and continued talking in a desperate attempt to fill it.

“Er, Lord Tillet brought us some cake today and I had some. It was really good.

Apparently, the store is on Third Avenue in the capital, so why don't we find time one day to go to—"

Before I could finish talking, Phil suddenly closed the distance between us. His lips only touched mine for a brief moment, but it was so sudden that my heart skipped a beat before it started to pound in my chest. It was rare for Phil to kiss me out of nowhere like this. It was even stranger that he'd do this considering his earlier attitude. I stared at him, perplexed, and saw Phil looking back at me with a sad expression.

"I don't want to hear about that."

"Huh?"

"Lately, *he* is all you ever talk about when you're with me."

I didn't mean anything by it. I'd thought that Phil and Lord Tillet were friends, so that might have been why I kept bringing him up. The bigger reason was that I'd only been going to practice lately, so I didn't have anything else to talk about.

"I-I'm sorry. I thought you two were friends?"

"We're acquaintances. In fact, I don't think I like him very much."

"Huh?"

Why would Phil dislike someone as sociable and gentle as Lord Tillet? Did something happen in their past? I did my best to try and calm the thunderous roar of my heart as I pondered this mystery.

"In the past, he kept complimenting you," Phil explained. "He always said that you're cute or that you're his type."

"Lord Tillet said...?"

"Yes. Apparently, he knew that we weren't on the best of terms at the time and asked if I'd be willing to trade places with him. That's when I started to hate him."

"I see."

I never imagined that such a conversation took place between the two of

them. Yes, Lord Tillet praised my appearance a lot. I thought that he was trying to make me feel better, since my looks were the only praiseworthy thing about me when it came to playing the role of the goddess. I was honestly surprised, since I didn't think he was serious about it.

It also seemed that Phil was jealous about Lord Tillet. Earlier, he'd said that he didn't think he liked him. Now, he very clearly stated that he hated him.

"He ticks me off..." Phil growled.

It was my first time hearing Phil use language like that and my heart jumped for more than one reason. His far-too-beautiful face drew closer to mine again until our foreheads bumped together. We were so close that our breaths mingled. I felt so embarrassed that I unconsciously tried to back away, but he quickly stopped me with a hand on my wrist.

"You're the only thing I ever think about," Phil said. When my only response was a quiet inhale, he continued, "To tell the truth, I didn't want you to play the goddess. I don't want you to call another man's name, nor do I want you to speak to one. Just the thought of someone else touching you makes me want to die."

We were so close to each other that I could see my own reflection in Phil's beautiful eyes. They burned with such strong passion that even though I wasn't sad, I could feel a sharp burning in the bridge of my nose. Phil must've noticed because his face twisted like he was about to cry as well.

"I wasn't ever going to say that to you..." he sighed. After a murmured apology, he pulled me close in a tight embrace and I felt my heart skip yet again.

"I know that I'm a petty man. I'm sure you no longer think as highly of me."

"Th-That would never happen! But why did you never tell me that was how you felt?"

"I couldn't. You seemed so determined to act as the goddess."

"Um, that's because..."

Phil had apparently been hiding his feelings of unhappiness and discomfort

ever since I told him that I would act as the goddess during the Founder's Festival. He even tried to secretly encourage other noble daughters to try and take the part from me, but after he saw how hard I was working, he stopped, thinking that he shouldn't act selfishly. I actually wished that he *had* been more selfish. We were trying so hard to be considerate of the other that we ended up causing more problems in the end.

"You're *my* lover, Viola..." Phil muttered, sounding like he was pouting as he buried his face against my shoulder. His reaction was so cute that I gently ran my fingers through his soft hair. A warm, fuzzy feeling settled in my heart upon hearing him refer to me as his lover rather than his fiancée.

"I'm sorry. I didn't know that you were so unhappy about this."

