



Hello, Travis

Ring. . . Ring. . . Ring. . .

Naramdaman ko ang guhit sa noo ko nung marinig ko ang ingay na yun. Anong oras na ba? Minulat ko ang mata ko ang nakitang ala-siete na ng gabi. Napatayo agad ako sa kama at hinahap ang phone ko.

“Oh shoot!” Agad kong kinuha ang tumutunog kong phone. Bakit ba ako nakatulog?

Napangiti agad ako nung nakita ang pangalan niya sa screen ng phone ko.

“Hello.” sagot ko. Sinubukan kong maging mahinahon at cold tulad ng kung pano niya idescribe ang boses ko.

“Hello, Travis.”

Nag-react agad ang puso ko. Sumunod na dun ang boses niya na kinababaliwan ko na ngayon sa loob ng isang buwan. Hanggang ngayon hindi ko pa rin alam kung sino siya. Pero alam ko sa tuwing kinakantahan niya ako, *bumibilis ang tibok ng puso ko*.

“I really want to know who you are.” pero isang dial tone nalang ang narinig ko nun.
Sino ka? Gusto na talaga kitang makilala.

Chapter 1

[NW: OFFICIALLY MISSING YOU by Jayesslee]

[“. . . and I'm officially missing you~”]

Naramdaman kong kusang ngumiti ang labi ko. Narinig kong ibinaba niya 'yung gitara niya. I wait for her to speak up after singing me another song. Officially missing you? Okay.

[“Ayaw mo ba?”]

“Wala naman akong sinabi na ayaw ko.” Pinigilan kong tumawa. Tss.

["Eh? Bakit ang tahimik mo? Galit ka ba saakin?"]

I shook my head, **"Bakit naman ako magagalit?"**

["Wag mo naman akong bigyan ng ganitong treatment, Travis."] I felt my heart skipped a beat. Laging ganun sa tuwing naririnig ko ang boses niya na sabihin ang pangalan ko.

"Wala naman akong ginagawa ah."

["Sorry na for not calling you for two days. Sorry na. Naging busy lang talaga ako."]

"Kung pinapayagan mo kasi ako-"

["Alam mo namang patay ang cellphone ko before 7PM and after I called you."] Napakamot ako sa ulo ko ang sighed heavily. **["Haha! I can imagine your face right now. Now now, don't get annoyed."]**

"Andaya naman kasi. You can see me pero ako hanggang sa pag-iintay nalang ng 7PM at hanggang sa tumunog ang phone ko-"

["Travis."] ayan na naman.

"Gusto lang talaga kitang makita. It's been a month now. At kahit pangalan mo hindi ko pa alam. Don't you think it's unfair?"

I heard her sigh, [**“Don't you think I'll be able to call you if you know who I am? And I don't think you'll get to notice my existence if I show myself to you. It's not just the right time yet.”**]

“I was only asking for your name. Pangala-”

[**“See? Alam ko namang alam mo ang pangalan ko.”**]

Ang hirap naman kasi. Ang sinabi lang niya saakin it means "Song". I even searched it in Google. Ang lumabas naman mga weird names and I was left with names of Aika, Ria, Charmaine and Melody. Pero ang alam ko singer lahat sila. Psh.

“Pero sabi mo naman na you're not Aika, Ria, Charmaine neither Melody. Eh yun lang naman ang alam kong mga Seniors na ang pangalan ay 'song' ang meaning.”

[**“What can I do if you keep on missing my names on your list?”**] she chuckled. She just know how to shut me. [**“Kelangan mo ba talagang malaman ang pangalan ko?”**]

“Yes.”

[**“I just can't Travis. I'm sorry.”**]

“Please?”

["I'm sorry. Btw, I gotta hung up now. We still have class tomorrow. Tulog ka na din."] Napatingin ako sa oras. 9PM. That's our cue.

Lagi niyang binababa ang phone tuwing 9PM dahil yun daw ang oras na natutulog siya. Ewan ko. Maaga daw talaga siyang natutulog. I sighed at alam kong kahit magpaawa ako ng boses sa kanya, still no use.

["Goodnight Travis."]

"Goodnight."

and the dial tone came after.

I dropped my phone somewhere in my bed. Umupo ako at tinitigan ang dingding. Pag nalaman lang ng barkada ko na may ganitong nangyayare sakin, they'll be laughing at me. Big time! Travis Delos Santos getting obsess to an unknown gril who calls me at 7PM every night. Crazy, huh?

This just started last month. After New Year's Eve, when an unknown number flashed on my screen. At first, akala ko isang greeting lang 'yun from a friend or random people. Pero nung sinagot ko 'yun, she begged that I wouldn't think of it as a call prank or what. Wag ko daw ibababa. Just listen.

Nung narinig ko siyang tumugtog ng gitara at magsimulang kumanta ng isang Christmas carol, I just found myself astonished. She has this sweet angelic voice that will make you stop and listen. No, it will even make you ask for more. Katulad ng nangyayari sakin ngayon.

Matapos nun, araw araw na siyang tumatawag at kumakanta para sakin. Sinubukan kong magalit sa kanya dahil sa ginagawa niya pero nalaman ko nalang na sarili ko lang din ang niloloko ko. Sinubukan kong tawagan siya pero kung hindi patay, nirereject naman niya. Maiinis ako pero mawawala agad 'yun pag nasabi na niya 'yung . . .

[“Hello, Travis.”]

Ibinagsak ko ang katawan ko sa kama at ipinikit ang mga mata ko. Isang buwan na ang nakakalipas. Isang buwan na. Di ko na ata kayang maghintay pa ng isa pang buwan. Gusto ko na talaga siyang makita.

Kinuha ko ang phone ko at pumunta sa messages.

To: Miss Singer

I'll find you. I'll do anything just to find you. And I'll make you sing not through the phone, but personally. You'll sing in front me. : P

Sent.

I smiled. Alam ko namang mababasa niya 'yun pag in-open niya ang phone niya. Gagawin ko ang lahat para makilala ko siya. It's making me crazy, I know but I really don't care.

Nagulat ako nung biglang mag-beep ang phone ko. Nag-reply siya. First time.

From: Miss Singer

I already sang in front of you, Mr. Delos Santos. Haha! Anyway, lemme see what you are up to. Ble! Sleep na! Good night. ;)

Bigla kong pinindot ang 'call' button pero too late, patay na ang phone niya. Tss. Ang galing talaga nitong babaeng 'to. Alam niyang tatawag ako. Napatay na niya agad.

“Yeah, you'll see what I'm up to.”

Chapter 2

I woke up and did my routine like I always do. Tumayo sa kama, maligo, magbihis,

kunin ang bag na halos walang laman, kumain at pumasok sa school. It was like I'm rewinding a CD all over again. Well, that's what I thought years ago.

After those phone calls, I got this urge to find this unknown woman. That unknown woman who made me go 'loco' by her voice and how she plays her guitar. Pero endless sighs are result of this craziness. I've never felt some eagerness within me since that day. *Gay, but it's true.*

“Good morning, T!” napatingin ako dun sa tumawag saakin. Well, they call me 'T' in school. I hate Travis. “Mr. Ignacio told me to hand you these.”

“Okay. Thanks.” I plainly said. She smiled at me then bounced her hair while walking back towards her chair. Ms. President is really a bubbly girl, though may pagka-weird lang ang personality.

Tiningnan ko 'yung papers na inabot saakin ni Ms. President. About the upcoming Music Festival. Annually nagkakaroon ng ganito sa school. Wala, 'yung principal kasi namin 'bagets' at mahilig talagang maki-IN sa uso. And yeah, I've been chosen to be in-charge of the program since I'm the Music Club President. Great. =_ =

“Hey T! Samahan mo naman ako sa canteen. Gutom na ako!” bigla nalang akong hinigit ni Khris. Can I say 'I can't' now? Psh.

“Can you just atleast stop pulling me?”

“Ito namang si sungit! Sasama ka rin naman saakin e.” He stuck his tongue out. Childish? Happy-Go-Lucky? That's what they describe Khris Lee.

“Pero hindi mo na ako kelangang hingitin. >_>”

“Oo na! Sus!” Tinanggal niya ang pagkakaakbay sakin tapos bigla akong siniko. Problema? “Alam mo hindi na naman kita ma-contact kagabi! Laging busy. Hindi ka na nakakasama sa session e.”

Session = Inuman

“Sabi ko naman kasi sayo wag mo akong tatawagan ng 7PM to 9PM.” My heart reacted. May naalala kasi.

“At kelan ka pa nagkaroon ng schedule sa phone? At ang alam ko, the 'T' doesn't want any long phone conversations. What's up with you, man?”

“Hindi mo na kelangang malaman.”

Magsasalita pa sana siya pero buti nalang biglang dumating si Ria, his girlfriend, at ipinulupot ang kamay niya sa kamay ni Khris. Mas lalo tuloy akong napapaisip na Ms. Caller is not Ria dahil girlfriend siya ni Khris. Di ko nalang sila pinansin at dumiretso kami sa may canteen.

Si Ria. . . tapos ngayon si Melody na may hawak na gitara. =_=a

“Hey Melody!” biglang tinawag ni Ria si Melody. Tumingin naman si Melody at pinalapit si Ria dun. Dumiretso kami ni Khris sa counter para makaorder ng breakfast niya. Fifteen minutes pa bago mag time.

“Yup, I'm signing up! Nakita ko din kasi ang posters sa bulletin kanina.” Melody said while tuning up her guitar. “We can make a band. Seniors naman e. Ask ko din sina Charmaine at Aika.”

“Hindi ko alam. I still have cheerleading you know.”

“Sayang! Pero hope you can join. Kaso kulang pa din ng isa. Khris, kapatid mo kaya?”

“I don't know. Ask her. Pero alam ko maalam siyang mag-keyboards at guitar.” Khris answered while eating his pancakes. Nagugutom na din ata ako.

“Natugtog si Rica?” tanong ko habang inagaw ang tinidor kay Khris.

“Walang agawan pare!”

“Penge lang e.” Damot talaga ng lokong 'to.

“Oo. Ngayon nga, violin ang gustong tugtugin.”

“So count her in, Melody?” sabi ni Ria. Minsan talaga ayoko ng boses niya. Parang cliché voice ng mga cheerleaders.

“Eh di ba required na kakanta dun, T?”

“Oo. Kelangan e.”

“Nakanta ba kakambal mo, Khris?”

Nagulat kami nung biglang tumawa si Khris na halos mag-choked ang pancakes sa lalamunan niya. May nakakatawa ba sa tanong ni Melody? Mukhang ewan 'tong si Khris e. Pareho sila ni Ria. Compatible? Pero ewan ko lang kung seryoso ba 'tong dalawa sa relationship nila. Labeled players kasi.. =_ =

“Hahah! Ang benta ng joke mo Melody. Sobra! HAHAHA!”

I looked at Ria at parang gusto niyang sabihin 'Di ko po boyfriend ang katabi ko'.

“Rica's voice is sooo out-of-tune!” he blurted out. He tried to compose his self pero napapatawa pa rin siya.

“Hoy lalake sinong out of tune?!” napatingin kami sa likod namin at nakita ang female version ni Khris. “Isa ka rin namang out of tune dyan!”

“Atleast hindi ako trying hard! Bleh!”

Sumama lang ang tingin ni Rica sa kapatid niya tapos umalis na din nung dumating 'yung mga kabarkada niya. Tataka lang ako kung tomboy ba yun o one of the boys lang talaga? Never kong nakikitang sumama sa babae 'yun e.

“So no Rica, then?” humalumbaba si Melody sa gitara niya at nag-pluck ng strings.

Gusto kong isipin na sa apat na 'yun, andun ang unknown caller ko. I stared at Melody tapos ngumiti siya. Biglang umiwas ang tingin ko, nakaramdam ako ng kaba. Di ko alam.. Bigla niyang pinatugtog ang gitara niya, [You got me](#).

“Oh, I just can't get enough find my stoup I need to fill me up. It feels so good it must be love, it's everything that I've been dreaming of. I give up. I give in. I let go. Let's begin. 'Cause no matter what I do~ Oh my heart is filled with you.”

My heart skipped abnormally when she winked at me. Hindi ko alam kung iisipin kong siya ba 'yung tumatawag sakin o nahahalata niya lang na napapatitig ako sa kanya. I want to hear her voice more, just to make sure. Pero nararamdaman kong umiinit ang tenga ko. Aish!

“May gusto ka kay Melody?”

“H-ha?!” nagulat ako nung biglang bumulong si Ria saakin. Napatingin naman si Khris at Melody pero itinuloy parin nila 'yung ginagawa nila. “Wa-wala.”

“Eh bakit nauutal ka?” she said with her irritating voice. “I'm jealous.”

O_O?

Tatanungin ko sana si Ria dun sa huling binulong niya pero biglang nag-ring kaya sabay na silang umalis ni Melody pabalik ng room nila. Class C sila, tapos kami ni Khris sa B naman. what the hell was that?

Feeling ko napaparanoid na ako.

After ng klase, nagkaroon kami ng meeting sa Music Club para sa upcoming event nga para sa Valentines. Two weeks nalang. Halos lahat ng members may hawak ng instruments. Kanya kanya ng practice para sa assigned performance. Andito sina Ria, Melody, Charmaine at Aika. Nakaka-out of focus.

“Sus! Dali na. Tutugtog lang e.”

“Eh ayoko nga e! Matapos mo akong masabihan ng out of tune kanina?!”

At oo, andito rin 'yung kambal. Ngay nga nila e.

“Dali na! Isang Canon lang e!”

“Oo na! Tumigil ka lang dyan!”

Lahat kami napatigil sa ginagawa namin nung biglang tumugtog si Rica, [Pachebel's Canon in D](#). Di ko alam na ganito ng kagaling tumugtog ng keyboards si Rica. Pag kasi nabisita ako sa bahay nila, naririnig ko lang siya pero madalas nagkakamali pa siya ng notes.

Minsan gusto ko ring isipin na si Rica 'yung caller. Pero with *her* clues, wala dun si Rica. Yes, she can play guitar like what her brother told us. I've heard her sing once at oo, totoo ang sinabi ni Khris. **sorry* at her name? Rica means 'Rich'. I even searched it in Google just to make sure.

Yan, I'm totally out of focus right now. Lagi nalang yung tumatawag sakin ang naiisip ko. Tss.

Now Playing [Out of my League](#)

["Coz I love him with all that I am and my voice shakes along with my hands. 'Coz it's frightening to be swimming in this strange sea but I'd rather be here than on land. Yes he's all that I see and he's all that I need and I'm out of my league once again. . ."]

"Aren't I supposed to be singing that?" I chuckled after hearing her song. Ibinaba na niya ulit ang gitara niya. "Tumatawa ka ba?"

["No."] She's obviously forcing herself not to laugh.

"Ah sige. Ganyan ka na."

Then she laughed out. I froze.

It's not the first time that I heard her laugh, but *I can actually say that it's music for my ears.*

["I'm sorry. *Breathes in* Naalala ko lang kasi ang itsura mo kanina! Haha!"]

"Kanina? Okay. Spill it out." Tumawa na naman siya. Gusto kong mainis pero napapangiti ako sa naririnig ko. Kahit tawa niya, parang anghel ang tumatawa. **"Madaya ka talaga, alam mo 'yun?"**

["Uyy! Galit na si T!"]

Ugh.

"Don't call me T. Tss." Ewan ko ba. Ayokong tinatawag niya akong T.

["Arte naman nito! Fine~"]

"Dapat nga matuwa ka e. Ikaw lang ang pinayagan kong tawagin akong Travis."

["Arte talaga! Haha! What's wrong with Travis? Nagagalit ka nalang bigla pag may tatawag sayong Travis e.."] I smiled. **["Tapos magagalit ka naman pag 'di kita tinawag na Travis."]**

"Eh gusto kong ikaw lang ang tumatawag sakin na Travis."

["Sus! Maarte ka lang talaga! Hahaha!"]

Kung tutuusin, magagalit na dapat ako sa point na 'to. Walang makakatawag saakin ng maarte o ano dahil alam nilang 'di ko gusto ang mga ganung biro. Pero listen to this girl, patatlong beses na niya 'yan. Psh.

“Bakit ka muna tumatawa ha?”

[“Uh! Yan pinaalala mo na naman~”] she chuckled. **[“Wala~ ang cute mo pala mag-blush~”]**

Mag-blush?

[“Nahihiya rin naman pala at namumula si Mr. T~”] and I heard her sweet angelic laugh again. Pwedeng gawing ringtone.

“Ano bang sinasabi mo?”

[“In denial! Haha! Sa canteen this morning. I saw you blushed. You're so cute~ Buti nalang napigilan ko ang sarili kong pisilin ang pisngi mo!”]

“Dapat di mo pinigilan.” I teased her.

[“Sus! Edi nakilala mo kung sino ako? Yoko nga!”]

“Ayaw pa kasing magpapakita. Di naman kita pipigilan na mang-gigil sakin e.” Now it's my turn to laugh. Alam ko kasing naiinis na siya. Panay na ang “Eh!” niya. “Ano? I'm wondering, ikaw kaya pano mag-blush?”

[“Nakita mo na 'yun.”]

“Tss. Pano ko naman malalaman na ikaw nga 'yun? Di ko naman alam kung si-”

[“That very first time you called out my name. I blushed instantly and that's when I realized that I like you.”]

Dug.. Dugdug.. Dug.. Dugdug..

“Y-you like me?”

Teka, ano ba 'tong sinasabi ko?

[“Sus! Mage-eeffort ba ako ng ganito kung di kita gusto, Travis?”]

Napahawak ako unconsciously sa dibdib ko, “Sabi ko nga.”

[“Speechless ka na naman! Hahaha!”]

Di ako sumagot. Lagi naman e. Ngumiti nalang ako, alam kong alam niyang napapangiti niya ako sa mga ginagawa niya. Who would have thought that she can actually make me smile? Hindi ako ang ganitong tipo ng lalaki. She's really unbelievable.

[“I'm really happy that I can actually make you smile, Travis. Kaya siguro ayokong magpakita sayo kasi nagdadalwang isip ako kung makakangiti ka ng ganyan pag nakaharap na kita.”]

“I'll smile at you basta sabihin mo lang kung sino ka.”

[“I don't think so.”] She sighed. **[“Sana ganun lang kadali. Biggest achievement na 'to para sakin, Travis. Ang marinig ang boses mo, ang tawa mo, ang maging ka-close ka kahit dito sa phone, ang makuha ang oras mo, ang masabi ko na gusto kita . . . sobrang saya ko na dito na hindi ko alam kung kakayanin ko pang magpakilala sayo.”]**

“Pano--pano kung gusto na rin kita?”

[“You're still unsure.”]

“Eh pano kung hindi?”

["Let's just wait for the right time. Ayoko lang talaga mawala pa 'to sa kin."]

"Sana dumating na 'yung oras na 'yun." I almost mumbled out. I wish. I hope for that time, the time when I finally gonna see who she really is.

["I can't tell, Travis."]

"I like it when you say my name. Pakiramdam ko ang special ng pangalan ko."

["Travis . . . Travis . . . Travis . . ."] Umabot na ata sa batok ko ang ngiti ko. Okay, *that was weird*.

"Wag kang ganyan, baka ko mapigilan ang sarili ko."

["Whatever, Travis~"]

This weird feeling she's giving me. Parang cloud nine.

["I really like you."]

and I hope I can express this weird feeling anytime soon.