Though the marchioness was determined to have me be the goddess, there were so many volunteers now thanks to the Lord Tillet Effect. There was the chance that if we all went to try and convince her, she'd let someone else take the role from me. In any case, it seemed that Phil's biggest issue was with the dance so I told him that it was no big deal. I would simply be holding hands with Lord Tillet for a little bit. But it seemed that Phil placed a lot of importance on holding hands because he stared at me like his world was ending.

"I'm not very quick on the uptake, so if I do something you don't like, please just tell me," I said.

I didn't realize that character flaw by myself. Thanks to the fact that I didn't notice Phil's feelings for me despite all the years we'd spent together, a lot of people around me told me that I was a little obtuse. It was something I wanted to work on for the future.

However, Phil hesitated before he said, "I'm scared that you'll think I'm annoying to deal with. I don't think I've been doing a good job of trying to fix that part of me."

"Oh, of course I'd never think that. I'm more scared that you'll start to dislike me if you keep your frustrations bottled up."

"I'd never hate you."

I giggled a little at the slightly angry look in Phil's eyes. "Will you really never

hate me no matter what I do?”

“Yes, of course.”

“Even if I eat what’s yours without permission?”

“I’ll make sure we always eat the same food.”

“What if I break one of your valuables?”

“There’s nothing more valuable than you.”

I was scared that he *really* wouldn’t get angry at me no matter what I did. I’d never do something to make Phil angry or upset on purpose, but I wanted him to tell me off if I was at fault. But when I told him that, he simply replied that he would give it a try next time. It didn’t sound like he actually would.

“The only reason I accepted the goddess role in the first place is because I heard that if I do a good job at it, it’ll improve my standing in high society.”

After I told him that, Phil’s eyes widened for a moment. He must’ve realized why I cared about my reputation with the other nobles. Though Phil was far more obtuse than me when it came to matters of love, he was very perceptive when it came to these kinds of things.

“Sorry... I’m going to hide myself in a hole now...” he said in a voice so quiet I could hardly make out the words. “You did all that for me, yet my own selfishness was all I could focus on.”

“That’s not true. I’m happy that you were jealous of me.”

Phil looked like he was actually starting to get dejected so I patted him on the head, only for him to mutter, “You’re making it worse by being so nice to me.”

“Phil, you’ve been putting in a lot of hard work ever since you were a kid, right? Now it’s finally my turn to pull my weight.”

Upon hearing me say that, he slowly raised his head to look at me. As the future Duke Lawrenson, Phil must have received an education far stricter than mine. He had been born with a plethora of talents, but I knew that Phil put in a lot of time and effort in studying as well.

“I’m sorry it took me so long to do so,” I said. “I won’t cause you any worry, so

could you watch over me?"

His face twisted slightly as if he was fighting back emotions and nodded. In the past, Phil would only take me to the bare minimum of social gatherings, and would always head home right after greeting people at the party. I'd heard that wasn't how Phil acted when he was alone, so I had been under the impression he was embarrassed about how I was inferior to him in every single way. But now, I realized that he must've been doing his best to keep up appearances while alleviating the pressure from me, since he knew that I didn't enjoy going out to parties.

"I'm not very reliable yet as your fiancée. But I'm going to get better."

"Thank you." The inner corners of Phil's eyebrows raised slightly and he smiled as if at a loss before he hugged me again.

"Just why do you like me so much?"

I could sense how much Phil thought about me. It was to the point that I could no longer understand how I missed these signs in the past.

"You could slice off all my fingers and kill me in the most sadistic manner, and I still probably couldn't hate you."

"Is that what you think of me?"

If your fiancée is a crazy murderer, I actually think you should hate them. Seconds ago, I was so touched but now I'm not sure. It was scary how strong his love for me was.

"In any case, that's how much I love you," he concluded.

"I love you too... But my feelings for you are probably about half of your feelings for me."

I must like him a lot too because what he said just now made my heart skip a beat. I definitely didn't want him to kill me or anything though.

"That's more than enough," Phil said, smiling softly at my words before he tightened his arms around my body.

Fake It to Break It! I Faked Amnesia to Break Off My Engagement and Now He's All
Lovey-Dovey?! Volume 2
by Kotoko

Translated by Stephanie Liu
Edited by Ruuri

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

KONYAKUHAKI NERATTE KIOKUSOSHITSU NO FURI WO SHITARA, SOKKENAI
TAIDO DATTA KONYAKUSHA GA "KIOKU WO USHINAU MAE NO KIMI WA, ORE
NI BETABORE DATTA" TOIU, TONDEMONAI USO WO TSUKIHAJIMETA Vol. 2

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After a ton of hard work, I successfully fulfilled my duties as the goddess during the Founder's Festival.

"Viola, you were amazing! It was such a touching performance!" both my mother and Jamie exclaimed. They were so moved by both my acting and the effort I put in that they started crying. They weren't the only ones to praise my work, a lot of people praised me as well. I felt like my performance as the goddess was my greatest achievement to date.

"Viola, thank you. You did amazing," Phil said. He showered me with more praise than anyone else, and he thanked me over and over again.

I'd spent my entire life running away from my problems and responsibilities, so I'd never worked this hard at anything. But doing so for the Founder's Festival was an experience worth treasuring. It wasn't all fun and games, and there were a lot of times I thought it to be so painful I wanted to quit. But now, I could say from the bottom of my heart that I'm glad I took on the role.

In the past, I was always hiding in Phil's shadow, staring down at the ground. But now, I wanted to boldly stand by his side and live my life looking forward.

The Shape of a Married Couple

Time flew by, and it had already been a month since Phil and I got married. Now, my name was Viola Lawrenson, and I lived in House Lawrenson's manor. There were a lot of things I still wasn't used to, but both my new family and servants treated me very well. I didn't want for anything at all. The Duke and Duchess Lawrenson were often in their duchy, so I usually spent my days with Phil and Lord Cedric. Of course, Little Vio would be with us as well.

One afternoon, Jamie and Rex visited the manor, and I had tea with them in the garden.

"This was supposed to be your wedding gift. I'm sorry that it took me so long to give it to you," Jamie said.

"It's all right. Thank you, this is a great present."

Apparently, both of them prepared a wedding gift together, advising each other the entire time. However, since it was a custom order, it wasn't finished in time for the actual wedding. When they told me that part of the story, they had matching dejected expressions and slumped shoulders.

"Thank you so much, to both of you. I'll treasure it," I continued.

"You're welcome," Jamie replied. "Speaking of which, is Lord Phillip not home today?"

"He isn't. He's attending an acquaintance's birthday party."

Phil left in the morning and told me that he would be back in the evening.

"Huh, I didn't know about that," Rex hummed. "I've been pretty busy lately too, so I haven't been able to meet up with Phillip at all."

It had been a long time since I saw Rex as well. He worked as a civil official and recently received another promotion. He's been the subject of the other noble's gossip, saying that he's one of the youngest nobles to reach a high position in the country.

"And you know what, my parents have been nagging at me about getting

married, saying that it's about time for me to settle down," Rex sighed.

"I can't blame them. You're going to be twenty-five soon."

Rex was slightly past the average age men got married, and he was supposed to take over his family as Earl Dowland. Considering his status, I understood why his parents were starting to get nervous about the fact that he was a perpetual bachelor.

"Lord Rex, you seem the type to have really high standards."

"Oh? It's that obvious? I simply can't find a woman who would be a suitable wife for me."

"I'm not surprised..."

I wasn't joking when I said that. It was undoubtedly a difficult task to find a woman who could be Rex's equal. Not only was the Dowland family one of the more important noble families in the kingdom, but he himself had great looks and an elite job. His only flaw was his personality.

"So many people have approached me about giving their daughter a chance that rejecting them all takes me the entire day. On occasion, I look through what information the matchmaker has on the daughters and guess whose name I saw in one of the folders? Natalia! I couldn't stop laughing."

Rex chuckled and added that marrying Natalia would be a pretty amusing experience. However, as I took another sip of tea, I thought that it would take Rex a while before he finally put a ring on it.