Chapter 3

“So the four sections of Seniors will be merged together for this activity. Since ako naman ang nagha-handle lahat ng MAPEH. Partly, this will be your contribution narin for the Valentine's special natin. Oh! Btw, you guys must work with the Juniors too.”

Lahat ng babae mukhang excited sa magaganap na event. Tingnan mo nga naman. Lalong dumami tuloy ang intindihin para sa February 14. Psh. Pati Seniors magkakaroon ng part at ito na daw ang pinaka-project namin sa MAPEH. Great.

“I know that close naman halos ang batch na 'to kaya walang maiiwan. Right?”

Sumagot naman ang mga kaklase ko. Yung iba nagtilian pa. Makakasama daw nila ang crush nila sa kabilang section. I don't care. >__>

Wait.

Kabilang section?

“So we can't have a date on Valentines eh? Psh!” napatingin nalang ako kay Khris. Napakamot siya sa ulo. Player e. Big deal sa kanya ang Valentines. “On the other hand, I'm not obliged to date Ria, right?”

Kelan ba magseseryoso ang kulugong 'to? =_ =

Ibinigay na samin ni Ma'am ang mga groups namin.

1. Rica Lee and Aika Mendez from Section A
 2. Travis Delos Santos and Khris Lee from Section B
 3. Suzumie Silva and Thomas Bautista from Section C
 4. Norilae Lee and Geo Sung from Section D
- and random third year students.

Pero ang alam ko team up din kami sa ibang groups kaya hindi ko na alam. Si Khris na o si Aika ang bahala dito since alam naman nilang busy ako sa Music Club. Psh.

Si Miss Caller kaya san ka-group?

Ang alam ko lang kasi ka-batch ko siya at pareho kami ng school. Wala na siyang ibinigay saking clues after the name meaning 'song', she has a great voice and good at instruments. Wala na akong alam pa. Pfft. Ang hirap naman kasing maghanap ng taong ayaw naman magpakita sayo.

Kagulo na sa labas ang mga kaklase ko. Ewan ko ba kung bakit kami kinukunsinte ng principal namin. Basta nagustuhan niya ang isang proposal ng teacher, wala siyang pakielam kung makaapekto man 'to sa ibang subjects. Basta gawin namin, no more class. Weird Principal, right?

Lumapit samin sina Aika at Rica nung nakita nila kami sa loob ng room namin. The usual nag-away lang 'yung kambal tapos ang ikinagulat ko bigla lumapit saakin si Aika, binati at ngumiti siya saakin. Hindi kami nagkakausap. Kahit magkasalubong kami, never kaming nagtingingan 'yung tipong wala lang.

“Hi, Travis.”

I flinched when she called out my name. Ngumiti siya pero nakaramdam ako ng iba. . .

“Oops. I’m sorry. I forgot na ayaw mo nga palang tinatawag sa pangalan mo. Sorry, T.”

“O—okay lang.” Iniwas ko ang tingin ko sa kanya pero alam kong ngumiti siya dun sa sinabi ko. Oo, weird para saakin na palagpasin ko ang pagtawag niya saakin ng ‘Travis’. Madalas kasi susungitan ko 'yung tao o kaya naman never ko ng kakausapin.

I have name issues.

Dumating na din 'yung iba. Wala naman akong kakilala sa kanila maliban kay Rica, Aika, Khris at Geo. Kabarkada ko ko din kasi si Geo, kakambal naman ni Khris si Rica at si Aika nakilala ko lang dahil dun sa unknown caller ko.

Nagpakilala 'yung iba lalo na 'yung Juniors. Tumango nalang ako sa kanila at simpleng sinabi ang "I'm T." Alam ko namang gets na nila 'yun. Alam na naman nila siguro na hindi ako 'yung tipong mahilig makipagsocialize sa tao.

"Musical play! Yung mala-highschool musical." ito ata si Suzumie? Ah. Basta siya 'yung mukhang Intsik. =_="

"We'll just waste so much time. Rehearsal for singing at dancing? That's too much!" Geo said with his so awesome English accent.

"Sus! Ang tamad tamad mo talaga!"

"I'm just telling that we couldn't make it. Less than two weeks?! How can you produce a skit within a short period of time? Huh!"

Nakaramdam kaming lahat ng intense between these two. Ano bang meron sa kanila? Pansin ko 'yung mga Third year students natatakot. Psh. Suzumie? Suzumie? Bakit ba parang naging topic na namin siya dati? -__-"

“Kaya naman natin ‘yun e! You always want the easy way! Could you just atleast exert a little bit of effort?! Mapapagod ka? Hoy lalaki, nakasalalay din dito ang grades ng mga batang ‘to!”

“Oh that’s it! I wasn’t exerting enough effort that’s why you dumped me, huh?!”

AH! Ex-issues.

“Hep! Hep! Hep! Ibang usapan na ‘yan. Umupo na nga kayong dalawa!” biglang gumitna si Rica dun kay Suzumie at Geo. Great move. “So ito nalang, kung agree kayo sa suggestions ni Suzumie. . . present nalang tayo ng ideas on how the skit will flow. Kung hindi naman, ano sa tingin niyo ang pede pang gawin?”

I just stared at Rica. I never thought she could actually speak up in front of everyone. Nag-smirk lang si Khris sa kanya. Alam ko ang iniisip niyan, “show-off”. Wala atang pag-asang magkasundo ang kambal na ‘to.

Nag-agree sila sa suggestions ni Suzumie. Nakinig nalang ako. Kagulo na din kasi kung anong magiging theme ng skit. Ayoko ng makisali sa away nila. Bahala na sila. Basta may project ako, ayos na ‘yun. Napansin ko si Geo na panay pa rin ang tingin kay Suzumie. May tama pa rin e.

Si Aika, siya ang taga-sulat ng buong script-something. Nagsuggest ng mga kanta ‘yung Juniors tapos inassign na ‘yung iba sa mga instruments. Yung kambal siguradong sa instruments na dahil ayaw nilang kumanta at sumayaw. Ako? Hindi ko pa alam. Sana instruments nalang din ako. >__>

“Wala ka bang balak sagutin ang phone mo?”

Nagulat ako nung biglang pumunta sa harapan ko si Rica at tinuturo ‘yung bag ko. Dun ko narealize na kanina pa palang tumutunog ang phone ko. Tumalikod na siya at kinuha ko na ‘yung phone sa bag ko. Si ate, tumatawag.

“Yow.”

[“Well, we already traced the number you sent me this morning.”] Bigla akong napaayos ng upo. Kinabahan ako. Ang labo.

“S—so? Any results?”

[“Alam mo naman Travis na city lang ang maiibigay naming location right?”] She sighed. Oh, I get it. [“Yes, the numbers is activated within our place pero madalas lumalabas din siya at I found out that she’s been in Quezon Province and Laguna.”]

“Quezon Province at Laguna?” Ang layo naman. Tss.

[“Yea. Kaya ko lang naman ma-tract ‘yung number kung ginamit niya ‘yung kung natawag siya o may tumawag sa kanya. I can’t actually tell you the exact address, bro. I’m sorry. It’s a bit confidential.”]

“H-hindi ba magagawan ng paraan?”

I'm getting crazy with this thing.

["Sorry Travis. That's the only help I can give you."] I sighed. Useless din pala. ["But there's another thing. Yung tracker ng number habang nakakausap mo siya. Kaso wala akong alam kung san may device na ganun except from Investigatory Corporations."]

"Like I can ask them to help me." I said sarcastically.

["Why are you being so obsessed huh Travis? Who is the owner of this number anyway?"] She teased me. Tumawa na siya ng tumawa. Bigla tuloy uminit ang tenga ko.

"You don't have to know."

["Yeah right little brother! I'm happy actually that you asked me for help. That's new. I should thank that person whoever he or she is. Pero mukhang 'SHE' ata 'yun."]
Tumawa na naman siya. Psh. Kaya ayokong humingi ng tulong dito e. =_="

"Go back to work, old lady."

["You're so mean, Travis!"] She sounded annoyed pero tumatawa pa rin siya. May baliw po akong kapatid. "Fine! Fine! You're lucky having a sister like me, don't you think?"

"You wish. -_-"

["Don't be such a brat! Tinulungan pa din kita. Just at least thank me."] Ang lakas talaga niyang mang-asar. Purket alam niyang pikon ako.

“Oo na. Thank you!”

[“Haha! That’s my little brother! Oh, you’re VERY VERY welcome.”]

“Shut up. Ibababa ko na.” Pipindutin ko na sana ‘yung end button. . .

[“Wait.”]

“Oh?”

[“Kasi I just found out na number ‘yun ng dating ‘lined-user’. I can ask them out for a bit information pero I’m still not sure.”] I can hear my heart beat. [“Getting the name of the registered person sa line maybe a great contribution. I guess?”]

I smiled. That's a chance, right?

“Thanks.”

[“WAAA!! You really thanked me without me forcing you!! That’s a REALLY great improvement brother!!”] Ugh. Ang sakit! Kelangang sumigaw?! [“Ohkay. Ohkay. You’re welcome! Loveyou bro. Bye bye!”]

**Totoot.*

My sister is working on telecommunication industry. Ngayon ko lang naalala. Umuwi kasi siya sa bahay kagabi and she talked about her busy work there. Kaya naisip ko a baka matulungan niya ako ma-tract 'yung singer ko di ba? Nakakahiya. I may sound weird and a crazy stalker pero buti nalang hindi ganun ang takbo ng utak ng kapatid ko. Kaya naman naging madali 'yung inaakala kong 'nakakahiya at pahirapang' paghingi ng tulong sa kanya.

Totoo lang, wala pa akong maisip na iba pang way para malaman kung sino 'yung caller ko. Kaya grab lang ako ng grab ng opportunity. Seryoso talaga akong makita siya. Iba na kasi talaga ang nararamdaman ko.

“Sinong tumawag?” Rica asked randomly. Tanda ko di kami close e. -__-

“My sister.” I said coldly.

“What for?”

“Private?” I furrowed my brow. Chismosa pala 'tong si Rica?

“Okay.” That was very odd.

Hindi kami naguusap ni Rica. We don't really have casual conversation before. Wala

kaming pakielamanan. Kasi ganun naman talaga ako and Rica usually acts a snobbish brat kaya I never tried to talk to her casually. Tinatanong ko lang if ever hinahanap ko si Khris.

- - - - -

Now playing: [This!](#)

["If I was your girlfriend, I'd never let you go. I can take you places you ain't never been before~ Baby take a chance or you'll never ever know, I got money in my hands that I'd really like you to blow. Swag on you~ Chillin' by the fire while we are eating fondue. I don't know about me but I know about you, so say hello to falsetto in three two. . ."]

"Are you pertaining something?"

["You're getting meaner."] She sounded hurt but I know that pretend stuff lang 'yun. ["So what if I'm pertaining something huh?"]

"Sasagutin kita." I teased her. Tumawa naman siya. "Well, that's what you meant right? If you are my girlfriend?"

We laugh.

["Even if I want to, it can't happen."]

"If I was your boyfriend, never let you go. Keep you on my arm girl you'd never be alone. I can be a gentleman, anything you want. If I was your boyfriend, I'd never let you go, I'd never let you go. . ." I said, copying a verse from the song. I want her to know that I'm serious about this.

["Travis, no."]

"What? I'm serious."

["I don't want to be head over heels crazy about you."]

Masakit ata 'yun.

"Pero ano bang ginagawa mo sakin?" I sighed. "Sa tingin mo gusto ko bang mabaliw sa boses mo?"

["I'm sorry, Travis."]

Sorry.

Palagi nalang sorry.

Kaya ayokong mahulog e.

“I’m starting to like you and I don’t think I can handle this much longer.”

Bakit ba ako nasasaktan sa sorry na 'yan. Tss.

Silence is what I only heard after. Ayaw niya din magsalita. Am I being selfish? Hindi ko na kasi alam. I've never been like this before. Pakiramdam ko kasi may dapat akong malaman behind her calls. It's been bugging me since.

“I’m sorry.”

[“Sorry for?”]

“Selfish.” Fine. I admit it, I am selfish.

[“Stupid. I am the one who is selfish. Normal lang na magkaganyan ka. Kahit sinong nasa kalagayan mo, pipilitin na mahanap kung sinong unknown caller niya.”]

“Di ko kasi maintindihan kung bakit kelangan mo pang magtago.” I heard something from the other line. Parang isang bukas ng pinto.

["I have my personal reasons though. But you'll know soon. Hey, not there!"] May kausap siyang iba? ["Don't tell me, nahuhulog ka na sakin?"]

Bumilis tibok ng puso ko. Halata na naman siguro di ba? But isn't it too weird if I fall in love with her because of her angelic voice? Is it even possible? Mas pinili ko nalang na di sumagot.

["There! Hey, don't touch my things. **who are you talking to?** You don't care~ **I'm telling papa** Aish. Just leave, please?"]

“Sino 'yun?”

["Pinsan ko. **Eh! Lily has a boyfriend~* Ahh! Shut up!!*"]

“Li-lily ang pangalan mo?”

["Shoo! Out! **Papa! Si Li-** I'm gonna kill you!!"]

Di ko napigilan ang sarili ko na matawa. Halatang naiinis na siya. So her name is Lily? Pero wala akong kilalang Lily na kaklase o kahit kabatch ko. Kung sabagay uunti lang naman ang kilala kong Seniors. Pero ang meaning ba ng Lily ay song? =_ =a

["I know what you're thinking. Lily is just what my relatives call me."] Narinig ko 'yung paghiga niya sa kama. **["You gain no clue, Travis. Ble!"]**

"I don't care." I smiled. Nawala bigla ang inis ko.

["You don't care?"]

"Yup. Atleast, I have some name to call you. Hindi na Ms. Caller or my singer and likes. Right, LILY?" I chuckled.

["Don't call me Lily."] She sighed..

"Why?" Hinanap ko 'yung headset ko sa side table ko at inayos 'yun sa phone ko.

["Wala. Para kasing hindi ako 'yun yung Lily pag nakakausap kita. Lily is different from who I am to you right now."] My heart began to pound on its speed pace, again. **["Bothersome ba pag di mo kilala kung sino kausap mo?"]**

I nodded na parang kita niya.

["Then call me anything you want."]

"Papayag ka ba kung tawagin kitang baby, babe, love or honey?" Napatawa ako sa sinabi ko. Ewan ko. Siguro kung may kakilala akong katabi ngayon napagsasapok na ako sa sinabi ko o sinabihan ako ng 'Ew' o 'Yuck'. Unbelievable.

["Haha! Silly."] I closed my eyes and imagined of what she can be possibly look like.
["Fine, call me Ree."]

"Ri?"

["R-E-E. REE."]

Ree?

Rica Lee? @_@?

Chapter 4

"Side. . .step and turn!" naginstruct si Suzumie ng steps habang kami nina Khris, busy sa mga tutugtuging kanta. Pinag-aralan ko na din 'yung mga dapat kong kantahin. Tapos may kaduet akong Junior na hindi ko matandaan ang pangalan. =__=

"Ang hirap naman ng steps mo e!" Geo yelled out using his perfect English accent.

"Kung ginagawa mo kasi ng ayos!"

“Mukha mo!”

Tumawa si Khris. Kahit kasi nagcu-cuss na o galit na si Geo, fail pa din ang ‘Tagalog-angry accent’ niya. Para daw ‘naipit na bakla’ ang term ni Khris. >__> Hindi ko nalang pinansin si Khris at baka madagdagan ang pagkabadtrip ni Geo. Mahirap na.

“Aish. Di tayo matatapos nito e.”

I froze when I realized Rica beside me. Since yesternight, it’s been bugging me kung REE ba ay meaning Rica Lee o nagkakaroon lang ako ng conclusions na hindi naman dapat. It’s weird. Kasi malay natin kung RIA din ‘yun o baka wala talaga sa kanila. Ang hirap e.

“Is it you? Is it you? Maybe you’re the one I’ve been waiting for~” Tumingin nalang ako kay Aika na nagpa-practice ng song and dance ngayon. Pede din naman si Aika di ba?

“Go Aika! Woo!”

“Aika! Aika! Aika!”

Melody and Ria showing off their cheerleading basic steps. Bakit ba andito ang mga ‘to? Hindi ba sila hinahanap ng mga kagroup nila? Psh. What would you expect? Pasaway sila e. Tss. Cheerleaders.

“Is it you~ Is it you~” Napalingon ako nung biglang dumating si Charmaine sa room at sinubukang sabayan si Aika.

Napatingin ako kay Rica at mukhang kinakapa ‘yung kanta sa keyboards. Seeing them altogether before me makes me so confused and out-spaced. Lalo akong nalilito. Hindi ko alam. Ang gara.

Damn. @__@

“T! Hoy Travis!” I jolted when I heard my name Travis. Not in school, please.

“Don’t ever call me that name.”

“Eh hindi mo ako pinapansin. -__-”

“Malay ko kung maging maingay dito.” Palusot.com.

Mukha namang naniwala si Khris kaya nagpoker face lang siya. Umiling nalang ako at lumapit sa kanya. Kinuha ko ‘yung gitara sa kamay niya at nag-pluck ng strings. I need to focus. Iisipin ko pa ang line ups ng performance para sa Valentines. Ang hirap naman kasi nito. 14 days.

“Hi T!” Ms. President showed up out of nowhere, being so bubbly as she always used to be. “Ito na ‘yung complete arrangement ng performance para sa projects natin. In total there will be 10 performances.”

Tumango lang ako sa kanya. Ano nga ulit pangalan nito? Lagi ko nalang nakakalimutan e. =_ =

Tumalikod na siya at nagtatalon? pabalik dun sa mga kaklase niya,

“Ms. President.” tumigil naman siya at lumingon, exposing her white teeth. “A-ano ngang pangalan mo?”

I really do have name problems.

“Rhythm Eliza Esmundo. Bow!” she literally bowed then smiled afterwards. Tumawa pa nga ‘yung ibang nakakita sa ginawa niya. I smiled unconsciously. I really find her cute. . I mean, yung personality.

Rhythm Eliza Esmundo?

Fck. Another REE. =_ =

And her name is close to Music or sound.

Napakamot ako sa ulo ko dahil sa mga iniisip ko. Imbes na matulungan, nadagdagan pa. Why should I bother myself of finding her anyway? Eh di ba siya naman 'tong ayaw talagang magpakita? Pero sino nga ba naman ang niloloko ko. Gusto ko talaga siyang makita e.

Lumapit na 'yung ibang Juniors na kakanta sa gagawin namin. Itinago ko muna 'yung files sa bag ko at pinag-aralan 'yung tutugtugin ko. Ako sa guitars tapos si Khris sa drums and beatbox. Nagpatulong na din samin 'yung ibang kagroup kung pede kami na rin ang mag-banda sa kanila. Since Mr. Popular din 'tong si Khris, hindi tumanggi.

“Madami akong gagawin, Khris. =_=”

“Ako din naman! Ikaw talaga hindi marunong mag-gentleman!”

“Mag-gentleman? Grammar. =_=”

“Pabayaang mo grammar ko! Ayos accent ko naman! HAHA!”

“Mag-english ka nalang. =_=”

Alam kong pinapatamaan niya si Geo. Buti nalang wala dito. Badtrip pa rin 'yun. Baka mag-away na naman 'yung dalawa. Isang pikon at isang mahilig mang-asar. Tss.