"All right, enough about me," Rex said. "I wanna hear about you two."

"I plan on marrying Hugo next spring, but nothing interesting has happened between us. Nothing that would amuse you, Lord Rex. It's been very peaceful."

"Oh, please. You don't have to say it as if I'm always looking for trouble or poking my nose into other people's business."

"Aren't you, though?"

From their interaction, it was plain to see that Jamie was also starting to get really familiar with who Rex was as a person. They both turned to look at me.

“So, how’s married life?” Jamie asked. “Have things been different?”

“I was pretty curious about that too,” Rex added. “Has Phillip been on cloud nine?”

They both leaned forward as they asked, pressuring me to answer them. I had a feeling I knew what they wanted to say, and I shook my head.

“Nothing changed,” I said.

“Oh, stop, as if. Living together makes you closer in lots of ways.”

“I’m not lying. Absolutely nothing has changed.”

I was telling the truth. Since we got married to each other, we were obviously living under the same roof. That was a change, for sure, but my relationship with Phil was the same. In fact, that was *exactly* the issue.

“Jeez, Viola. You’re making a face like you’ve only gone as far as a kiss,” Jamie joked.

“Well, that’s exactly it,” I replied with a solemn nod.

After I said that, both Jamie and Rex widened their eyes. “You’ve gotta be kidding” was written all over their faces.

“Wait, really?”

“Yes, really.” I repeated it again and again, and every time I said it my heart started to hurt.

“You’re joking, right? It’s already been a month since you two got married,” Jamie exclaimed.

“What, is Phil chickening out again?” Rex asked.

“No, that’s not it,” I said. I shook my head and heaved a heavy sigh. It was terribly embarrassing, but I’d been agonizing over this problem by myself for over a month now. I’d wanted to ask someone for advice, and these two would certainly offer me some.

I gave a tight squeeze to the skirt of my dress and said, “To tell the truth, I told him no.”

“Huh?”

“Because I said no, we didn’t go any further.”

It was really embarrassing to confess this to my friend and my cousin. It was hard to find the right words. But both of them were quick on the uptake and understood what I was trying to say.

“Are you saying that when you said ‘no’ because you were embarrassed, Lord Phillip took it at face value?”

I nodded at Jamie’s question. After our wedding ceremony, I tidied myself up and went into the bedroom where Phil was waiting for me. Things were fine up until that point. I didn’t think that there were any issues after that either. However, halfway through, I said no. Though I didn’t mean anything by it, Phil’s hand stopped immediately.

“I’m sorry,” he murmured, making a trouble and hurt expression. After that, he walked away from me. Our first night together as a married couple ended without anything happening, except for there now being an awkward atmosphere between us.

“It’s been a month since then and nothing has happened...”

After I finished telling them about what happened, Rex made a pitying noise and Jamie covered her mouth with both of her hands.

“That’s...” she said, but her words trailed off.

“I didn’t dislike it at all. Honest,” I whispered. Every time I thought back to that moment, I felt so much guilt that I wished I could simply disappear.

“Don’t worry, I get it, Viola. Girls don’t mean it when they say ‘no,’” Jamie said. “But, I have to say, this *does* seem like something Lord Phillip would misunderstand.”

“Phillip really treasures you, and sometimes his feelings get the better of him,” Rex added.

Both of them looked frantic as they tried to comfort me, and I could tell that they were careful with their words. Hearing them say that neither Phil nor I were in the wrong was a weight off my chest.

“I guess you two have completely missed the opportunity to get to the next

step of your relationship,” Rex said.

“Once, I tried to apologize and so brought this up with him. But he ran away,” I sighed.

Don’t worry. I understand. I’m sorry. After he said that, Phil ran off. I highly doubted he understood anything. Even if I could corner him and tell him that what happened that day was a misunderstanding, I didn’t feel like he would believe me. Rex and Jamie were still staring at me with matching expressions of vague sympathy.

“It’s not really your fault, Viola. But I do feel so bad for Lord Phillip. I can’t even begin to imagine how he’s feeling.”

“Phillip is usually such a lame coward, so it must have taken him a while to work up that courage. When I think about how all of that went to waste, I seriously feel bad for him.”

“It hurts to think about it...” I murmured in such a quiet voice that it was nearly inaudible. I covered my face with both of my hands.

They were right. Phil was usually very shy, he must have been so nervous waiting for me that day. Then, he heard me say ‘no’ and thought I was rejecting him. When I thought about how he must have felt at that moment, my heart clenched like it was gripped in a vice.

“It’s usually impossible to get a second chance when it comes to things like this, especially if it’s Lord Phillip we’re talking about.”

“Oh no, what should I do?”

“Is Lord Phillip otherwise his usual self?”

“Yes, he’s the same as he always is so long as I avoid bringing up what happened that night...”

In saying that though, it felt like he touched me less than before. I felt like because of my rejection, Phil was under the impression that I didn’t like him touching me. But I was always ecstatic to feel his touch. I felt like holding my head in my hands but before I could do so, Jamie held my hand in a tight grip.

“Viola, this isn’t the time to worry about what you should or shouldn’t do.

This time, you *have* to do something. I'm sure that with how much of a coward Lord Phillip is, he isn't going to make the first move under the current circumstances."

"But what *can* I do?"

"Push Lord Phillip down on the bed."

"P-Push him..." I froze, unable to believe what I just heard.

But Jamie was serious. "I feel bad for him. This entire time, wimpy Lord Phillip has been doing his best to show you how much he loves you. Don't you think it's time for you to return the favor?"

"She's right. Despite how pathetic he is, the only reason you two are together now is because he put in the effort. Viola, it's time for you to show how serious you are about Phillip too. You have to put in extra work to make up for how dumb he is."

I'd never heard my husband insulted in so many different ways and this many times before. However, they were correct. It was true that I'd lacked assertiveness. Besides, I was the one in the wrong this time. Just thinking about pushing him down made me want to shrivel up and die from embarrassment, but I had to do my best. With that resolve in mind, I looked up and opened my mouth. But before I could say anything, another voice rang throughout the room.

"Sorry that I'm so pathetic and dumb and wimpy."

We all turned around at the sudden voice and saw Phil standing there.

"Oh, Phillip. Welcome home. You're early," Rex said. Both he and Jamie looked somewhat awkward, and it was clear that Phil's sudden arrival had taken them by surprise.

"The person I was with started feeling sick, so I came home after I sent him back to his manor."

"So that's what happened. Welcome home," I said.

"Thank you. I'm glad to be back."

Every time I greeted Phil upon his return home, he seemed happy. In the past,

he'd said that this interaction made it feel more real that I was in the home that he would return to, and it always filled him with joy.

"So, what were you all talking about?" Phil asked.

"About your and Viola's married life," Jamie replied.

"Our married life?"

"That's right. Viola was asking us for advice."

"Advice?" Phil repeated, a perplexed look on his face. "Is there something you're worried about, or something that you're unhappy with?"

"Um..."

"It seems like Viola has something she wants to say to you, so we'll be heading home now." With that, Jamie stood up.

"Huh?" I exclaimed.

"Thanks for the tea. Good luck, Vivi," Rex said as he stood up as well. "You don't have to see us off," he added before he and Jamie quickly left the room.

Jamie was my best friend, so I knew exactly why she said what she did. She created this situation precisely so that I wouldn't chicken out and run away. Phil and I were the only ones left in the room, and I could feel an awkward atmosphere between us.

"Did I do something?" Phil asked.

"N-No, you didn't! You really didn't do anything. In fact, I'd said that I did..."

"In any case, let's go back to our room first."

"All right..."

The two of us walked through the garden side by side and made our way back to the manor. Usually, we would hold hands while walking through the house. However, my right hand remained empty. The lack of warm fingers threading through mine felt like yet another cold stab through the heart.

After we made it to Phil's room, we sat down next to each other on the sofa.