Lumapit sakin si Tom at tinanong 'yung chords ng iba para masabayan niya daw sa bass guitar. Lumapit na din 'yung kaduet ko kaso mukhang nahihiya. Lagi kasing nasa tabi ni Tom, ni Rica o ni Khris tuwing tutugtog e.

Nung nagkatinginan kami, sinubukan kong ngumiti. Sabi din kasi nung iba nakaka-intimidate daw kasi ang itsura ko kaya nasusungitan o natatakot 'yung mga lower batch sakin. Oo na, si REE ang isa sa may sabi nun. Improvement.

After ng practice sa hapon. Dumiretso ako sa music club para ayusin din 'yung mga nagpasa ng form para sa upcoming event. Walang tao. Umupo ako sa table ko at binasa ang mga papers na nakapatong dun.

Bali two days celebration. Ngayon ko lang din nalaman na birthday ng principal namin kaya tuwang tuwa siya ng may magaganap na event. Last year kasi simple Valentines program lang. Tapos yung Music Event ginanap nung December.

Nakita ko 'yung banda nina Melody, kasali dun sina Ria, Aika at Charmaine. To be followed na daw 'yung isa. Pinak-check ko na to sa ka-club officers ko. Mukhang tinanggap nila. Fine. Ayoko ng problemahin 'to.

Binasa ko lang 'yung notes regarding sa mga suggestions ng teachers and other staffs. Dinis-regard ko 'yung mga nauulit na suggestions and such at isinave sa computer ang mga kasali. Dapat si secretary ang gumagawa nito e. Bakit ba sila umuwi agad?

** . . . Ring . . . ringring . . . **

Tumingin lang ako sa likod ko nung tumunog 'yung phone ko pero hindi ko na pinansin. I can call him or her back. Wala pang 7PM kaya naman imposibleng si Ree 'yun.

Nakailang tunog din ‘yung phone ko kaya baka kelangan talaga.

Kinuha ko na ‘yung phone ko dun sa panglimang tawag. . .

“Sht!” Sinagot ko agad ‘yung tawag. “So-sorry. Hindi ko alam na—”

["It's okay. Halata namang busy ka e."] she laughed quietly. I sighed at inayos ang upo ko. ["Too busy for the upcoming event huh?"]

“Oo e. Ang dami ko pang tatapusin.”

["You want me to help you?"] I was alarmed by the tone of her voice. Seryoso ba siya? ["You're really cute when you're shocked."]

“Pa-pano mo—” Bigla akong napatayo at tumingin sa paligid ng room. Kaso imposible. Studio type ang room at wala ding tao sa labas. “Asan ka?”

["Umupo ka kasi. Aalis na ako dito."] Pakiramdam ko ang malamig na pawis ko sa likod. Andito lang siya sa malapit. ["Sit!"]

“Hindi ako aso.”

["Now the poker face~"]

=__=

“Ree.”

[“**Good boy!**”] She chuckled again.

“Ree.”

[“**Hala! Tampo na si Travis?**”]

“**Pinaglalaruan mo ako.**”

[“**Ito naman! Ngayon na nga lang kita nakita ng ganitong kaseryoso ulit sa isang bagay. Pagbigyan mo na ko.**”] Humarap na ulit ako sa computer at ni-loud speaker ‘yung phone para makapag-typr na ulit ako. Kelangan ko pa kasing tapusin ‘to.

“**I’m always serious. Ikaw na nga mismong nagsabi sakín nun dati.**”

[“**But your eyes are different now compare to the simple serious T.**”]

“**Ano namang iniba ng mata ko?**”

[“**You show that you love what you’re doing.**”]

Napatigil ako sa pagtatype nung sinabi niya 'yun. I just stared at my phone and made my mind think nothing.

["I really love those eyes, Travis. That's the eyes that I always stack for every year."]

"Eyes stalker? That's new." I heard her soft giggles. She made me smile again.

["But I doubt, parang mas gusto ko 'yung ngumi-ngiting mata ni Travis."] I smirked, realizing na pinapanuod nga pala niya ako kung saan man. **["You eyes can't lie, you know."]**

"Ikaw na ang magaling magobserve ng mga bagay." I mocked out.

["Sayo lang ako ganito. Pag nakita na kita, sayo na naka-focus ang mata ko."]

"Banat ka na naman."

["Havey naman sayo! Hahaha! You should see your smile right now!"] Alam ko. Yung ngiting aso na abot hanggang batok. Fck. >____> **["Pogi talaga ni Travis oh~"]**

"Ikaw maganda ka, Ree?"

["Hindi e. Pangit ako."]

"Sus! I can imagine an angel's face whenever I hear your voice."

["Angel na may sungay~"]

"I want to see you, Ree." Kinuha ko 'yung gitara sa tabi ko at nag-pluck ng strings habang tinuon ko 'yung chin ko sa hollow part ng gitara. "Gusto ko talaga."

["You know you can't cause I won't allow it."]

"Hanggang rinig nalang ganun?" I sulked.

["Travis. . ."]

"Oh?" I still try my best to sound displeased.

["Don't frown! You're getting ugly. "]

"Don't care." I sighed.

["Travis. . ."]

Aish. Ang galing talaga ng boses niya.

I sighed again for the gesture of my defeat. Wala naman kasing mangyayari kung bumaligtad man ang labi ko kakasimangot. She won't show herself up and I think she really has the reason. Baka magalit pa 'to sakin.

["Close your eyes."]

=_=?

["Just close your eyes, Travis. Don't peek."]

"Ha?"

["Gawin mo nalang. Dali na~"]

I closed my eyes and rested my back against the chair. Ano na namang meron?

["Don't open them, okay?"]

"Oo na—"

I heard the club's door.

Pumasok siya?

["Don't dare to open them."]

"What for? I want to see you."

["Just please, Travis."]

Talo na naman.

I sighed again. Exhaling air to let her know that I just can do nothing but to obey.

I heard footsteps getting closer as well as the pounding in my chest that seems to be an unbearable feeling of nervous and impatience. I want to open my eyes so badly but I'm too scared that she may turn back and be away. I can't let go now.

I jolted when soft palms covered my eyes.

“Just making sure you won’t steal a look.”

I was taken aback when I heard her voice.

Nanlamig ang katawan ko but at the same time, nararamdaman ko ‘yung init ng mukha ko.

“Whenever I wake up, the first thing I think of is you. . . I still can’t imagine that this really happen to me oh~” She rested her chin cheek at the top my head and I can feel my arms’ hair standing up. Giving chills and shiver. “. . .**You are so wonderful to me~”**

Now playing: So Wonderful by Devotion

“Ree?”

“Hm?”

“Di ba talaga pede?” Naramdaman ko ‘yung ulo niya sa left shoulder ko. Gusto kong gumalaw pero ramdam ko na para akong pagod na mas piniling umupo at pakiramdaman siya. **“You’re such a mystery.”**

She let me hear her sweet giggles. There are much better than through phones.

“I didn’t know that I can hold you like this.”

My heart was on the race track again. It beats so fast that it may suffocate me, anytime.

“Let me be unknown for now, Travis. Please. Don’t open them.” Dahan dahan niyang tinanggal ang kamay niya sa mga mata ko. I nodded. She seems upset. **“I let you know soon. Promise.”**

“S-sige.” then I felt her arms surrounding my neck. Goosebumps and heat waves.

Siguro kung ibang tao ako, he may take the risk of opening his eyes just to see who’s the lady at my back. Pero mas pinili kong maging duwag. May ipinaparating siya na hindi ko alam kung gusto o away kong malaman.

“You smell coffee.”

“Yes. It’s your favorite scent.”

I smiled when I felt her breath touching my neck.

Why can’t you open your eyes, Travis? Here’s your chance for Pete’s sake!

Why can't I just open them now?

"This is bad."

"Ha?"

"I'm losing my wings and I'm falling down slowly."

I heard quiet sobs.

"I should regret this but I just can't."

"Ree—"

"I'll have you Travis. Not now, but I will."

I want to hold her but she already let go and run away. I opened my eyes and just saw her back running out towards the door.

“Ree!”

Too late.

Ang bilis niyang tumakbo.

Hindi rin ako makatayo mula sa upuan.

I tried to chase her pero hindi ko magawa.

Anong ibig sabihin niya?

I shook my head in disbelief. When did I become a coward? I'd lose her just like that. Napahilamos ko ang kamay ko sa mukha ko. Hindi ko tuloy maisip na lalaki ako at nagpapadala ako sa isang babae ng ganitong kadali. Sobra sobra na 'to.

When I gained my reflexes back, I shut the desktop down for I won't make any concentrations after what happened. Mixed of happiness and regret, that's what I'm feeling right now. Just full of crap for I let her go just like that and bliss for I not only heard her, she came near just me to feel her presence.

Tumayo na ako matapos ayusin ang gamit ko. Lumabas na ako ng room pero isang bagay ang nakakuha ng atensyon ko.

Kinuha ko 'yung isang keychain sa sahig at tinitigan 'yun.

A musical note with 'NLily' carved on its back.

"Kay Ree." I said while putting it inside my pocket.

Chapter 5

MAS lalo akong naguguluhan. After that encounter from the Music Club Room, she never made any calls. It's been two days, this weekend, and I never got the chance to ask her things like why and what's happening. Titigil na ba siya?

Thinking of it makes me so desperate of knowing her more, pero I could just let go and just forget that like I always do. Pero bakit ako nagkakaganito? Fck. I hate this feeling.

Parang gustong sumabog ng dibdib ko. Ang gara e.

“Kuya T, practice daw tayo sabi ni Ate Suzumie.” lumapit sakin si Nolee at inabot sakin ‘yung lyrics. Kinuha ko ‘yung gitara sa tabi ko. This junior kiddo is my partner and I must admit that she really has a great voice.

“Game?” She nodded and I start strumming the string of my guitar, finding the right tempo.

Now Playing: [Count on me by Bruno Mars](#)

“If you ever find yourself stuck in the middle of the sea, I'll sail the world to find you.”

“ If you ever find yourself lost in the dark and you can't see, I'll be the light to guide you~”

Maganda ang boses ni Nolee at naalala ko si Ree sa kanya.. Ang sweet din kasi ng boses niya. Parang ang sarap pakinggan. Natural sweet angelic voice. Nung una, natutuwa ako pero mas gugustuhin kong ‘di marinig ang boses ni Nolee dahil naalala ko si Ree sa kanya.

Napansin kong napatingin samin sina Khris nung nagsimula kaming kumanta ni Nolee. Tumungo nalang ako at finocus ang mata sa gitara. Narinig kong medyo tumawa si Nolee pero di ko nalang pinansin. Tss. Umiinit ang tenga ko.

Tulad ng ginagawa ko tuwing natatapos ang practice namin ni Nolee, umaalis agad ako

at pinapatong ang gitara kung saan. Mukhang sanay na naman si Nolee dun kasi di na niya ako hinahabol tulad ng dati. Pumunta ako sa labas ng room at tumabay sa railings. Sunday afternoon and I'm at school. Great life. Psh.

"Hi T!" nakita ko nalang si Ria sa tabi ko. I wonder if they even really have practice today. I can't see any of her group mates here.

"Hello." I plainly said.

"Alam mo, gusto ko talaga ang boses mo! REALLY!" She shrieked out like she's in her cheering squad. Geez.

"Uh, thanks." =__=

"Ang cold cold mo pa! Alam mo ba na yan ang nagiging modern Prince Charming ngayon?" She flaunt her teeth and twirl the ends of her hair. Asan ba si Khris? >__>
"Tapos you are one of the hottest guy in school. Isn't that so COOL!?"

I don't really care, anyway.

"Sana makaduet din kita minsan~" she sang it out. "You can count on me like one, two, three. I'll be there~ And I know when I need it . . . I can count on you like four, three, two and you'll be there~ coz that's what friends are supposed to do oh yeah~ ohhh~"

I want to smile when I heard Ria's singing voice. Maganda ang boses niya. Pero remembering her attitude and personality combined, I'm becoming less interested in smiling. Ganun na talaga siguro. Iniisip ko talaga kung kelan ako ngingiti. =__=

“T, please date me.”

O_O

“You’re already dating my best friend.” I said trying to be cold, not letting her know that I was shocked. Such a bummer. >__>

“Pero alam mo namang di kami seryoso ni Khris!”

Tss. Okay lang ba talaga na ipagsigawan niya ‘yun? Khris!! >__<

“Will you just keep your voice down?”

“I can break up with him, right now, you know.” Change. Wag nalang pala siya magsalita. Tss. Mas kaboses niya ‘yung naipit na bakla. “HEY KHRIS! LET’S BREAK UP!!”

WHAT THE? O__O?

“Okay!!” Khris yelled.

Ano pa nga bang ineexpect sa mga players?

“So tayo na?” She linked her arms to mine pero tinanggal ko naman din agad.

“Nope. I won't date you.” Tumalikod na ako. Ayoko ng ganun e.

“But why did you let me broke up with Khris?!”

“I didn't tell you to do that. That was your own decision.” I said and managed not to look back. I don't care because I won't EVER date her and some girls like her. Sorry. =__=

Pero kung siya 'yung caller?

Ewan.

Pero wag naman sana.

“The number you have dialed is not yet in service, please try again later. Totoot. Totoot~”

I sighed and put my phone inside my pocket. Ayoko talaga ng ganito. Off ang phone niya, hindi siyang nagpaparamdam. Much worse, this unsaid feelings are bugging me so much. Hindi naman ito ‘yung first time pero kinukutuban akong malabo ng tatawag siya ulit. Tss.

“Oo, tapos papasok ‘yung main lead tapos tugtog ‘yung kay na T. Then last song!”
Tumingin lang ako sa busy kong group mates. Looks like I’m back of being the old T.

Siguro sasabihin ng iba na ang bilis makuha ni Ree ng loob ko. Kahit ako nagulat sa nangyari. Pero nung unang mga araw, hanggang kanta lang ‘yung nagagawa niya nun pero in-insist ko na magsalita siya after that song ang we got along. 28 days straight niya akong tinatawagan. Much effort and her voice. Ibang klase.

["I like you, Travis."]

When she confessed, I felt different. Unlike those who'll be texting me randomly and calling me non-stop telling what I look like, how mean I am when I ignore them and such. Iba talaga si Ree. Ibang iba. >///>

I want to hear her Christmas Song again. That first song she used to carol me on New Year’s Eve. I wonder if she still remembers. Dun ako namangha sa boses niya. That’s when I found out that I love music more. It’s been more than a month ago.

Ipinikit ko ang mga mata ko and rest my head on the walls behind me. Ganito naman ako lagi tuwing walang ginagawa. Akala nila, inaantok o natutulog na talaga ako.

Will you hate if I actually like her?

Masama bang magustuhan ang taong hindi mo pa nakikilala?

Gusto kong malaman kung anong dapat gawin dito.

Hindi ko na kasi talaga mapigilan ang paghahanap sa kanya.

Ipinasok ko ang kamay ko sa bulsa ko at kinapa 'yung keychain ni Ree. I can still remember how she smells coffee last Friday. Her head on my shoulder whilst sobbing things that made me think things more complicated.

Biglang nagvibrate ang phone ko kaya napamulat ako at kinuha 'yun agad. I saw a video message. Okay? =__=?

["TRAVIS!!"]

WTH!?

O__O

Napatingin sakín yung mga ka-group ko kaya naman pinause ko ulit at inayos ang

headset ko. Tss. I didn't know someone will sent me a video and will scream my name out loud. Psh. Sino ba 'to?

I looked on my phone's screen and questioned why am I only seeing the chin part of the face and guitar on her hands. Video prank ba 'to? Yung tipong may lalabas na scary face at the end of the video? =__=?

["HAHAHA! I know you'll be shocked. OMG! I can see your face right now! Pinipigilan ko na siguro ang sarili ko kakatawa! HAHAAH!"]

That voice.

Tumawa muna siya. Pero dahan dahang nawala 'yun,

["Sorry, Travis."] her lips went upside down. ["Sorry if I do things complicated. Sorry. . . Isa lang akong duwag na babae."]

She sighed and forced her lips to form a smile.

This girl is really mysterious.

["Teka nga. Pano nga 'yun?"] She cleared her throat and pulled the strings of her gui— bakit parang akin 'yung gitara? ["You can count on me like one two three, I'll be there~"]

'Ree.'

Much better, no. WAY BETTER than Ria's version.

["Must be wondering why I'm holding your guitar? Iniiwan mo kasi palagi! Ayan ayan! Akala moy lagi galit sa mundo. Tss."] She smiled. Naramdaman kong uminit na naman ang tenga ko. Tumingin ako sa paligid, checking if they're looking. I can't hide this. .smile.

["Travis, miss na kita!"]

'I miss you too.'?

Para namang nakita ko na siya. =__=

Fine, I miss her voice and touch.

Touch?

Ugh. Basta!

*["Sorry for not calling you, ha? Just gaining my 'confidence' back. Nabawasan ang kapal ng mukha ko e. Haha! Ble!"] *that was cute. ["Anyway, "]*

Bigla niyang ibinaba 'yung gitara ko. Kinuha 'yung phone at itinutok sa ibang view. Nakita ko nalang na binuksan niya 'yung isang pintuan tapos pumasok sa isang room. Yung room kung saan kami nagpa-practice. Then I saw Khris with. . .me?

Khris holding the sticks for his drums and me doing my 'lazy sit' and focusing my eyes on the phone. When did this happen? =_=a

["Saw that guy beside Khris? I like that guy."] She whispered. I heard her giggles. ["Can you ask him to date me?"]

Baliw.

*["Ang alam ko kasi name niya Travis at siya 'yung Pres ng Music Club namin. Baka close kayo, 'T'. Tulungan mo naman ako. Haha! I sound stup*d."] She still kept her voice down. Ayaw niya talagang may makahalata sa ginagawa niya.*

'I find it clever, actually'

["Nah, enough with this."] Lumabas na siya ng room at pumunta dun sa room kung nasaan siya kanina. Ibinalik niya 'yung pagkakafocus sa kanya. Pano niya kaya nasiguradong di ko makikita ang buong mukha niya? She's good. *["Peace na tayo ha?"]*

Peace na nga ba?

Nakita ko si Khris na papalapit sakin. . .dun ko narealize na he's wearing the exact same shirt on this video. Ibig sabihin?

"Ano yan ha?" Itinago ko agad 'yung phone at inilagay sa bulsa ko. Tss. >__>

"None of your business."

"You got a boner?"

"Ulu!" Binatukan ko siya tapos tumawa lang siya. Akala niya nanunuod ako ng scandal. Tsk.

"You were smiling before I got here. Fishy~"

"Fishy mo mukha mo. =__="

“It was the first time I saw T smiling!”

Nagulat ako ng makita si Ms. Pres sa tabi namin ni Khris. Kahit si Khris nagulat. She really wants to show everyone that she has some good white teeth, huh?

“Wonder what you're watching a while ago. Hmm. . .”

Darn. Ano kayang itsura ko kanina? Sana di niya nakita ‘yung mukha kong asong ngiti. Amp.

Kelan pa ako naging conscious sa itsura ko?

At kelan pa naging Nosy type 'tong si Ms. Pres? Ano nga ulit pangalan niya? -___-?

Ang labo.

Chapter 6

["Are you REALLY okay, Travis?"] Tumango ako. Alam ko naman kasing nakikita niya ako. Ipinikit ko ang mata ko at sumandal sa upuan ko. **["Pumunta ka na kasi sa clinic!"]**

She demanded me again but I still refuse.

Kung 'yung iba natutuwa sa pagtambay sa clinic para makaiwas sa klase, ako hindi. Ayoko talaga sa amoy-gamot na lugar na 'yun.

["Ang tigas naman kasi ng ulo, Travis."] I smiled. Naiimagine ko kung gano siya ka-cute pagnaiinis. **["At ano na naman ang ngini-ngiti mo dyan ha?"]**

"Masama bang ngumiti pag naririnig ko ang boses mo?" I tried my best to say it clear. Ang sakit ng lalamunan ko, pati na ulo ko.

["Sus! Yan ang side effect ng lagnat, nagiging Boy Pick-up si Mr. Travis Delos Santos."] Medyo tumawa ako kaya napatingin 'yung ibang babaeng nasa room ngayon. Bakit parang gulat sila? =__= **["As if I know that they want to shriek out for seeing and hearing you laughed. Pssh."]**

"Pano mo naman nasabe yan?"

["Travis, they are members of your fanclub. Puh-lease~"]

"Fanclub?"

["You don't know?"] She sounded shocked. Ako? Merong fanclub? Di naman uso 'yun sa Pinas di ba? **["Kung sabagay, T isn't that much of the nosy type. Academics and Music club lang naman ang focus mo e."]**

"Ikaw ng maraming alam sakin."

["Talaga! At kahit magpadamihan pa kami ng alam tungkol sayo ng Pres ng T-backUps!"] TBackUps? ["OMG. Your fanclub's name is really funny! HAHA! Naalala ko na naman~"]

Tss. Inaatake na naman siya ng 'di makaget-over' syndrome niya.

Wait. T-BackUps ang pangalan ng fanclub ko daw?

Lame. =__=

Ibang TBackUps ang pumapasok sa isip ko.

Yung *ano*. Basta.

"Ohright, stop laughing." I gave out my serious cold voice.

["KJ Brat! Bleh! You pissed off coz of your fanclub's name? Haha!"]

"I don't care."

["Sunget talaga ni T!"]

"How many times do I have to-"

[". . . tell me to not call you T? I know. I know."] I chuckled after hearing that. ["Hey, di ka ba kakain?"]

I shook my head.

["Travis."] She said with dismay. ["Kumain ka na kasi baka **may practice pa kame mamaya** Sige bye **Hey-** Khris!"]

TOTOOT

O_O

Kilala ni Khris si Ree?

Agad akong tumakbo palabas ng room para hanapin si Khris. Pero too late, napapaligiran na siya ng madaming tao, babae actually. Single kasi ngayon. Pssh. Nakita ko rin si Charmaine, Aika at Nolee sa tabi niya. Kausap pa nga niya e. Okay. Sayang.

“Uy pare, okay ka na?” sigaw ni Khris sa hallway. Tumingin at tumango lang ako sa kanya. Lumapit naman siya kasama nung tatlong babae. Bakit kaya kasama ni Khris 'to?

“T, balita ko nilalagnat ka?” nagulat ako ng biglang maramdaman ko ang kamay ni Charmaine sa noo ko.

“I-i'm fine.”

Tumingin ako sa kanya tapos tinitigan niya lang ako na para bang may gusto siyang gawin, o ako lang ang nagiisip nun? Di ko din masabi kasi parang sumimangot siya nung iniwas ko ang mukha ko sa kamay niya. Ewan.

“May lagnat ka kuya T?”

Tumango lang ako. Nakikinig ba 'tong si Nolee kanina? =.=

“Ah! Oo nga pala. Eto oh.”

“Hey! Bakit di mo ako binibigyan niyan?!”

Kinuha ko lang 'yung inabot sakin ni Nolee. Nagsimula namang magtantrums 'tong si Khris. Napatingin din naman si Aika at Charmaine kay Khris at mukhang na-aamaze sila sa itsura ni Khris ngayon. Feeling ko may crush 'tong dalawa kay Khris e.

Tumingin lang ako 'dun sa box na inabot ni Nolee. Cupcake 'yung nasa loob. Yung fondant cake na pedeng kahit anong design.

“Eh pinapabigay lang naman sakín 'yun e. >o<”

Pinapabigay?

“Nino?”

“Ni Lily.” She stuck her tongue out and winked at me.

Lily?

Si Ree?

Ngumiti naman ako out of the blue when I realized this is from her. Tss. Di ba niya alam na masakit ang lalamunan ko? Parang 'di alam na may lagnat ako e. Kausap ko ba talaga siya kanina? =0=

Anyway, *Smiles*

“Sino namang Lily 'yun? Ang kilala ko lang Lily ay i-”

“You don't know her. Bleh! Ask Kuya T.” Tinuro naman ako ni Nolee pero ngumiti lang ako sa kanya. So, kilala ni Nolee si Ree?

“Ngu-ngumiti ba talaga 'tong si Travis?”

My ears twitched when I heard Aika.

“Oops. Sorry T.” Alam na niya siguro kung bakit.

“You barely smile, T.” Charmaine added.

“Suplado kasi 'tong kaibigan ko. Pangalan pa nga lang di ba? Ayaw niyang tinatwag siyang T.R.A.V.I.S. =0=”

“Pansin ko nga. Bakit ayaw mo ba-”

Napatigil si Charmaine nung nakita niyang sobrang lapit ni Nolee sa mukha ko. I blinked twice pero mukhang wala lang kay Nolee. She looked dazed while staring at my face. Naramdaman ko tuloy ang pagkanerbyos ng katawan ko.

“Ang ganda ng mata mo.” *O*

Oh-kay?

“Thanks.” I cleared my throat and looked away. Mainit ba? Oo, nilalagnat ako pero di naman ganun kainit kanina diba?

Ano bang meron kay Nolee at lalo siyang nagiging weird?

- - - - -

“You make me wanna say I do, I do, I do do do do~”

I stared at Melody for a while as she hums and plays the guitar with Colbie Calliat's I DO. Nagpeperform kasi ang bawat sasali sa Music Event. Tapos ang representative ng group nila ay si Melody. Sama-sama nga silang apat tapos nagulat nalang ako ng isama nila si Nolee at Miss Pres.

Sabi nila magaling din daw kumanta si Miss Pres tapos magaling naman talaga si Nolee kaya kahit Junior siya, isinali pa din siya nina Melody.

“Please do support us, seniors. Thank you.” Melody said after the song. I don't know if I'm hallucinating but did she really winked at me? =_ =a

Umub-ob ako sa upuan dahil lalong sumasakit ang ulo ko. Di ko nalang pinansin. I don't have time for thinking if she did or not. But I'll reconsider if she's Ree. Tss. Sakit talaga ng ulo ko. Shoot those hectic schedule. Napatingin naman din sakin si Khris kaya napahawak siya sa noo ko.

“Pare, ang taas ng lagnat mo! Ma'am!”

My sight began to blur. Naaaninag ko pa naman pero lumalabo ang paningin ko. Alam kong may lumapit saking mga kaklase ko at pinatayo ako. Sumunod naman ako at umakbay kay Khris.

Unconsciously, I found my other hand placed before my forehead. Geez.

Nahihilo na talaga ako.

I shut my eyes at wala na akong naramdaman pero alam kong narinig ko ang boses niya. . .

“Travis!”

I felt a warm palm touching my cheek. I heard her sweet hums, then. Warm electricity travelled to my arms when she linked her fingers to mine. Sobrang sakit ng ulo ko at di ko magawang maigalaw ang mga mata ko. Pero kahit ganun, alam ko na kung sino 'to.

“Travis.” Mas humigpit pa ang hawak niya sa kamay ko. I responded. I opened my eyes but I still have blurred vision. Great, she's sitting beside the bed but I still can't see her. *“Don't peek.”*

She closed my eyes using her other hand.

“You're mean.” I smiled but rejected at the same time. >__>

“Ang tigas tigas naman kasi ng ulo mo. Di ba sabi ko pumunta ka na dito sa clinic kanina? Tss. Travis talaga.”

“You're mean.”

“Tapos di ka pa kumakain. Pano ka makakainom ng gamot? Tss. Masyado mong pinapagod ang sarili mo. Take a rest.”

“You're mean.”

I frowned and she giggled. Pinagti-tripan niya talaga ako. Bakit ba kasi ayaw niyang makita ko siya? Wala naman akong pakielam kung anong itsura niya. Though, I really have someone in mind. I'm not just sure yet.

“Travis naman.”

“Di ka ba naaawa sa may sakit?” I joked then laughed. But I guess she laughed at my voice more. Ang panget ng boses ko. Tsk

“That won't work.”

“You're mean.” I repeated tapos tumawa siya. I chuckled but it faded. I tighten the grasp on her hand, “I want to see you, Ree.”

And I mean it.

She sighed. I felt her palm away before my eyes,

“Just close your eyes, the sun is going down. You'll be alright, no one is gonna hurt you now.” I slowly opened my eyes but I just found myself closing them again. “Come morning light, you and I'll be safe and sound~”

[Safe and Sound](#) by Taylor Swift and Civil Wars.

She runs her fingers through my hair while I listen to her voice. I'm amazed on how she can actually sing everything. I smiled showing pleasure. I'm beginning to like this place. Yung amoy gamot ng lugar. It has an ambiance that gives me warmth but I think Ree does the work actually.

“Oh~”

Is this what they call “Cloud nine” feeling?

Who can actually like her? No, How can I actually like her? She never wants me to see her. Pero physical appearance is just a bonus, right? Personality at kung ano siya 'yung dapat di ba?

“I-I like you, Ree.”

I do. I really like her, since her very first call.

Pero alam kong ibang LIKE na tong nararamdaman ko.

“I really like Ree.”

“T-travis.”

“I'll find my own way or opportunities just to know who you are.”

“Don't. It won't be go-”

“And if that WAY or chance is now, I'll grab it and-”

Naramdaman ko ulit ang kamay niya nung bubuksan ko ulit ang mga mata ko.

“Please, Ree.”

And I felt something that made my head blank.

“I like you too Travis. Please forgive me for doing things like this.”

Wala na siya nung binuksan ko talaga ang mga mata ko.

She kissed me then ran off.

My heart is pounding.

Now it's *really* complicated.

Chapter 7

Maingay na agad pagkapasok ko ng room. Cancelled na NAMAN ang klase. Hindi dahil sa event pero dahil may emergency meetings ang mga teachers. Sarap buhay namin dito sa school na'to ah. Wala pa ata kaming nagiging matinong klase simula ng mag-

February. =__=

“Khris!” Tinawag ko si Khris nung nakita ko siyang nakikipagusap kay Melody. As if I know na hindi lang pakikipagusap ‘yun.

“T! Dito! Chocolates~”

Isip bata talaga.

“Good morning T. Gusto mo?” Inabot sakin ni Melody ang isang box ng familiar ng chocolates. “Favorite mo ‘yan di ba?”

Hindi ko alam ang pangalan nito dahil intsik ‘yung nakasulat sa box pero madalas akong magpabili kay Ate nito tuwing sinasabi niyang pupunta siya ng Mall. Tinanggap ko naman ‘yung box at nag-thank you sa kanya.

“You really like coffee huh?” tumango lang ako. Inilagay ko lang sa bulsa ko ‘yung box at ngumiti.

Chocolates with little flavor and smell of coffee.

“I know.”

May sinabi ba siya? May narinig ako e. Pero bulong, hindi ko naintindihan.

Tumingin ako kay Khris at kinakain niya lang 'yung chocolates niya na para bang may kaagaw siya at wala talaga siyang pakielam kung ano ang itsura niya. Tss. Pero aware naman siya kung masama na 'yung itsura niya madalas, pag minsan lang talaga nawawala ang pagka-Khris conscious niya. Ang labo.

“Melody?”

Napatingin kaming tatlo nung may tumawag kay Melody.

At kinabahan ako nung nakita ko Rica at Nolee.

Hindi ko alam kung bakit.

“Ah! Ito nga pala, Rica. Yung pinapabili mo.” Inabot naman ni Melody ang isang box ng pamango ata?

“Salamat. Bayaran nalang kita.”

“Hindi na! Sabi naman kasi ni Mama okay na daw.” Ngumiti naman si Rica dun sa sinabi ni Melody. “Ikamusta mo nalang daw siya kay Ninong Christopher.”

“Okay. Salamat talaga!”

“Nagpabili ka na naman niyan?” sabat ni Khris nung tapos na niyang kainin 'yung

chocolates niya. "Aish! Ang baho baho naman niyan e. >__<"

"Eh di wag mong amuyin!" ayan. Nagaway na naman 'yung kambal. Napatawa nalang kaming tatlo sa kanila.

"Lage nalang kasing nangangamoy kape ang bahay dahil sayo!"

Nagulat ako sa sinabi ni Khris. Amoy kape?

"Pakielam mo ba! Tse! Makaalis na nga. Belat!" tumalikod na si Rica at naglakad palayo pero tumingin ulit siya, "Salamat Melody!"

Kumaway nalang si Melody tapos nagcuss si Khris. Isip bata talaga. Tapos si Nolee, tawa lang ng tawa. Tss. Pano niya kayang natitiis na kasama 'tong kambal? Ang hirap siguro ng may pinsan ng kambal. -__-

sniff. . . sniff

Sino 'yun?

"I can smell CHOCOLATES! *sniff . . . sniff* GUSTO KO! T^T"

PRES?

“Haha! I forgot that Ree has goood sense.” tumawa si Melody. She called Ms. Pres Ree. Kinabahan ako lalo. “Oh!”

“I owe you!” Bigla silang nagyakap. Ang bilis naman nilang maging close. =__=a

“Pres, penge. T____T”

“Pero. . .”

“Please? T^T”

Hala. Khris is going choco-loco again.

“Aya~ No no! Run Rhythm! >____<” Nolee pulled Ms. Pres away. Pero hinabol sila ni Khris. “Waaa! Go away oppa! No no no!!”

Oh boy. =__=

“So, what’s your plan?” Nagulat ako ng biglang magsalita si Ate.

“Hi-hindi ko alam.”

“Well, I’m glad that I’d help my little brother out.” She smiled and I just looked at her. I ran out of things to say. “Now, where’s my thank you kiss?”

Baliw kong ate. =_____ =

“Mandiri ka nga.”

“Aba aba!” Biglang umusok ang tenga niya. Lumabas tuloy ‘yung guhit guhit sa tenga niya. “As far as I know you like kissing your ate~”

“That’s more than a decade ago. I’m 16.” Tumayo ako at dinala ‘yung ibinagay niya saking papel.

“Yeah, you’re already a grown up.” Tumayo na din siya at nagulat ako nung bigla niyang ginulo ang buhok ko, “But not that old! You’re still my younger brother. Totoy ka pa din sakin! Ble!”

“Tss. Isip bata. = __=”

“Maganda naman!” She stuck her tongue out again and marched going to the kitchen.

“Ate!” I called her out. Tumingin naman siya. “Thank you!”

Iniwag ko na yung tingin ko at naglakad palayo. Mukha kasi siyang ewan. Natulala siya sa sinabi ko. Narinig ko pa si mama na sumigaw. Ganun na ba talaga ka bigdeal sa kanila ‘yun? Tss.

Umupo ako sa kama ko at tumingin sa orasan. 8PM na pero hindi pa rin siya tumatawag. Eto na naman siya. Hindi na naman niya ako tinatawagan. Tatlong araw na ang nakakalipas after that kiss sa clinic. Gaining confidence again? Psh.

Pero mas kinabahan ako sa binigay saakin ni Ate na papel.

There I saw details of the owner of Ree’s number.

It was named to Mr. Christopher Lee, Khris and Rica’s father.

“Ree. . . Ree. . . Ree. . .”

Ibinagsak ko ang katawan ko sa kama habang nakatitig parin sa papel na hawak ko. Sumasakit ulit ang ulo ko, hindi dahil sa galing ako sa sakit kundi kaiisip dahil pinapagulo lalo ng mga nalalaman kong information ang lahat ng tungkol sa Ree. Hindi ko na talaga maintindihan.

Inayos ko ang higa ko at inabot ang keychain na nakapatong sa side table. Yung keychain na nahulog ni Ree sa labas ng music room. NLily? Pano ba naging connected ang pangalan ni Rica sa NLily at wala talaga akong matinong maisip na magiging connected sa kanya. Pangalan pa lang.

Umiling ako at ipinatong ang papel at keychain sa side table at kinuha ‘yung listahan ng kasali sa Music Event. Finalize na ang lahat at naka-organize na lahat ng dapat. Natawagan ko na ‘yung rerentahan namin ng musical instruments at kakausapin ko personally ‘yung may-ari.

Busy Travis, again. >__>

I guess, this is okay. For my mind is full of Rica.

Real bad.

Valentines came. . .

Naramdaman ko ang ibig sabihin ng tibok ng puso ko pagkamulat ng mata ko. Ilang araw na. Tumayo ako sa kama at napahawak sa labi ko. After that kiss at the clinic, wala na talaga. What happened to her? I'm badly missing Ree so much.

“Travis! Gising ka na ba? Tumawag si Khris on the way na daw siya!”

Hindi na ako sumagot saka tumayo at dumiretso sa banyo. Ginawa ko ang dapat gawin. Kelangan ko kasing maging maaga sa school dahil alam kong hindi pa tapos ang preparation sa school, yung line up dahil alam ko may nagback out at kung ano ano pa. Mga pahirap sa buhay.

Lumabas ako sa kwarto at nakita si Khris na nakain sa dining room kasama si Ate. Tawa lang sila ng tawa tapos ako? Hindi ko alam. Tsss.

“HAPI BALENTAYMS PARE TI AY YAB YU!!!”

Tumakbo si Khris papalapit sakin kaya sakto kong iniharang sa mukha niya ang kamay ko. Napatigil naman siya at nag-pout. Kahit kelan talaga, parang ewan 'tong si Khris. Ngumiti ako ng matamlay at umupo sa tabi ni Ate at inagaw 'yung hawak niyang tinapay.

“Tamo 'tong si Travis! Menopause na naman. =__=”

“Yan ang napapala ng walang lablayp ate Trixie!” tumawa naman si Khris pero mukhang nainis si Ate.

“Anong problema sa walang love life? -____-++++”

“Ah-e-hehe. Joke lang ate Trixie! Kaw naman! Di ko kaya ang dalawang menopause na Travis!”

Hindi maipinta ang mukha ni Ate. Di niya kasi alam kung tatawa siya o maiinis ni Khris. Wala akong pakielam. Di naman ako natatawa e. Cold T. Cold T. WTH. Ayoko talaga ng ganito.

Tumayo na ako matapos kong inumin ‘yung juice at kinuha ‘yung bag ko, “Tara.”

Agad na din namang tumayo si Khris at minadaling ubusin ‘yung juice sa kanya. Papagalitan pa sana ako ni Ate pero lumabas na agad ako ng bahay. Tss. Uulit-ulitin lang naman niya ‘yung sasabihin niya. Yung ‘wala na naman daw akong pakielam sa mga tao’ at ‘lagi nalang daw akong nasusunod.’ Minsan may ‘ANG SUNGIT MO TALAGA, TRAVIS!!’

=____=

Papasok sana ako sa passenger seat ng bigla akong pinigilan ni Khris. Dun ko lang na-realize na may babaeng nakaupo sa loob. Isang babaeng natutulog sa shotgun seat. At. . . At. . .