The distance between us felt wider than usual. Even if it was just a trick of my mind, it still made me sad. Phil suggested that he prepare some tea for us but I told him that I was all right for now. I felt like saying it now before I started thinking too hard about it would be the only chance I had.

“Um, Phil, I need to talk to you about something.” I turned to face him and reached out to where he was resting his hand on his lap. I placed mine over his and felt him twitch under my palm as if he was surprised. “I’m sorry that I said ‘no’ the other night.”

“Viola, that’s...”

“I didn’t mean it. I was really happy, truly. I didn’t dislike it at all.” I did my best to communicate my sincere thoughts to him. I wasn’t able to find the right words to go about it, but I wanted him to know that I wasn’t just trying to spare his feelings.

“I’ve been so lonely this entire month because it felt like you were distancing yourself. In reality, I want to spend more time with you. I want to touch you.” It was so embarrassing, but considering how he must’ve felt that day, I couldn’t let that stop me. “I want you to—”

But I wasn’t able to finish my sentence. Phil pressed his lips against mine and stole my words from my breath.

“Are you really all right with it?” he asked after he broke off the kiss.

“Yes. In fact, I’m more than all right with it. I’d be delighted if—”

Once again, Phil kissed me. His fingers grazed my cheeks and ears, and even slowly made their way down my neck. After what felt like forever, he pulled away and stared into my eyes. His face was so close that the tips of our noses were touching.

“I thought that you never liked being touched,” he said.

“Um, I’m not sure if I like or dislike it. But I don’t mind being touched if you’re the one doing it, Phil.”

I worked up the courage to say that and my world spun a moment later. By the time I had realized it, Phil had pushed me down onto the sofa.

“Viola.” I couldn’t look away from his sweet, honey-colored eyes. “Are you sure about this?”

“Yes.”

“I’ll make sure that no one can make fun of me for being pathetic again.”

“I like you even if you are.”

I gently cupped Phil’s cheeks with both of my hands and pulled his face down toward mine. His blush only lasted an instant, but I could feel affection welling up inside me at how cute he was.

“That was unfair,” he complained and I giggled in response. “I suppose that I’ll never grow out of this when it comes to matters involving you.” He slowly leaned down and pressed his forehead against mine. “May I try again tonight?”

“Yes, if you’ll have me.”

We looked into each other’s eyes and chuckled together. I was sure that this wouldn’t be the last problem we faced together. We would likely continue to misunderstand each other in the future, or have little arguments. But every time that happened, I wanted to face Phil head-on and get close to his way of thinking.

With that resolution in mind, I returned the hug that my beloved husband was giving me.

The One Truth That'll Never Change

"Wendy, here you are!"

I peered under the table in the study to discover my beloved daughter, who was hiding there with a book in hand. She had my violet hair and Phil's beautiful golden eyes. Wendy gave me a mischievous smile and then looked at Little Vio perched on her shoulder.

"Hee hee, looks like they found us."

"Wendy, angel!"

"Jeez, stop copying what father says. You kept on repeating embarrassing things in front of my friends, so I had to deal with them teasing me."

Lately, Wendy was really into reading the books that were in the study, with Little Vio always at her side. Seeing them together made warmth bloom throughout my chest and I told her to read in a brightly lit room or else she'll harm her eyes. Wendy agreed and immediately crawled out from under the table. Usually, she would read while sitting properly in a chair, so I wondered why she was under the table today.

I asked her that and Wendy, oddly, scrunched up her face like she was feeling awkward. "I was reading something kind of bad."

"Kind of bad?"

I don't remember any books like that in the study. I figured that she shouldn't be reading any books detrimental to her development so looked at what Wendy had in her hands. It looked less like a book and more like a journal.

"That's the 'something kind of bad'?"

"Yeah. It's father's diary from when he was a kid."

"Huh?"

Apparently, Wendy found the journal while rummaging through the collection in the study, wedged in between two other books. Though Wendy knew that she shouldn't read a person's private diary, she wasn't able to resist the

temptation, so she read it under the table. I had a bad premonition about what could be in those pages.