At sa unang pagkakataon, nagandahan ako sa babae.

Hindi naman sa hindi talaga ako nagagandahan sa iba kong babaeng kaklaseng babae pero ngayon lang ako namangha ng ganito. Kumatok si Khris dun sa bintana nung babae. Napakunot ang noo nung babae at tumingin sa labas ng kotse kung nasaan kami ni Khris.

Sumenyas naman si Khris na ibaba 'yung bintana. Kinusot niya 'yung maliliit niyang mata at tumango. Ewan ko. Pero kahit anong gawin niya sa mukha niya, la-lalo lang atang umiinit ang tenga ko. Ay tae.

“Wae? Aren't we going yet?”

** . . .dug. . .dugdug. . .**

Sht.

Isa lang ang tumatakbo sa utak ko ngayon.

Kaboses niya si Ree.

“Sige, akin na.”

Hanggang ngayon nakatitig lang ako sa kanya. Ayaw maalis ng mga mata ko sa kanya. Hindi ko alam pero malakas ang kutob ko na siya talaga si Ree kahit na alam kong wala akong proweba. Kinakabahan talaga ako.

“So, what do you think babe?” Natauhan ako nung ipinulupot ni Khris ang kamay niya sa bewang ni Lyra.

Thinking her name, simply made my heart skipped a beat.

Th-this is really the first time.

Nagulat ako nung ipakilala ni Khris sakín ang bagong girlfriend niya. Taga-dito rin siya sa school namin. Pero madalas siyang wala at nags-special classes dahil madalas siyang pumunta sa iba't ibang lugar pero madalas daw sa Quezon and Laguna for some special reason.

Dun palang sa Quezon at Laguna, kinabahan na agad ako. Yung mga information na ibinigay sakín ni Ate. Yung pangalan niya, Shira Lyrica Lindon. Ewan ko. ngayon lang ulit bumilis ang tibok ng puso ko after those empty days. Pa-pati 'yung boses niya.

“Hi Travis.”

Again. . .

“Ba-bakit?”

“Pede mo ba akong samahan sa Music Club room? Eh di ba ikaw lang ang may spare key?” Tumango ako. “Kelangan ko kasing kunin 'yung gitara ko. Itinago kasi 'dun ng pinsan ko e.”

“Pinsan?”

Tumayo ako at nagsimulang maglakad papuntang Club room. Kinakabahan ako ngayon alam ko. Sobra. Nanginginig at nanlalamig ang mga kamay ko kaya itinago ko 'yung sa magkabilang bulsa ko.

“Yup. Si Nolee, third cousin ko siya.” Tumango nalang ako.

Yung boses niya.

Yung pagsabi niya ng ‘Hi, Travis.’

Yung pangalan niya.

Yung pagwawala ng puso ko ngayon.

Nawawalan na ako ng hininga.

“O-okay ka lang ba?” Nagulat ako nung bigla ko siyang makita sa harapan ko at biglang hinawakan ang noo ko. “Hindi ka naman mainit, pero bakit namumutla ka?”

Iniwas ko ang tingin ko sa kanya at nilagpasan siya.

Dahil sa ginawa niya, lalo lang naguluhan.

Kinuha ko 'yung susi sa bulsa ko at sa katangahan ko, hindi ko maipasok ang susi sa door knob. Sht. Mahahalata niyang kinakabahan ako. Nagulat ako nung bigla niyang hinawakan ang kamay ko na nagdulot ng paginit ng tenga ko.

"Ako na." Kinuha niya 'yung susi sa kamay ko at hinayaang buksan ang pinto.

Bakit ba ganito ang nararamdaman ko?

Malungkot, masaya, kinakabahan, masakit pero

gusto ko ang hindi ko maintindihang pagtibok ng puso ko. . .

Pumunta siya sa harapan ko at dun ko naamoy si Lyra.

She smells coffee. . .

Bullsht Travis.

Siya na nga ata si Ree.

Bakit ganun?

“Tara?”

Ngayon ko lang napansin na matagal na pala akong nakatulala. Napailing nalang ako sa hindi ko malamang dahilan. Masyado lang siguro akong napaparanoid. Dahil sa lampas ng isang linggo kong hindi naririnig ang boses ni Ree.

Oo, siguro—naguguluhan lang talaga ako ngayon.

Tama ‘yun.

“A-ayaw mo ba sakín, Travis?”

Pero tuwing naririnig kong tinatawag niya akong Travis.

Bumabalik ang pagkalito ko..

“H-ha?”

“Kasi—” Napakamot siya sa batok niya gamit ang freehand niya. “Si-simula kasi nung nakita mo ako kaninang umaga, parang umiiwas ka sakín.”

Bigla siyang sumimangot.

A-ang ganda niya.

Hindi ko na talaga alam.

“So-sorry. May i-iniisip lang kasi ako.”

“Ano ‘yun?”

“Wala. Na-naalala ko lang siya sayo.”

“Ah.”

Nagsimula na ulit siyang maglakad at tinititigan ang likod niya.

Inaalala ko ‘yung tumatabong babae nun sa Music Room. Yung isang pagkakataon kung san ako niyakap ni Ree. Pero—hindi talaga ako makasigurado.

“Lyra.”

Ewan ko. Bahala na.

“Bakit, Travis?”

Bumilis ang tibok ng puso ko nung bigla siyang lumingon at ngumiti sakin. . .

“**Wa-wala.**” Tumungo ako.

Ang puso ko.

“**Okay.**”

Tumalikod na ulit siya at naglakad pabalik sa activity room kung saan maggaganap ‘yung Music Event.

Dumaan kami sa building namin kasi may pupuntahan lang daw siyang tao. Silip siya ng silip sa bintana ng room ng IV-A. Hindi niya siguro makita dahil ng kagulo ang tao. Puro busy. Nagulat ako nung biglang tumingin si Rica at nanlaki ang mga mata niya nung nakita niyang kumakaway si Lyra sa kanya.

Agad tumakbo si Rica palabas ng room,

“Ree!”

“Rica!” Nagyakap sila at ako--

Isang gulat na ekspresyon ang makikita panigurado sa mukha ko.

Tama ba ‘yung na-narinig ko?

“OMG! Narinig ko ba ‘yung boses na ‘yun?!’” biglang lumabas si Nolee mula sa IV-A room at mukhang gulat siya ng makita si Rica at Lyra. “ATE LILY!”

“Nolee! I missed you!” Tumakbo naman si Lyra papalapit kay Nolee saka 'to niyakap.

Ree? Lily?

Shoot Travis.

GF yan ng bestfriend mo.

Chapter 8

What do I feel?

That's been bugging me ever since that kiss was made. Up to know, I don't know. I just don't know yet how will I ever call Travis again. It's painful, I know. I'm a sadist and still consider myself as a masochist. If only Travis knew why I'm hiding myself, this will be less complicated.

I sighed, hoping I can exhale all this pain away.

Travis shouldn't be treated this way.

In the very first place, I should have not made that call.

I know the consequences but it's too hard to accept all of them.

I'm such a coward.

I am.

"Lily?"

I saw Khris.

Inayos ko ang upo ko at ngumiti sa kanya. I handed him Travis' guitar. He accepted it and smiled too.

"How long, Lily?"

I shook my head for I really don't know the answer.

"He's getting worse, Li-"

"I know."

I exhaled once more. I know.

I shouldn't give this treatment to Travis.

He doesn't deserve craps.

"I'll call him. Promise."

Khris sighed as a sign of his defeat. You can see on his face that he's worried for his best friend. Nah, He really does have a soft heart for Travis and *for me too, that's why I love him so much*. He looked at me and smiled weakly. I shook my head once more.

"I know you can."

His voice was still soft as ever. I nodded and smiled at him again.

"Hindi ko lang alam kung hanggang san pa 'tong kakayanin ko, Khris."

"If you just let him know. He'll understand. Hindi naman kasi—"

Alam ko. Alam ko.

I smiled bitterly and made him shut.

“Konti pa.”

He nodded.

He handed me my phone after turning it on. Inabot ko naman ‘yun at tumingin sa kanya. Ginulo niya ang buhok ko. Lumabas siya ng classroom at tumingin muna ulit sakin bago tawagin si ang lalaking nagpapagulo ng takbo ng mundo ko.

“T!!”

Nakatitig lang ako sa labas hanggang sa makita ko si Travis sa harapan ni Khris. Ang puso ko. Eto na, nagtatatalon na naman sa tuwa. Pero nararamdaman ko na naman ang luha ko. Di pede ‘to. Kelangan kong maging matatag. Compose yourself, Lily!

“Uy Lily! Forever alone ang peg?”

“Baliw.”

Dumila ako kay Charmaine tapos tumawa siya.

“Mamaya na! Excited na ako sa event~”

“Ako din.”

“Labas ka na mamaya, ha?” Tumango ako sa kanya tapos lumabas na siya.

Tumingin ulit ako sa labas ng bintana at nandun pa rin silang dalawa. Nag-uusap. Sinabi ko naman talaga ‘yun kay Khris dahil matagal kong hindi nakita si Travis. Namiss ko e. Plano talaga namin ‘to. Khris was laughing naturally while Travis still has his poker face. The same old Travis I knew. Masungit pa rin talaga! Pero ang cute niya, sarap lumabas at pisilin ang pisngi niya.

Kinapa ko ‘yung earphones ko sa bulsa at tiningnan ang phone ko. Inayos ko ang handset ko at inisa-isa ang mga text niya. Nakakatuwa dahil kahit hanggang ngayong ‘di ako nagpaparamdam sa kanya, hindi niya nakakalimutang i-text ako.

Tell me Travis.

Do you like me?

Pero sino bang niloko ko?

Kitang kita ng mga mata ko kung pano siya magbago . Nakita ko kung pano maging malungkot ang mga mata niya tuwing natingin siya sa phone niya. . .tulad nalang ngayon.

Kitang kita ko ang pagtawa ni Khris habang walang pakielam si Travis. Alam naman namin na hindi siya nakikinig at wala siyang pakielam sa mga sinasabi ni Khris. Kung hindi lang mabait si Khris, siguro nasapak na niya ang kaibigan niya.

Pumunta ako sa contacts at nakita ang kaisa-isang number na nakaregister dun. Siya lang naman kasi at sina Khris ang may alam ng number na 'to e. Pero alam nina Khris na hindi ito ang ginagamit ko. Ginagamit ko lang tuwing tatawagan ko si Travis.

I pressed the green button and secret placed the mic close to my lips. I heard the first ring and my heartbeat went crazy. Nakita ko ang expression ni Travis nung napansin niya ang phone niya. I smiled secretly.

Hindi ko maipaliwanag ang itsura ngayon pero kahit ano pa 'yun. Natutuwa ako.

I'm too proud of saying that I'm the only person who can make Travis like that.

Mayabang ako. Alam ko.

Pero ito ang kayabangan na gusto kong ipagmalaki,

Pero hindi ko magawa. *sigh

Pasimpleng tumingin sa kin si Khris. Nakita ko ang smirk sa mukha niya. He mouthed something to Travis at tumango naman 'to. Dahan dahan siyang umalis at naiwan si Travis sa tapat ng room IV A. I smiled for I saw his lips forming something I really really missed.

He's smiling.

Tumingin siya sa loob ng room at saktong nagtama ang mga mata namin. Nagpatay malisya lang ako sa kanya. I smiled casually like I always do whenever I saw him. He smirked at looked away.

He still doesn't know who I am.

He doesn't know that I was he's secret caller and singer for more than a month now. Gusto kong matuwa. Gusto kong malungkot. Kasi nasasaktan ako pero I should accept it for I'm the one who chose this.

Inayos ko ang buhok ko para itago ang earphones at kumuha ng panyo para sa mic.

Sinagot na niya.

["R-ree?"]

Napangiti ulit ako nung nakita ko siyang mapakamot sa batok niya.

His voice.

"Hello, Travis." I respond. "Happy Valentines. I-I missed you."

Ngumiti siya at sumandal sa railings. Tumingin siya sa baba ng building. Maybe he's thinking of what to say? Kahit kasi ako hindi ko alam ang sasabihin. . .

Biglang may lumapit kay Travis. Si Aika,

*["*T, kelangan ka na daw ni sir sa music room* Ah sige. Susunod na ako."]*

Umalis naman din si Aika at pumasok sa room namin.

"You're busy. You should go." I lowered down my voice. Tumingin sakin si Aika at ngumiti. I returned the smile.

["I can't go. Ng-ngayon ka nalang ulit tumawag."]

"I'll call you again if you're done."

["N-no."]

"Pasaway."

Lumabas naman si Aika pero nagulat ako nung,

"CHARMAINE!"

Alam kong narinig ni Travis ang boses ni Aika mula sa linya ko. Nakita ko siyang nakatingin kay Aika at dahan dahang ipinaling ang tingin mula sa loob ng room.

["Ree?"]

Busted.

Chapter 9

Nakatingin lang ako sa kawalan. Kinig ko na 'yung dial tone mula sa linya ni Ree. Napatingin ako kay Charmaine na katapat ngayon si Aika. Nag-uusap sila para sa event mamaya. Rinig ko sa kabilang linya 'yung pag-sigaw ni Aika kanina nung. . . tinawag niya si Charmaine.

Andito si Ree.

At bumilis ang tibok ng puso ko nung nagkatinginan kami ni. . .

Pero imposible.

So ibig sabihin, pinaglolo lang ako ni Ree?

Pano?

@#\$%! Hindi ko na talaga alam.

Tiningnan ko lang 'yung dalawang babaeng lumabas sa room ng IV-A at nilagpasan si Aika at Charmaine. Kita sa mukha nila ang pagkaputla. Gusto ko na talaga makasiguardo na siya si Ree pero sa di ko malamang dahilan parang ipinako nila ang paa ko sa sahig.

“Ree. . .”

Natapos ang Musical event at parang may celebration party since bagets nga ang principal namin. Pabor na din daw namin sa kanya. Wala na din kaming nagawa dahil masaya naman ang kinalabasan ng program at nakuha lang namin ang third place sa labanan ng Seniors.

Tatanggapin ko kung sakin nila sinisisi ang lahat.

“Pare, okay ka lang ba talaga?” Khris approached me while hanging me a glass of juice. I accepted it but don't have any plans of drinking it. “Nabo-bother ka ba?”

“Khris, kilala mo ba si Lily?”

“Si Lyra?”

“Eh si Ree?”

“Si Lyra ulit?”

I smiled. Napakamot naman si Khris. As expected, it's either he's lying or just plain innocent. Biglang dumating si Lyra and linked up her fingers to Khris'. I felt empty for a

moment for I wish I could hold someone's hand.

“Play the piano for me, Khris. I want to sing.”

“Sing? Pero—” I saw an expression from Lyra's face. That 'don't-ask-just-go' look. “—tara!”

Nag-wait sign lang naman sakin si Khris at tumango naman ako sa kanya. Tumakbo sila sa may stage at kinausap ang pedeng kausapin para makapag-perform sa stage. Sa di ko malamang dahilan, nauna pa sila 'dun sa kanina pang nakapila. Tss.

“Good evening everyone!”

Everyone stopped and looked at Lyra.

“It's good to be back! It's Valentines and I would like to dedicate this song to the MOST special person in my life.”

Commotion began to form.

“Oo nga. Galing siya sa Laguna for some reason.”

“Eh? So it is true!”

“Eh diba kasama nga si Nolee pero mas maagang bumalik?”

“So kaya pala absent si Nolee for a long time!”

“Hey! Kakanta daw!”
“Oh no!”

I smirked.

Now, what are their plans now?

“Hey lonely boy, I know you get me.” She signaled Khris to start playing the keyboards.
“You’re in my arms and all the world is gone. The music play a song for only two. . .”

I can feel goose bumps.

B-poses ni Ree.

Hindi talaga ako pede magkamali.

Pero hindi tamang marinig ko ‘yun mula kay Lyra.

Something's not right here.

“. . . So close together and when I'm with you so close to feeling alive.”

People start to find their partners.

And I'm gonna look for her.

Ree, please.

Alam kong ikaw 'yun.

Ayokong magkamali dahil alam kong ikaw 'yun.

Tumakbo ako sa malapit sa stage. Nakita naman ako ni Lyra kaya tumango siya at ngumiti saakin. I smiled back. So she's giving me the chance?

I know that she's not Ree.

She can't be.

For there is someone else who holds Ree's position.

“And now, forever, I know all that I want is to hold you so close~”

Tumingin ako sa backstage at nakita si Ria at Melody na may hawak na instruments.

“Hoy T! Pasalamat ka!” Ria

“Too late to make you fall in love with me. Tsk. Tsk.” Melody

“Asan siya?”

“Sinong siya?” sabay nilang sinabi pero may halong ngiti. Gusto kong magalit pero di ko alam kung pano ko pa nagagawang ngumiti sa lagay ko.

“Sly girls.”

Tumawa naman silang dalawa saka ako tumakbo sa lugar na—hindi ko alam, hinayaan ko nalang ang paa ko na dalhin ako sa tamang lugar..

My heart is beating so fast, not only because I'm nervous, excited and tired. . . for I'm answering all the questions in my head and coming up with one answer.

She can't be **Aika** for Aika is too angelic. Si Aika ang tipo ng babaeng madaling mahalina at hahanapin ng mga lalaki. Traditional Maria Clara? Well, I can say that Aika is one of the examples. She's kind, friendly and such but she can't be Ree. No.

She can't be **Charmaine**. She can't play guitar and keyboards. She has this great voice but too deep compare to Ree's. She can make my heart a beat whenever she calls me Travis. We don't hang out but I know she's a great person. She's easy to be with, nice and such but she can't be Ree.

She can't be **Ria**. Though, their voice match close, she can't be. I can tell for the way they speak and how the way she's with me. Kahit alam kong magaling sa drama si Ria, alam kong she's always true to herself when she wants to express her feelings. She's too honest.

She can't be **Melody**. I must admit that Melody is one of those who are on top of my list. An angelic voice, talented hands. . .pero wala dun 'yung nararamdaman ko tuwing naririnig ko ang boses niya at kung pano siya tumugtog. She has this great smile that can capture any man's heart except from mine. Can't do.

She can't be **Ms. Pres.** though they possess the same characteristic and bubbly at the same time, she can't be Ree. There are some things they're not compatible. Natutuwa ako kay Ms. Pres but she is not just Ree. I can tell and feel.

She can't be **Lyra.** She can't even though destiny tells me she is. I know there are mistakes. Kahit kaboses niya si Ree, hindi siya ang Ree na naririnig ko tuwing ipinipikit ko ang mga mata ko. She's Ree and Lily, but it doesn't matter. There's only one girl who I see whenever that voice lingers with my ears. She can't be.

And she can't be. . .

Alam ko.

Alam kong may iba tuwing andyan siya pero—

“Ree!”

She smiled weakly.

This is what they call undefined feeling,

Bliss.

Excitement.

Pain.

Nervousness.

Sadness.

“We’re so close to reaching the famous happy ending. . .”

She let her angelic voice out whilst holding the mic.. I know that voice can’t be Lyra.

For the voice can only be for Ree.

“So close and still so far. . .”

I just realized my feet stuck on the ground.

I closed my eyes.

“ . . . *Travis.* ”

I smiled.

There she is.

“ . . . *I'm sorry.* ”

I was too late.

Crash. Down. Into pieces.

Chapter 10

I smiled for I held her hands with mine. She gave me a sweet smile yet something is bothering me for long. I can't explain why. I can't define what it is. Something strange but for some reason, I know something is wrong.