“It’s from the five years between ten and fifteen, and father wrote in it whenever something made him happy.”

“Happy?”

“Yep. This entire diary is about you, mother. He wrote about how he was able to say hello to you or that he saw you smiling.”

I couldn’t say anything in response. It was embarrassing enough to know the existence of this diary, but it was even worse to learn about it from my own daughter, who had flipped through its contents. This wasn’t even my diary and I felt this way. If Phil learned about this, then he would be so embarrassed that he would hide himself away in his room. I didn’t mind him recording his love for me, but he should really keep it in a more private place.

“Were the two of you on bad terms before?” Wendy asked. “When I read this, I feel like father liked you a lot more than you liked him. It’s a little scary how intense he is sometimes, but it’s still really cute.”

It was painful that I couldn’t completely deny it. However, if I didn’t say anything, then it would affect Wendy’s perception of Phil as her father.

“In any case,” I said, deciding to change the topic instead, “let’s put it back where you found it. We’ll be in a world of trouble if Phil comes and sees us holding this. Make sure you don’t tell *anyone* you found this diary.”

“Okaaay. But, I wanna hear more stories about your and father’s past later, all right?”

Truthfully, I was really curious about the diary’s contents, but it was probably for the best if we pretended we never saw it. The moment Wendy handed the diary to me, the study door opened.

“Were you two talking about me?”

“Father!”

His timing couldn’t have been worse. Phil had been looking for us and entered the study.

“Wendy, I’m so proud of you. You’re always rea—”

He must’ve been ready to praise Wendy like he always did. But the second his eyes fell upon the diary between us, he froze. In the next moment, his face fell and he looked like he was witnessing the end of the world. It felt like a somewhat familiar sight. I frantically tried to come up with a way to lessen the blow for him and in the end, I decided to pretend that we’d just found the diary and hadn’t actually looked through it yet.

Before I could say anything, Phil muttered, “Wh-When we were students, I beat up a stalker of yours and this was what came out of his bag. I think that’s what happened, anyway.”

He was so quiet that both Wendy and I had to strain our ears to hear him. *Stalker? Doesn’t that mean you beat yourself up?* I thought as I cradled my head in my hands. Out of the corner of my eye, I could see Wendy barely suppressing a laugh.

Rex *loved* to spoil Wendy and dropped by often to visit her. As a result, she’d started to laugh just like him. One of my biggest worries lately was how I could break her of the habit. In any case, that wasn’t what I should focus on right now. This time, I would help to play along with his ridiculous lies. Right when I made up my mind and was about to signal to Wendy with my eyes, Little Vio opened her beak.

“When I read this, I feel like father is a little scary with how intense he is sometimes!”

Phil and I stared in stunned silence at Little Vio, and Wendy could no longer bite back her giggles. Little Vio just had to combine Wendy’s lines in the worst way possible. I could no longer look in Phil’s direction either.

The four of us moved to the parlor and sat down at the table, an indescribable atmosphere still between us. Phil was still hiding his face behind his hands and Little Vio was perched on his head. The entire time, she kept repeating, “I feel like father liked you a lot more than you liked him!”

Please, Little Vio, I’m begging you. Have mercy on him.

“Father, I’m really sorry that I read your diary without permission.”

“No, it was in the study. Books in there are for people to read, so it would be unreasonable for me to ask why you did. I’m sorry.” After Phil said that, he gently patted Wendy on the head.

“But I thought it was wonderful. It was clear that mother was the only woman for you.”

“Of course. Viola is my entire life.”

“Jeez...” I was happy to hear it. But it was still really embarrassing for him to say that in front of our daughter.

Phil usually acted a little shy if Wendy could see us, but it seemed like what happened earlier in the study made it hard for him to judge what was embarrassing and what wasn’t. Wendy cupped her cheeks in her hands, looking between us with a delighted expression.

“I’d love to marry someone who would say that to me as well.”

“Wendy... Married...?”