"Are you okay?" she asked. I just nod and weakly smiled.

This is what I want, right?

"It's odd seeing you right now. H-hindi ako sanay." I nervously respond.

"Hindi ka ba masayang kasama ako?"

She said like she was offended.

I was taken aback.

"Hello Kuya Travis!" biglang napatanggal ang hawak ko sa kamay ni Ree.

“Hi Nolee.” I smiled and felt something weirder.

“Please, call me Nola.” She crossed her arms, showing that she's annoyed.

Nolae?

I heard Ree chuckled.

“Teka, edi ba may program for Juniors? Ba't andito ka pa?”

Tumawa si Ree.

“Kuya T naman e! >3<” She pouted her lips. “Senior na din ako! Mukha lang talagang Junior.”

I laughed.

“Y-yung height mo kasi e. Haha.”

She laughed, too.

Weird.

“It’s great hearing you laugh, Kuya T.”

Nawala ang tawa ko nung sinabi niya 'yun. Ewan. Di ko maintindihan.

Hindi ko akalain na nalinlang ako. Senior na pala siya. She has a petite height ang wearing a blue lace kaya akala ko talaga third year lang siya.

Norilae Lee and Geo Sung from Section D.

Ah! Now I remember.

“Goodbye, T.”

Umalis na si Nolee—Nolae. I saw a smile pero bakit biglang nawala 'yun nung ipinaling niya ang mukha niya. Her smile was fake. I can tell. Like she wanted to tell something but chose to kept it to herself.

Bakit 'di niya pinansin si Ree?

Close sila di ba?

Naramdaman ko ang kamay ni Ree kaya naman nagulat ako at napatingin agad sa kanya.

There is something behind this heartbeats.

Those fast heartbeats.

“I like you, Travis.”

She said for the nth time today.

Bliss feeling.

“R-rica.”

Alam kong masaya ako dahil sa pagkakataong 'to, nakita ko na si Ree. Kilala ko na siya at 'yung pinapangarap kong makasama siya at mahawakan ang kamay niya, andito na at nangyayari na ngayon. Ngayon mismo.

BUT, Why am I unsure?

--FinxXx



Bye, Travis

A hello can change everything.
Falling with the consequences, you should know how to struggle and stand for it.
You made a choice.
Accept the results.

But how many sacrifices will it take?

I started it.
WE played along.

But somehow, though I don't want to.

I just have to put this into end.

“Hello, Ree?”

Bye, Travis.

The Chapter 1

“Hello, who's this?”

That was the very first statement I'd heard from Travis. That very day, New Year's Eve. I can feel the shiver for he has this voice that can melt a woman's heart and I believe mine is included. *Sigh Lily, you're getting whatever again.

“Hello, Travis.”

It took me so looooong seconds before to respond. I didn't know what to do. My heart is racing that suffocation might be here any moment. But I'd never expected that this unbelievable heartbeats would feel so bliss inside. I'd never like Travis before. Never. But what's happening?

I sang a Christmas song accompanied with the tune of my guitar. I saw a smile from my cousin's face. She really did like what I doing for her. I looked at her while trying to focus to my singing. She mouthed "Great job" with thumbs up gesture. I smiled.

I pressed the red button right after I finished my song. Then after, my cousin yelled out so loud due to her being so "kilig". Psh.. Now really? I never thought this girl can really be like that. Oh well, she's only REAL with me. I must say.

She smiled at me then ran outside my room for I need to rest. I must not be too tired. I just can't. I placed my guitar at the side of my bed and find the comfortable spot. Happy New Year everyone. Lily really have to sleep now.

But before closing my eyes, I heard my phone beeped.

Now who could actually text me at my old phone number?

I saw "Travis" at the home screen. There I realized that I'd use my old number to call him. Psh. Forgot to put my new sim card back. Tss. I opened his message and I'm very sure of myself that my heart skipped a beat naturally and unexpectedly.

From: Travis
Hi. Thank you for that angelic voice. Happy New Year! -Travis

Lily, control yourself.

- - - - -
- -

Hindi ko ineexpect na mahahawakan ko na ang kamay niya ngayon. Alam kong mahirap para sa side ko pero ayoko lang talagang mawala siya sakín ngayon. Ito ang time ko. Tapos na ang *kanya*. Sakin naman. Alam kong para sakín siya.

“Oh.”

Tinanggap ko 'yung cup na binigay niya sakín. I linked my fingers to his. At first, alam kong nagulat siya pero napalitan naman 'yun ng ngiti. Yung ngiting inaabangan ng lahat na tanging ako lang ang nakakagawa. *Pero, ako nga lang ba?*

Inamoy niya 'yung coffee niya at saka uminom. Ginawa ko din naman 'yung ginawa niya pero nagulat ako ng sobrang pait nung kape!

COUGH.COUGH

“O-okay ka lang ba Ree?”

Tumango ako pero umubo pa din. “D-di lang ako umiinom ng black coffee.”

“You don't drink black coffee?” tanong niya na para bang nagulat siya sa sinabi ko. Tumango lang ako sa kanya na may halong pagtatanong sa mukha ko. “Wa-wala.”

Pinilit kong inumin 'yung black coffee kahit ayoko. Wala naman talaga akong hilig sa coffee. Wala talaga pero simula nung nalaman kong ito ang paborito ni T, sinubukan kong kumukha ng pamango ng coffee at uminom ng mga 'to.

Pero nagtataka ako kung bakit nasabi ni Khris na ako daw ang may dahilan kung bakit nangangamoy coffee ang bahay. Eh last week lang naman ako nagsimulang magpahanap nito kay Tita, yung mommy ni Melody sa France.

Tinapon na namin 'yung coffee cups at napadaan sa vendo machine. Kelangan mawala 'yung lasa ng pait sa dila ko. Di ko kaya 'yung lasa. Pag nagkakape kasi ako yung may cream o basta may asukal. Hindi plain black. Tss. >__<

“S-saglit lang.” Tumigil ako sa harap ng vendo machine at naghulog ng pera saka pinindot 'yung button para sa chocobar. Kinuha ko naman agad 'yun at binuksan. “Gu-gusto mo?”

Tumingin siya sakín at for the nth time, nanlaki ang mata niya saka umiling. “I-I'm allergic.”

Tumango lang ako. Saka kinain ang chocobar at hinawakan ang kamay niya. Nagulat ulit siya. Napaparanoid na ba 'tong si T? Laging nagugulat e. Tss. Pero-

Iniwás niya ang tingin niya sakín. Hinigpitan ko ang hawak sa kamay niya saka siya ulit tumingín at ngumiti sakín. Nakakahalata na ba siya? Pero ako naman talaga dapat di ba? Bakít ganún? May kirot sa puso ko pero-

Ayoko.

Alam kong mali.

Pero di ko siya bibitawan.

Mahal ko si T.

The Chapter 2

I opened my locker and I saw another quote inside it. After my solved mystery from my caller, now I'm having secret admirer? I really have a weird life. =__=

“Hi T!”

Sa pagkagulat ko, naitapon ko pabalik ang note sa locker saka sinarhan 'to. Mukhang nahalata naman 'yun ni Ree pero imbes magsalita, ngumiti lang siya sakin. Ngumiti naman ako pabalik.

“Hi Ree.”

“Recess?”

I nodded. Nung nagsimula na akong maglakad, Ree linked her arms to mine. Oo, nagugulat ako. Di ko kasi ine-expect na mahilig si Ree sa mga "touchy" or "physical" interaction like this, holding hands, hugging and such. Basta 'yun.

It never popped out of my head before.

“Are they dating?”

“Ewan pero simula last week lagi na silang magkasama.”

“Hindi ko na nga nakikitang magkasama si T at Khris e.”

“Ye. Pati 'yung kabarkada ni Rica di ba?”

“Weird. I feel weird.”

“Ano gusto mo?” I asked her tapos tumingin naman siya sa menu sa cafeteria.

“Letter B.”

Tumango lang ako at umorder. Nung nakita ko 'yung order niya, hindi ko na talaga kung anong itatakbo ng utak ko sa nangyayare. Pero, siguro may rason naman ang lahat di ba? Ayokong mag-isip. Napaparanoid lang ako.

- - - - -

“Gusto ko nang chocolates. Yung scented at flavored coffee. Yung nabibili sa mall.”

[“Really? Ako naman, I don’t eat sweets.”]

“Oh? Bakit naman?” I chuckled. It’s my first time to meet a girl who aren’t in favor of sweets.

[“I’m allergic.”] Oh. Seryoso siya. - ___ -

- - - - -

Naalala ko 'yung iang convo namin. Bakit last week kumain si Ree nung choco bar after naming uminom ng coffee? Tapos parang wala lang siyang reaksiyon nung sinabi kong allergic ako even though alam kong alam niyang may certain type of chocolates akong kinakain.

Napa-paranoid lang siguro ako. =__=

But that black coffee sounded weird, too.

I don't know.

I placed our tray dun sa table na napili niya. Kinuha naman niya 'yung order niya. A plate of carbonara, sweet potato waffles, parfait and fruit juice. She definitely loves sweet and a big eater. One of the boys nga siya di ba? I smiled secretly. I find it cute though.

“Bakit 'yan lang ang kinakain mo?” tanong niya.

Ngumiti lang ako sa kanya pagkatapos kong mapatingin sa isang slice ng Coffee caramel cake.

Hindi na ata pede 'to.

Pero seryoso.

Ayokong magduda.

Pero *hindi ko mapigilan*.

SLAP!!

I touched my slapped cheeks and looked down. I deserve that slap and anger. I want to cry right at this moment but tears are holding back for fear and unexplainable feeling. Why? Why Lily? Defend yourself for @\$% sake!

“Wala ka bang sasabihin?!”

Her words were fierce and painful. I can feel it. But why am I accepting all this so easily? No, I'm not accepting it for--Fine, I admit-- I am guilty for what I'd done and currently doing now. Call me stupid but I didn't plan this stupidity. Who ever planned of liking--worse, loving-someone?

Especially if from the very start, you know that it won't last *forever*.

She pushed my hard causing me to fall down to the floor easily. I didn't fuss. I refused to say anything for I thought that I was really to blame from the first place. I should have control this weird feeling. I should have. Because sooner or later, she will not be the only one who's hurting. . . it will possibly hurt me and *Travis*.

“ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?!”

I didn't realize that Khris was here. He came down rushing to my position and helped me to stand up.

“OO! HINDI MO KO MASISI DAHIL ALAM MONG NAGMAMAHAL LANG AKO!”

I can feel Khris' anger. I patted his shoulder and lightly shook my head. He looked at me and I read his thought for me, “Why are you just letting her, Lily?”

"I'm okay." I whispered but he's not totally convinced.

"Stop this nonsense, Lily."

I looked at her. She's like this when she's getting angry. She became so fluent in Tagalog and English while giving an angry face. I know her too well. So maybe that's the reason why I just let her, right? For I know that she's deeply hurt. I can sense that she's hurt. I understand.

"I-I surrender." I said without giving a hint of doubts.

"I-I'm letting him go. I promise."

"Lily! Ano ba?!"

"Don't worry. Dito rin naman pupunta ang lahat e." I smiled weakly.

Magsasalita pa rin sana si Khris pero naunahan siya-

“On Valentines. I want him.”

“Okay. You’ll have him.”

“Lily.” Khris said with dismay. I just smiled at him.

“Keep your promise.”

And she went outside.

Then tears came after.

I’m dying now in pain. Please, let me regret this.

The Chapter 3

Tumingin ako kay Khris habang kanina pa niyang ibinababad ang sarili niya ng katitingin sa cellphone niya. Ano bang problema ng lalaking 'to? Kanina pang 'di mapakali. Minsan na nga lang kami magkasama tapos ganto pa.

Pero kung tutuusin.

Kasalanan ko kung bakit.

“Pare, ano bang problema?”

“*Wa-wala.*” Utal-utal niyang sinabi. Bakit kaya?

I noticed the tiredness and puffiness of his eyes. I think it's weird for Khris wouldn't allow anything to destroy his face. Masyado siyang self-conscious sa sarili niya e. But seeing him now makes him different. He always sighs and for the record, you can shut him for 5 minutes. That is very unusual.

Marami na ba akong di alam sa kanya?

“*Sorry.*” I said. Mukha naman nagulat siya. Ang dali na ding basahin ni Khris ngayon pero at the same time, mahirap din. Hindi ko maexplain.

“You don’t have to be sorry man! Ganyan talaga ang mga tao pagnagkakarelationshi at—”

“For keeping Ree a secret and not knowing that she’s Rica. And besides, kahit nagkagirlfriend ka, you never try to be out of my side when I needed you.”

Unfair ako sa kanya, obviously.

“Don’t call her Ree.”

Nagulat ako sa sagot niya. Dahil hindi ‘yun ang inaasahan ko.

“Ha?” tanong ko sa kanya. Seryoso ang mukha niya. Parang ang lalim ng iniisip niya.

“W-wala. Ree can’t be Rica.”

What? O_O

“H-ha?!”

Biglang tumawa si Khris.

“Eh kasi naiimagine kong girlfriend ko tuloy ay si Rica e! Ew!” Tumawa lang siya. So he’s still dating Lyra? “Pero Travis.”

Hindi ako sanay ng tinatawag niya ako sa pangalan ko.

“Please use this.” Tinuro niya ‘yung left side ng chest ko. I gave him a weird look at mukhang seryoso naman siya. “Not this.”

Bigla akong napaurong at tumawa siya. Loko. Tinuro pa naman ‘yung ano ko sa baba. Pagka-green talaga ng lalaking ‘to walang nilulugar. Alam niya kasi na hindi ako tulad ng tipo niya. Aminado naman ako. =__=a

Sabay kaming kumain ni Khris at sinubukan kong hindi iopen ang topic tungkol samin ni Rica. Kahit halatang-halata na ng lahat na “nagde-date nga daw kami.” Wala namang masama di ba? Ayoko lang na unghatin pa ang isang halatang bagay. Nagiging kumplikado.

“Ye. Go eat your lunch, K?” Kanina pa ding may kausap si Khris sa phone niya. Pag walang kausap, may katext. Hindi naman siya ganito.

“Possessive boyfriend ha? Kelan pa nagseryoso ang Khris Lee?” asar ko sa kanya. Nginitian lang niya ako. Nakakagulat dahil hindi naman kami ganito. May iba kay Khris. “Pare, ano ba talagang meron?”

“You don’t have to know. Samin nalang ‘yun.” He coldly responds. “Besides, you have other issues to solve first, di ba?”

Issues?

“W-wala naman di ba?”

“Bestfriend mo ako T. Alam ko ang nararamdaman mo. Pero wala ako sa lugar para panghimasukan ang kung anong nagiging at magiging desisyon mo.”

When did Khris become like this?

“Yeah.” I plainly said. Hindi ko alam pero nakaramdam ako ng sakit sa sinabi niya. P-para bang may dapat akong gawin pero hindi ako makasigurdo o hindi ko alam kung ano ‘yun. Gusto kong magtanong pero kinakain na naman ako ng kaduwagan ko.

“Khris!” napatingin ako sa likod ko nung may tumawag kay Khris. “Oh! Hello, Kuya Travis.”

Yung. . .

“Di ba sabi ko sayo wag kang tatakbo?” sabi ni Khris nung makalapit si Nole-Nolae samin. “Asan si Lyra? Bakit ‘di mo siya kasama ha?”

“Eh may inaasikaso pa siya sa guidance e.” Nolae pouted her lips. Naaalala ko ‘yung mga Korean female leads tuwing ginagawa niya ‘yun.

“Aish. I tell her to look af—”

“Ano ka ba Khris! Ilang oras mo lang ‘di nakasama gf mo pero ganan ka na. >3<” Napatawa ako dun sa sinabi ni Nolae. Mukhang tinamaan na nga ata si Khris. Pe-pero bakit parang. . .

Iba talaga si Khris ngayon?

“Tigilan mo na nga ako. Sige na. Dito ka muna, puntahan ko lang si Lyra.” Natigilan naman si Nolae na para bang hindi niya maintindihan si Khris. “Gohgae piloyohae.”

Khris left us two. I didn’t understand what he said but I’m sure Nolae did. She turned red in an instant kaya naman nagtataka ako. There must be something behind it. Pero wala naman atang dahilan para malaman ko ‘yun di ba?

“Na-nakakain ka na ba?” tanong ko kay Nolae nung nagiging awkward na ang sitwasyon. Umiling naman siya. “Tara, samahan kita sa counter para makaorder ka.”

“Wag na. Ako nalang. Tsaka—baka magalit sa kin girlfriend mo pag nakita niya tayong magkasama.”

“Girlfriend?”

“Si—Si Rica.”

I became stiff.

Girlfriend ko na nga ba si Rica?

“Ah..eh..hindi ‘yun. Tsaka pinsan ka naman niya at—” She smiled. Natigilan ako sa di ko malamang dahilan. I gained my reflex nung tumingin siya sa kin. “I—I insist. T-tara na?”

Nag-sigh nalang si Nola at walang nagawa kundi tumayo at dumiretso sa counter. Sumunod naman ako sa kanya. Kausap niya ‘yung isang staff sa cafeteria at mukhang may iba siyang ino-order. Ngumiti naman ‘yung staff sa kanya at saka pumunta dun sa loob ng kitchen.

“Salamat.” sabi ni Nola nung nakuha niya ‘yung order niya at matapos magbayad. Iba nga. Wala ‘yun sa menu at ngayon ko lang nakita.

Nagtitinda pala sila ng vegetable salad. =_=?

“Want some?” She offered but I declined. “Oh, T doesn’t like vegetables e?”

“Hindi. Busog na kasi ako.”

“Yeah right.” She said sarcastically and it actually made me smile. Napatingin naman siya sakin at umiling nung napansin ko ‘yun.

“You use coffee scented perfumes, too?” I asked.

“Eh?” Anong ‘eh’? Bigla niyang inamay ‘yung sarili niya. Napatawa ako kasi ang—ang cute niya. “Ah! It’s not a perfume.”

“Ha?”

“It’s my shower gel and shampoo.”

Coffee shower gel and shampoo? @_@

“Haha! Ang cute ng itsura mo.”

She—laughs.

“Well, I’d never heard things.” sabi ko.

“Meron. It’s a gift from my Tito, Khris’ father.” Tumango nalang ako. “They are my favorites.”

Coffee?

Favorite?

“Mga coffee?” Bigla akong kinabahan.

“He knew that it was my dad’s favorite shower thingy.” sabi niya at tumungo. Ewan pero nakaramdam ako ng disappointment. “Well, you do know about my late dad, right?”

“L-late dad?”

“Oh. I thought you knew.” She smiled bitterly. “That’s why I’m living with my cousins.”

Hindi ko alam.

“W-wala namang nababanggit sakin si Khris o si Rica.”

“Anyhow, hindi mo rin nga naman pala dapat malaman. Akala ko kasi alam mo din. Hehe. Wala ‘yun.”

Those smiles.

They mean something.

“Ba-bakit siya namatay?” tanong ko. “Pero hi-hindi mo naman talaga dapat sagu—”

“Diabetes. He carelessly and didn’t take his sickness seriously so ayun.”

Tumahimik nalang ako at di na umimik pa. I don’t think I have the right to ask her more, though unexpected questions are popping out my mind. Diabetes? Hindi ko alam na it is such a complicated disease and should really have serious action. Wala kasi akong alam sa mga ganitong bagay.

Sinubukan kong ibahin ang topic tungkol sa kung ano-anong bagay since I brought the wrong topic a while ago. Nagkwento naman siya ng tungkol sa Korea nung dun pa sila nakatira nina Khris. Yung mga bagay bagay na ginagawa niya, gusto niya and likes. It’s odd.

Cause I was intentionally listening to her.

We split up after we reached our classrooms. Class IV-D siya habang ako sa B.

“Una na ko.” Ngumiti ako saka tumalikod pero nakaramdam ako ng isang kamay sa braso ko.

“Pede favor?”

Tiningnan ko lang siya at unti unti siya lumapit sa mukha ko. Bigla akong kinabahan.

Naalala ko ‘yung unang beses niyang ginawa ‘to at sinabing ang ganda daw ng mga mata ko.

Bigla siyang ngumiti at. . . pinisil ang dalawang pisngi ko.

Aw. =__=

“Kanina ko pa kasi talaga gustong gawin ‘yan e. Bleh!” Bigla siyang tumakbo papasok ng room niya at minasahe ko nalang ang pisngi ko.

What a sly girl.

There are things that you should accept and let go. There are reasons behind what you have now and what have let you.

I sighed then stare at the cold empty night sky. Walang stars.

Hawak-hawak ko 'yung mga post-its. Marami na rin akong nakuha mula dun sa kung sino mang naglalagay ng note sa may locker ko. Hindi ko alam kung anong dapat gawin sa kanila. Kasabay ng bawat tibok ng puso ko, katumbas ng sakit na nararamdaman ko ngayon. Masaya naman ako kanina pero bakit ganito?

'If I was girlfriend, I'd never let you go.'

'Can I still count on you, like four three two?'

Ang gulo.

I grabbed my phone and played Ree's video message again.

Yung video na sinend niya sakin nung after niyang magparamdam sa Music Room.

Bumilis agad ang tibok ng puso ko.

Pinaulit ulit ko 'yung sa parte kung saan siya nakangiti.

Dun ko napansin ang isang bagay.

Hindi.

Tao.

Taong nahagip nung video.

Si . . .

“Hindi ba sinabi kong layuan mo siya?”

Goosebumps surrounded me when I heard her voice when I entered the house. I blankly stared at her. Trying not to flinch and not giving too much emotion. I must be careful of my words and think of not hurting her anymore. *Must.*

“I-I did. But it was-”

Fail.

I just can't pretend shts to her.

She let out her mean side again and pulled my uniform's collar. I pulled myself away from her but insanity took over her head that she become so powerful, again. What's wrong? Why is she like this?

“S-stop.” I begged for I got nothing to say more. I can't do anything but beg for help.

“You used me, Lily.”

That voice.

That hurt voice.

Yeah, I used her but she did the same thing and is still doing it.

But, I still *did*.

"I'm sorry. Pero alam mo namang sumuko na ako di ba?" I can't look in her eyes for it was too painful to look at.

"Pano mo naitago sakin 'to ng isang buwan?"

It hit me.

Hundred times.

and it felt worse than before.

I was too **guilty**.

"Pareho lang tayo ng nararamdaman." I weakly uttered. It's a sign of defeat, a defeat to let her know that I didn't plan to have this feeling towards Travis. *"Sorry. But I'm doing the right thi-*

"At sa tingin mo nakakatulong ka talaga?!" Her grip tightens like she can rip my collar off my blouse. **"You just make it worse!"**

I lost myself off the ground and after a short second, I felt another pain in the back. She pushed me again like I'm not fragile and I'm capable of all these aches. She's turning blind and obsessively overpowering her head with her uncontrollable feeling.

I'm doubt to make a sound of pain or not. If I let out a moan, she'll think she's too powerful and might end up of hurting me again but if I don't, she'll think I'm getting fed up and I'm being too proud with my 'she-thought-I-have' ego and may thought of hurting me again to prove that I'm wrong.

I know her too well.

“Ba-bakit--”

But this is surprising.

I looked at her while she kneels in front of my pushed body. She lets out her tears and pleads. . .

“Please. Wag si Travis. Na-nagmamakaawa ako.”

Sumuko na naman ako diba?

A-ano pa bang kulang?

I made my hair into a ponytail then used my hands to give me some air. Pft. What is it so hot?! I’m sweating non-stop! Jesus. =____=

“Juice?”

I smiled instantly when I heard Khri’s voice behind me. I looked at him at accepted the box of juice in his hands. He sat beside me and placed his head above my right

shoulder. He let out a deep sigh. I linked my fingers to his and chose not to speak for it is better. I can't make any arguments or can't let out a good advice.

“She's getting worse.”

I know.

“Ye. We'll be heading back to Laguna tomorrow.” I said for the nth time for I am sure that he forgot it already, *again*.

“Ha? Ba't di mo naman sinabi sa kin?” See?

Instant Alzheimer's disease even though he really doesn't have one. He's been like this since Valentine's and I probably know why even if he doesn't speak about it. Norilae is my cousin, a very close one, how should I not know?

“I told you last Monday already.” Nagulat naman si Khris sa sinabi ko. “Don't let things trouble you so much, Khris.”

I caressed his cheek and shut his eyes.

Kawawa naman ang boyfriend ko. >0<

Pumapanget ng dahil sa eyebags!

“Can we stay like this for a little while?” he request. I nodded since we had a hard time being alone. “Thank you.”

I blushed.

I really love his sweet voice.

It's melting the core of me! >///
<

Ang pogi pa.

* _____ *

“Don't worry, Khris. Take a rest.” I played my fingers with his hair. “You're such a great brother.”

Things shouldn't be complicated as it is right now. I don't know why they should be troubled. Ang love nga naman talaga. Hindi ko na rin maintindihan. I looked at Khris' sleeping face. My heartbeats lost their tracks and began drumming hysterically. Sabi ko nga, nakakabaliw ang pag-ibig. >///
<

I squeezed Khri's hands and it electrified me. Gosh. Cloud nine!

Am I too in love? *////*

Erase. Erase! Hindi dapat kalandian ang iniisip ko ngayon.

Tama! Tama! There are more important things to reconsider first!

*Bzzzt*Bzzzt*

From: NoLaeLee<3
I need to cry.

I tensed up reading her message.

To: NoLaeLee<3
Rooftop.

Don't tell me something happened between her and that Bratinella again? >0<

Pag di na ako nakapagtimi . . .

Pfft.

Who am I kidding?

Kakambal siya ng boyfriend ko. =__=

I can't do anything.

@#\$%!

Nolae came with puffed eyes. Need to cry, eh? She already cried, obviously. =__=

“I don't want to go to Laguna.”

She said aloud that she woke up Khris.

Napatingin lang kami ni Khris sa kanya.

Nagulat ako sa sinabi niya and I'm sure ganun din si Khris.

“I don't want any medications.” she begged.

“But-”

“It will hurt her more.”

That does it. >_____<!!

“FOR @\$%#@# SAKES!” napatayo ako sa bigla and glared at her. “STOP BEING TO NICE NORILAE! WOULD YOU?!”

I am too emotional.

I'm crying now.

Sht.

I just can't stand this bullshts anymore.

“I love Rica, you know that.” She stooped down her head.

I wiped my tears. Naaawa ako kay Norilae dahil hindi naman dapat ganito ang mangyayari. Bakit kelangan niyang gawin 'to? Wala naman siyang kasalanan! Pero

minsan gusto ko din magalit sa lalaking 'yun dahil siya ang nagpapagulo ng lahat.

“Nolae, how about you and him?”

“There's nothing between us.”

“You know that there is.” Khris cuts in. I just stared at him while he makes his way towards Norilae.

“Khris. . .Alam mo namang wala ding mangyayare.” She smiled bitterly.

“Why won't you think of yourself first before others?” Khris interrupted. “Don't make me abhor my twin sister more.”

“Kh--”

“And don't make me lose my temper, Lily.”

The Chapter 4 | Side story much.

1/3

Tumingin ako sa hospital bed niya. Ramdam ko ang namumuong luha sa gilid na mata ko per mas pinili kong manahimik at pigilan ang dapat. Puno ng poot ang buong puso ko hanggang ngayon at sa simula't simula pa lang.

Naging mabait ako.

Sinubukan kong maging isang mabait na kamag-anak sa kanya. Sa totoo lang, pinilit kong tanggapin siyang kapatid dahil sa kalagayan niya. Ipinagsawalang-bahala ko ang mga kirot na kinimkim ko simula ng dumating siya sa buhay ko..

May dahilan ako kung bakit ako nagkakaganito.

Inggit. Galit. Selos.

At kung ano ano pa.

Naramdaman ko 'yang lahat kay Lily.

Inagaw niya sakín ang magulang ko. Hindi dahil nawalan siya, kelangan niyang kuhanin ang sakín at gawing kanyang mga magulang.

Inagaw niya sakín ang kapatid ko. Hindi dahil wala siyang mapupuntahan, kelangang may umaruga sa kanyang isang kuya. Isang kuya na dapat umaalalay sa kanya.

Inagaw niya sakín ang best friend ko. Hindi dahil wala na siyang mabibigyan ng tiwala ay tatakbo siya kay Lyra para magpaawa at kunin ang magandang kalooban niya para makalimutan ako.

At ngayon aagawin pa niya ang taong mahal ko?

Aaminin ko, baliw na ako o nahihibang.

Pero hindi na tama ang dapat ipagsa-walang bahala nalang.

Ayoko.

Ayoko na.

“Mahal kita, Lily.” *Pero mas mahal ko si T.*

At kung dapat ipagpatuloy ko ito at maging kapalit ay ikaw. . .

Tatanggapin ko.

At ikaw na ang ipagsasawalang-bahala ko.

The **Chapter 4** | Behind those tears
2/3

Things are tougher and I don't think I can still make it into the cut. Breathless sighs started to come out of my lips. Tears flow down continuously and I can't make them stop. Pain can be felt all over my body, inside and out. *Jesus.*

“Li-lily.” Khris' faint voice. I weakly smiled though it can be obviously seen that I'm not in

my 'OKAY' self right now.

"Khris, your parents are here. Tara na." Ate Lyra came. Khris shook his head and looked at me once more. I just smiled at him to let him know that I'll be alright.

"Yo-you'll be fine, okay? T-trust me." I simply nodded and shut my eyes. *I'll be okay.*

But still these tears won't stop.

Yesterday made me into this situation. It was so painful. It was too hard to take. I just felt the worst thing ever and I don't think I'll be able to recover after that. But I wish I can . . . *I hope I will.*

Rica and I were best childhood friends. Hindi kami naghihiwalay. Inseparable. At mas aakalain pa nila na kami ang kambal kesa sa kanilang dalawa ni Khris. We used to play a lot, be on same dress, share the same interest and likes.

But that was *before* the accident.

Rica was kidnapped when we're ten. She was threatened at a very young age that's why she acts like that. Trauma, I must say. And the worst part is that I should be the one on her shoes when she wasn't mistaken as me by the kidnapers.

When Rica knew about the mistaken identity after being saved, she started ignoring me, being a meanie and hurt me as much as possible. I understand that. Sino bang hindi? Aaminin ko, sa age na 10 na hindi pa masyadong naiintindihan ang lahat. Ganyan ang mararamdaman ko.

Inggit. Galit. Selos. Takot.

We ended our friendship since then.

It was painful.

For I just lost a friend.

I became close to Khris when Rica suffers from traumatic conditions. He used to be my playmate when Rica can't. It all started when Rica ignored everyone else. Dahil ang iniisip niya, pinabayaan siya ng lahat. Walang nagmahal sa kanya dahil akala niya. . .
mas mahal nila ako kesa sa kanya.

If she only knew how her parents love her.

If she only knew how her twin brother cares too much for her.

But she was too close minded that she didn't have any time to recognize them all.

Even my love and care for her, it was mere 'lie' for her.

Pero kahit ganun, I still try to return the friendship and bring back the closeness we used to have. Masaya ako dahil unti-unting bumalik 'yun nung dumating si Travis sa buhay ni Rica. She now starts to tell me stories about him.

I know Travis kasi pareho lang kami ng school na pinapasukan at siya pa ang Pres ng Music Club. Nakikita ko siya araw-araw pero noon talaga, hindi ko alam kung bakit gusto siya ni Rica dahil suplado siya at emotionless.

But it changed after that phone call.

I'm guilty of using that chance to be close with Travis. Tinatawagan ko siya kahit hindi alam ni Rica. I sang for him every night. I didn't realize after every calls, an intimate feeling forms. I wanted to stop but I just can't. . .

and end up with those rings and me saying, **“Hello, Travis.”**

I can feel my tears running down my face. I can't deny that I've totally fallen for Travis. I can't deny that I like him too much. . .and yeah, it turns out that I love him.

I love Travis.

I do.

And I don't think it won't stop.

But yesterday. . .

“Manloloko.” he said.

My heart crushed down.

Painful like hell.

toooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

The **Chapter 4** | The Shuffled Feelings.
3/3

Tumitig lang ako sa langit. Kahit pala talaga kaming mga lalaki may mga kahinaan din. Ramdam ko na ang pag-gilid ng luha ko pero sa di malamang dahilan ay mas pinili nitong magtago at huwag pumatak mula sa mga mata ko. Pero totoo, *nasasaktan talaga ako*.

Nakita ko siya na naglalakad papunta dito sa playground. Bumilis. . . Naramdaman ko ang pagbilis ng tibok ng puso ko. Gusto kong maglabas ng isang magandang ngiti dahil sa nalaman ko pero mas nangingibabaw ang sakit sa tuwa.

“T-travis.”

Sinasabi ko na nga ba. . . *Siya lang ang pedeng gumawa sakin nito*.

Tumayo ako mula sa swing at kinapa sa bulsa ko ang keychain niya. May dahilan pala kung bakit hindi ko 'to agad naibigay kay Ree. Dahil sa hindi 'to kanya. . . *masyado akong nabulag at naniwala*.

“Buti naman pumunta ka.”

Ngumiti ako ng mapait at akong lakata niya ang pinaparating ko sa kanya dahila namumula na ang mga mata niya. Kaya pala. . . *Kaya pala ganito*.

“S-sabi mo kasi importante.”

Iniwas niya ang tingin niya sakín at nakita ko sa mga mata nia ang pagkagalit, pagkainis, pakatalo, pagkatakot at pagkalungkot. Di ko na maintindihan pero ito lang ang alam ko, na kahit anong mangyari . . . *galit at nasasaktan ako.*

“A-alam mo a ba?”

Nagulat ako sa sinabi niya.

Ngumiti ako, “**Alam mo na pala kung bakít kita pinapunta.**”

Ngumiti din siya at naramdaman ko na naman ang puso ko.

Sht.

Ak naman ang natalo at iniwas ang tingin sa kanya. Inilabas ko yung keychain sa bulsa ko at itinapon 'yun sa kanya. Nakita kong tumama 'yun braso niya. Kinuha ko din yung phone ko at iopen 'yung video.

Pero hindi ito ang inaasahan kong magiging reaksyon niya.

Nakangiti siya pero nagsimula ng tumulo ang mga luha niya.

“Manloloko.” sabi ko.

Kinuha niya 'yung tinapon kong keychain sa sahig at pinunasan 'yun. Rinig naming dalawa ang pagsasalita niya sa video. Pinunasan niya ang pisngi niya pero mukhang walang balak tumigil ng luha niya sa pagiyak.

“Anong karapatan niyo para lokohin ako?!” Hindi ko alam kung bakit lumalabas 'to sa mga bibig ko. . . Masakit kasi. . . Sobra.

Naba-blanko ang utak ko.

Iyak pa rin siya ng iyak pero hindi rin mawala ang ngiti sa labi niya.

“Bullsh*t Travis.” ungol niya. Rinig sa boses niya ang lungkot at poot. “P@#\$%! Minamahal lang kita. Mali ba 'yun? Panloloko ba 'yun?”

Natigilan ako. . .

Biglang nawala 'yung ngiti niya. . .

At ang tanging naririnig ko nalang ang boses at iyak niya.

“Minahal kita kaya ako naging ganito. . . Pero alam mo kung ano? Ang sakit dahil hindi kita pedeng mahal in pa!”

Iyak siya ng iyak. . .

Tama na. . .

“Hindi lang dahil hindi pede. . .Dahil mahal ko din si Rica at aykong masaktan siya dahil sa orad ng nawalan ako, *siya 'yung nandun.*”

Tumungo siya at nakita ko ang pagpigil niya sa galit niya, “Mahal ko si Rica. . .”

Si . . .

“Kaya mas pinili kong talikuran ka nalang.”

Pinunasan niya ang luha niya pero walang bisa dahil ng patuloy pa rin ang pagpatak nila.

“Oo, niloko kita. Pero mahal mo din naman si Rica, di ba? Ano pang mapapala ko kung ipaglalaman ko to di ba? Tako ako Travis! Talo ako! Kahit na anong gawin ko!” Ang sakit. “Kasi kahit hindi siya si Ree na nakakausap mo. . .Mahal mo din siya di ba?!”

Tama na.

Pinilit kong ngumiti, “Tama ka. Mahal ko nga si Rica.”

“See?” sagot niya. “Oh ano pang ginagawa ko dito? There's no use kung magalit ka pa saakin. Kahit sabihin mong niloko nga kita, ganito pa rin ang kakalabasan.”

Tama na.

Tumigil ka na.

“Di mo ko mamahalin, Travis.” Tumalikod siya sakin at nagsimulang maglakad. “Wag kang mag-alala. Kung magiging sagabal pa din ako para sayo. . . *Di mo na ako makikita, pangako.*”

Mas lalo akong natigilan. Hinayaan ko lang siyang mawala sa paningin ko. Hindi ko alam kung bakit pero alam ko sa sarili ko na dapat. Dapat pinigilan ko siya.

Di ko na siya makikita?

Bakit?

Bakit sobrang sakit na ng nararamdaman ko. . .

“T!”

Nakita ko si T na nakaupo sa swing. Bumilis ang tibok ng puso ko dahil dun. Masaya ako pero bigla akong kinabahan nung bigla siyang tumingin sakin.

Ito ang unang beses kong nakita na ganyan siya kaseryoso.

U--umiyak ba siya?

Tumayo si T at lumapit sakin.. Nagulat ako nung bigla niya akong niyakap. Niyakap niya ako na parang bang. . . na para bang may nararamdaman siyang sakit at ayaw niyang sumuko sa sakit na 'yun.

“A-anong meron, T?”

Umiling siya at hinigpitan ang yakap sakin, “Call me, Travis.”

“Ha? Hindi ba ayaw mong tinatawag kang Travis?”

“Please. . .”

“Travis.”

Ginawa ko ang sinabi niya. Bigla niyang niluwagan ang pagkakayakap sakin at dahan dahan na ding kumalas. Humarap siya saakin at ngumiti. . . *isang mapait na ngiti.*

“C-can you sing for me?”

Bumilis ang tibok ng puso ko. . .

“Pero...”

“Please Ree. Just one song.”

Ree na naman.

Bigla akong nanghina.

“Pero T . . .”

“I said, call me Travis.”

“Travi-”

“Sing, Ree. Please.”

Natatakot ako. . .

Ang lamig ng boses niya.

Nakakatakot ang mga tingin niya.

Nakakatakot ang Travis na nasa harapan ko ngayon.