“Phil, calm down. It’s going to be years before we’ll have to worry about that.”

Wendy was the apple of Phil’s eye, and he looked like he was about to faint at the thought of her getting married. I had no idea what would happen to him when the time actually came, and I giggled at the thought.

“I’m glad that you two fell in love with each other! That’s why I was born!”

“That’s right. I’m glad that we were able to meet you, Wendy. We love you so much,” I replied with a quiet chuckle.

“I’m glad as well,” Phil said softly.

Our days were so peaceful and I was able to spend them with the two most important people in my heart. I had no words to describe how happy my life was.

“I can tell that mother loves you as well, father. Isn’t that right?” Wendy asked me.

I couldn't fight back a smile. I hoped that my happiness would continue on in the future and nodded.

"Yes, of course. I'm crazy about him."

Afterword

Hello, it's Kotoko. Thank you for picking up Volume 2 of *Fake It to Break It! I Faked Amnesia to Break Off My Engagement and Now He's All Lovey-Dovey?! I* said it last time too but the title is shockingly long, isn't it?

Volume 1 covered how Viola and Phillip ended up falling in love with each other after a series of misunderstandings. The online version of the first book ended with the wedding scene. But I still wanted to write more about them, and I realized that I never actually wrote them being lovey-dovey with each other! So, thanks to everyone's support, I got the opportunity to write a second volume. Thank you so much!

In Volume 2, we looked back on the various misunderstandings in their past. Since the first volume was all about how much Phillip loved Viola, I decided that this time, I would write one where Viola could be more self-aware about her feelings for Phillip, as well as how important he is to her. So the story I wrote was one about jealousy.

I didn't want there to be an annoying hate sink type character in *Fake It to Break It* because I wanted people reading it to have a good time. That was why I came up with Adele, who's a little girl. Even if she was "the other woman," no one's feelings were going to get hurt.

When it comes to romance, I prefer stories that focus more about how much the main couple loves each other. So I'd never written anything about children before. But when I saw illustrator Amaichi's Adele, she was so cute that I fell in love. Lately, I've gotten into stories about children and have been reading a few books in that genre.

I've gotten off topic. But I'm really glad that I was able to write a happy ending for Viola and Phillip, as well as what happened after their marriage. When I saw how happy the cover of this book is, I was so touched that I started to tear up...

Thank you so much to my illustrator, Amaichi. They drew so many wonderful and beautiful pictures of all the unique and colorful characters, including the

new ones from Volume 2. The expression Phillip is making when he hugs Viola made my heart burst. It feels like every piece of art is so dazzling that no matter how many times I look at it, I have to exhale at the beauty. Viola's formal dress with all the ribbons was really cute as well. I loved all of the artwork that you did for this book.

I'd like to also take this opportunity to thank my editor, who made *Fake It to Break It* with me. Every time I gave my impassioned thoughts, or started yelling because I got too excited, my editor would agree with me in a gentle and warm tone. It made me really happy. I'd also like to thank everyone involved with both the publication and distribution of this book.

The series is now over. But the manga serialization by Yone is available right now in Manga Up! The quality is shockingly good and it's a fun read that'll make your heart race. I'd be happy if you could also watch over Viola and Phillip in the manga version of the story. It's the best.

These are my last acknowledgments in the afterword, but I'd like to thank you for reading all the way here! I hope you all have a wonderful and fantastic life, and hope that we'll be able to see each other again in the future!

Fake It to Break It! I Faked Amnesia to Break Off My Engagement and Now He's All
Lovey-Dovey?! Volume 2
by Kotoko

Translated by Stephanie Liu
Edited by Ruuri

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

KONYAKUHAKI NERATTE KIOKUSOSHITSU NO FURI WO SHITARA, SOKKENAI
TAIDO DATTA KONYAKUSHA GA "KIOKU WO USHINAU MAE NO KIMI WA, ORE
NI BETABORE DATTA" TOIU, TONDEMONAI USO WO TSUKIHAJIMETA Vol. 2

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