“Bakit Ree? Magaling ka namang kumanta di ba?”

“Pero kasi T. . .”

“I said it's Travis!!”

Nagulat ako nung bigla niyang tinapon pababa sa sahig yung cellphone niya.

“Bakit Ree? Natatakot ka? Anong dapat ikatakot e diba naririnig naman kitang kumanta nun?”

“Hi--hindi a--”

“You used to sing for me every night. Hindi naman siguro masama kung kumanta ka ngayon sakin di ba?”

Lumapit si T na naging dahilan ng pagurong ko. Nakakatakot siya. . Hindi ko maintindihan.

Bigla niya akong ikinulong sa mga braso niya. Niyakap niya ako ng sobrang higpit. Mahigpit na yakap na iba mula sa kanina. Sinubukan kong kumalas pero mas hinihigpitan niya. .

“Nasasaktan ako, T!”

Nagulat ako nung bigla niyang hinawakan ang dalawang braso ko.

“Sa tingin mo hindi ako nasaktan at nasasaktan sa ginawa mo?!”

Natulala ako sa sinabi niya.

Tiningnan niya ako ng masama na parang gusto niya akong patayin ng mga tingin niya.

“ANG SAKIT RICA! Pu@##%!”

Itinulak niya ako palayo.

“Inilayo mo ako sa kanya.”

K-kanya?

Si . .

“T!”

Tinawag ko siya pero hindi na siya lumingon.

Nakita ko ang luha niya.

Umiiyak si T.

The Chapter 5

I just want you to know who I am. . .

That was the last post it I received from Nolae. Guess what? She's my secret post it girl, too. Ang galing niya. Pano niya nagagawa ng madali ang mga nagitong pagtatago ng identity? I think I should ask her to teach me. *insert sarcasm*

I smirked after reading it, crumpled then throw it away.

I don't give a fvck anymore.

People noticed the change of my aura. I can't blame them. It was too obvious for me. The COLD Travis being COLDER than ever. I ignore everyone's presence, even Khris. He knew it all along. So was he part of this plan?

*Just bullsh*t.*

“T--Tr...”

I saw Rica but I gave her a cold stare. She stopped at the moment and looked down. I don't want to talk. I don't want any. I don't need them. What for? To let them play my life, once more?

“T!” I found her hands on my arms.

People around us gasps and started making commotions. What now?

“Pl--please, ma--making ka.”

I blankly stared at her for seconds.

Makinig?

Eh siya nakikinig ba siya sa sinasabi niya?

I don't want to hear excuses, explanation and alibis.

I don't want any of them.

I pulled my arms away from her.

Nagulat ako nung bigla siyang matumba.

I was stuck in the middle of deciding whether to help her to stand up or not.

“T...”

Then I heard sobs.

Just damnit.

“Stop the act Rica.” I said without giving a hint of any emotions. “You don't need to explain.”

I walked out.

Not wanting to look back.

Just great.

I'm letting another decision without thinking properly.

But was it my fault?

I was goddamn hurt!

But hell,

This is not what I planned.

I don't want this.

Hindi ako pumasok. I've been skipping class since last week. I'm not in the mood of listening to my teacher's blabbers. I wan not in the mood of anything. I can't even feel myself for anything. I feel thrown up.

I swing myself trying to focus--nothing. Kahit anong gawin ko, my minds are full of thoughts that I can't even understand. Questions been bugging me at alam kong hindi ko 'yung masasagot. Kasi--wala talagang kasagutan. It's like answering the question, sino ang nauna, itlog o manok?

Crazy, right?

I sighed, letting out a warm air from my lips, informing anyone that I don't feel anything but pain. But this weird heartbeats ever failed me. I'm really happy to know the truth but this pain kills me.

Masaya ako na si Nolaie 'yun.

Nabulag lang talaga ako.

“Nolaie nolaie hane.”

Huh?

Napatingin ako sa likod ko at nakita si Khris na may hawak na coffee sa magkabilang kamay niya. I stopped swinging and just looked at him while he sat on the other swing on my left.

“[Skipping class again, huh?](#)” He show off his known smirk and handed me the coffee, the one I used to buy at vendo machines. “[So not T.](#)”

I chose not to let a word out.

He can do the speaking.

“[Nolae jungmalo nolaehago sipeo.](#)” I just looked at him, confused. What's with repeating Nolae's name? Ine-alien niya ba ako? “[Nolae nolae hane.](#)”

I ignored him and smelled my coffee.

Pinagti-tripan lang niya ako.

“[I said, Nolae really wants to sing.](#)” He said with a smirk on his face. “[Nolae sings.](#)”

“[Oh? Magaling naman talaga siyang kumanta ah.](#)”

“[Nolae nolaehago isupnida.](#)”

“Pare, ano bang pro--”

“In tagalog, Nolae is singing.”

Ano bang sinasabi niya?

“Nolae nun sarangheyo..”

“Ano bang pinagsasabi mo, Khris?” inis kong sabi. Tumayo na ako at naglakad palayo. Gusto kong itapon 'yung hawak kong cup ng. . .

“You know what 'sarangheyo' means right?” Napatigil ako. Oo, korean word 'yung para sa. . . “It means I love or I love you.”

I tensed up.

Nolae nun sarangheyo?

Edi--

“I love Nolae.” Hindi ko alam kung bakit pero nabitawan ko 'yung cup.

Di ba may g--girlfriend siya?

Di--di ba magpinsan sila?

G-gusto niya si Nolae?

“I really love--”

I don't know why but I just found myself holding Khris' collar.

I looked at him with anger. . .

It just like something snapped out of me.

“Nolae nun sarangheyo.”

“What the fc--”

“It also means that I love songs.”

What?

Biglang tinanggal ni Khris ang kamay ko sa polo niya. I was dumbfounded.

“Wag mong sabihing magpapaka-slow ka?” He chuckled as I straighten up. I looked away, feeling embarrassed. “T, don't you think you're holding yourself back?”

Holding back?

“Well, it's actually okay if you ignore everyone because of this and that. But won't you consider the time you're wasting? Times running out.” He looked at me, seriously. I've never seen that look before.

Wait.

Nagpapagod ba si Khris?

Bakit ganun?

Hi-hindi ko napansin agad.

“I just hope for longer time.” He said while walking away. “You T, what do you hope for?”

“I--I don't know.” I stooped down and heard him chuckled.

Then a statement hit me again.

That Korean phrase.

Nolae nun sarangheyo.

I love. . .

The Chapter 6

Naglakad lang ako pataas ng High school building. And still, people share issues and stories that were purely made up by idiots. And still, I don't give sht about it. why would I, anyway?

Andito na ako sa fourth floor, sa Seniors' floor.

And my heart began to race abnormally.

It gives me the same heartbeat everyday.

“Hoooy! Dito dito!”

Nagulat ako nung biglang lumabas si Lyra sa room ng IV-A. Natigilan siya at bigla kaming nagkatitigan. It was very awkward, actually. I haven't speak to her since.

“Hi T! Long time, no speak~” She smiled casually. I returned the smile, though it's odd.

Naglakad na ulit ako para lagpasan siya pero I did hear something.

“*She missed you.*”

That made my heart go wild.

The blissful feeling runs through my veins. This warm and soothing effect. I smiled instantly. I don't know. Nag-volunteer ang labi ko.

I didn't response and continue walking. But to my surprise I met Rica on my way. We stared for a whole minute then she shows her smile.

That made me question myself if I should do the same thing.

Naramdaman kong aalis na siya. . .

“Ri--”

Tumakbo na siya palayo. I did hear soft sobs.

We're still in pain, I guess?

“Bitter pa din e.” Nagulat ako ng makita si Lyra sa tabi ko habang iniiling niya ang ulo niya. “Isa ka ding heart breaker alam mo 'yun?”

“Heartbreaker?” I finally let out my voice.

“Yeah.”

Ha?

Ano daw?

Umalis na si Lyra matapos niyang tapikin ang balikat ko. I blankly think for a while before deciding to lead my way again. It's a weird morning.

Natapos ang first subject at nakakaroon na naman ako ng pakiramdam na gusto ko na namang mag-cut ng klase. Tss. Tumayo ako sa kinauupuan ko at nakita ko lang umiling si Khris. Alam na kasi niya kung bakit.

Naglakad ako pababa papunta sa vendo machine. I bought my coffee and sit on the very bench where I actually hang out everyday. It calms my heart and mind.

I smelled my coffee.

Heaven.

Natauhan ako nung makakita ako ng teacher papalapit kaya naman tumayo na ako at umakyat pabalik ng building. Pero mas pinili kong lagpasan ang floor namin at umakyat

pa para makarating sa rooftop. Still drinking my coffee.

Sumandal ako sa pader at tinitigan ang langit.

It was blue as it is.

The clouds move freely with the air.

I wish I could move like them.

For I'm behind bars of nothingness, right now.

It kills me.

I closed my eyes while after finishing my coffee. Humming of I don't know song until I can't feel my surroundings right now. For this moment I feel lightness and peace.

I opened my eyes. Pero nagulat ako ng madilim parin ang nakikita ko. Kinusot kusot ko ang mga mata ko hanggang sa makakita ako ng liwanag.

I saw someone beside the railings.

The wind blew her hair away from her face pero napapikit ako kaya di ko nagawang makita ang mata niya.

I tried to stand up pero pakiramdam ko may mabigat na nakatuon saakin kaya di ko nagawa.

Pinilit ko. . .

Pero naramdaman kong may humawak sa mukha ko.

I froze.

I didn't move. My head still facing my lap, being unable to see her face. Narealize ko nalang na nasa tinatakluban na niya ang mata ko.

“W--”

“Shh..”

Dug.Dug.Dugdug.

“N-Ngayon lang.” She said. *“I just want to stare at you. Please.”*

She begged like it matters life and death.

Wala akong nagawa.

*NW: [I Miss You by Avril](#)

“Nana. . . na na na nana. . .” She started singing. I felt goosebumps. *“I miss you. . . miss you so bad.. I don't forget you, oh it's so sad. . . I hope you can hear me, I remember it clearly.”*

The hair on my nape stood up.

And I felt entering, *second heaven*.

Like there's *cloud tenth* existing.

“The day you slipped away. . . was the day I found it won't be the same.”

I twitched when I felt eargasm while hearing her voice again.

That angelic voice.

Hindi pa rin nagbabago.

That voice I've been longing for so long.

I moved my hands to reached her hand from my eyes. I can feel her stiffness but I didn't move my hands away. I just . . . I just want to feel her.

"The day you slipped away. . . was the day I found it won't be the same." She intertwined her free hand to mine. *"I . . . miss you."*

She sighed after her song. Para bang may ibig sabihin ang bawal pagbuntong hininga niya at salita. Nararamdam ako ng sakit at lungkot. Naramdaman ko ang pag-init ng mukha ko.

"I miss you, Travis."

Ramdaman ko ang paglayo ng kamay niya sa mga mata ko. Pero natakot ako. Ayokong imulat ang mga mata ko. A--ayoko.

And there was ecstasy again.

We *kissed* again like it was the first time.

It took not so long.

She let go.

Bigla siyang lumayo at binitawan ang kamay ko.

“Te-teka. . .” I opened my eyes and see darkness.

Narealize ko na nakahiga na ako ngayon.

How did I get into this?

Tumayo ako at biglang may nahulog na panyo mula sa mukha ko.

A handkerchief with embroidered initials on it. . .

“NLily.”

So it was a dream after all?

But was the kiss a dream too?

Yung puso ko. Para akong nasu-suffocate.

I should clear this now.

I miss her badly.

NW: [Someday by IU](#)

The Chapter 7

6:59PM

One more minute, dapat tatawag na siya sakin. Pero wala. Why would I expect her calls again? Hindi na siya tatawag.

“Stupid.”

I forced my palm against my forehead.

That kiss.

That dream.

Paulit-ulit na nagrerewind sa utak ko.

Tumayo ako sa kama ko at hinanap na naman ang video ni Ree. . . Pinaulit ulit ko 'yun at dun ko nakikita ang matatamis niyang ngiti na dating ini-imagine ko lang. Her lips. It was damn perfect.

“Pervert. Maniac.” I let my palm hit my forehead again. Nababaliw na talaga ako.

Ibinagsak ko ang katawan ko sa kama at ipinikit ang mga mata ko.

Those days I've been with Nolae.

Nung inakala kong junior lang siya.

Yung nakakaduet ko na pala *siya*.

“Ang tanga tanga mo talaga, Travis!” sigaw ko.

At dun ko nalang narealize.

Travis.

Travis.

Travis.

Travis.

She's the first person I allowed to call me Travis.

Yung tumatawag saking Travis na hindi ako naiinis o nagagalit.

Yung pag-“Hello, Travis.” niya.

Si Ree lang.

Si Lily lang.

Si . . . Si *Norilae* lang.

“Ghaddamnit!”

Napabalingkwas ako sa kama at lumabas sa kwarto. Nilagpasan ko lang sina mama at ate sa salas. Di na ako nagpaalam kahit tinatawag nila ako. Dirediretso lang ako sa paglabas ng bahay at pagsakay ng taxi.

Bumaba ako at humarap sa bahay ng mga Lee. *Bumilis ang tibok ng puso ko.* Pinapasok agad ako ng guard dahil kilala naman niya ako at walang ano anong pumasok sa bahay nila. Nahihibang na talaga ako.

Tumingin ako sa orasan.

7:50 na pala.

Nakita ko si Khris at Lyra sa salas at mukhang nagulat sila ng makita nila ako sa loob ng bahay ng mga Lee. Napatungo nalang ako at napakamot sa batok ko. Tinawanan naman ako ng dalawa.

“Travis came. Told you this will happen!” Lyra giggled. “Hah! In your face!”

Napangiti nalang ako.

“How would I know that? Bakit ba kasi ang galing niyong magimagine ng mga bagay bagay?”

“Sus! Magimagine? Mas malawak pa imaginations mo! Alam ko. Ikaw pa? Eh lalaki ka!” Tumawa silang dalawa. Hindi na maghihiwalay ang dalawang 'to.

“A-asan siya?” I cut in.

“You're just in time.” Khris said and pointed out something. “First door sa left.”

Tumango nalang ako at pumunta sa taas para iwan ang dalawa.

Then I heard soft piano notes when I reach her door..

“Eonjengan I nunmuri meomchugil. . .Eonjengan I eodumi geodhigo. Ttaseuhan haetsari, I nunmureul mallyeojugil.”

Yung boses niya.

Hindi na ako kumatok at binuksan ko ang pintuan.

Nakita ko ang dalawang taong nagpagulo ng buhay ko sa loob ng kwarto.

Rica holding a camera while Norilae playing the keyboard and singing.

“Kidarimyeon eonjengan ogetji. . .Bami gireodo haeneun tteudeushi. Apeun nae gaseumdo eonjengan da natgetji. I~ Yeah~”

Napangiti ako.

Nakita ako ni Rica. Ngumiti siya habang kinukunan si Norilae na tumugtog. Hindi niya pinaalam kay Norilae na andito ako. Hinayaan lang niyang tumugtog ang pinsan niya at makita ko ang lahat.

“Do you think I can still sing?” Nolae asked after her piece.

“Maganda pa rin ang boses mo.” Rica answered, still holding the camera.

“Mawawala na 'to. Malapit na.”

That heavy pound in my chest. Naramdaman ko ang sakit.

Bakit pa kasi ngayon.

“W-wag muna.”

Nakita ko ang gulat na mukha ni Norilae nung narinig ang boses ko. Ngumiti lang si Rica at ibinaba ang camera sa keyboards. Lumapit siya sakín at tinapik ang balíkat ko saka lumabas ng kwarto.

“A-anong ginagawa mo dito?”

Napakamot ako sa batok ko, “I was expecting for a 7PM call. Kaso Halos isang oras na ang nakakalipas, hindi pa rin siya tumatawag. Kaya. . .”

Ngumiti ako at napapansing mukha akong tanga.

“Kaya pinuntahan ko nalang 'yung iniintay ko.”

“Travis. . .”

Ayun.

Yung boses na tumatawag at nagpapahina sa sistema ko.

“Pede pa ba, Lily? Ree? Nolee? Nolae? Norilae?” I chuckled. “Hindi ko na kayang lokohin pa ang sarili ko.”

Tumayo siya at dahan dahang lumapit sakín.

“Kaya pa.” she said. “Abot ka pa sa deadline.”

Gusto kong matuwa pero nasasaktan pa rin ako.

“Sorry.” Hinwakan ko ang kamay niya. I felt electricity. Totoo pala 'yun. “Taena, dapat pala nahawakan ko na 'to dati pa.”

Bigla siyang tumawa.

At yun ang naging dahilan ng pag-ngiti ko.

Yung ngiting abot hanggang batok.

“Travis.”

“Norilae, please. . . please call me again.”

Fail.

But I really miss her calls.

She chuckled. I can feel the hotness of my cheeks. Ang baduy ko. Taena. Palamon niyo na po ako sa lupa. Ganito pala kahirap mag-confess.

“Fine.” She smiled.

She's really an angel..

Sana aabot pa.

Sana walang ng deadline.

Please.

Nagmamakaawa ako.

Ayokong mawala pa 'to.

Mahal ko na siya ng sobra.

The Chapter 8

Does everyone deserve happy ending?

Or are there only selected couples who'll last?

What will happen for those who wish to have happy endings but was not granted?

Will they just accept it and leave it as it is?

Unfair.

“Then I saw her coming for the street and. . .”

I stared at her while she makes fun of her childhood memories. She giggles every time she remembers silly moments. I have to smile for I'm seeing an angel before me, an angel full of happiness and life.

Two weeks na ang nakakalipas simula na gawin namin 'to. We don't have any relationship. Ayaw niya. It's better this way, she said. Hindi na ako nakipagtalos.

Whatever relationship we have. . .

Masaya ako.

“And then Rica and Khris---”

“I love you.” I cut in.

Her eyes widen. Now that's very hilarious. Ang cute niya. I let out a laugh. She started hitting me. She's too shy showing her emotions. Sinubukan kong hawakan ang kamay niya para patigilin siyang hampasin ako.

“Why are you being random?” She chuckled, realizing how stupid she looks.

“I'm not. I'm just stating what I feel.”

Her cheeks turn red, once more.

“Nakakainis ka!” she's hitting me again. Ganyan daw talaga siya kiligin e. “You're having

fun teasing me, huh?"

"Sort of." I laughed.

"Ah ganun!" Hinampas niya ako sa balikat tapos tumayo siya at naglakad palayo.

Tamo 'to.

Nilalambing lang e. =___=

Pero imbes na mainis, mas natuwa pa ako.

Pikon niya ano?

Tumayo na ako at inayos ang pinagkainan namin. Hinabol ko siya para masabayan siya sa paglakad. She looked at me as I intertwined her hand into mine. I smiled, that weird electricity never fades.

"Tutugtog kayo ulit?" I nodded. Last week, na-hire kami sa isang bar para tumugtog every saturday night para sa bar nila. Kasama ko sina Khris at ibang tropa. "Sama ako?"

"Gusto mo?"

“Yeah.” She pouted her lips. Kahit gusto ko, hindi naman pede. “Please?”

Nag-puppy eyes na naman 'tong Koreanang 'to.

=_____ =

“You're not skipping your sched again.” I warned her. She loves to skip her meetings with her doctor. Pasaway e. Sumimangot naman siya. “Norilae. . .”

Alam niya kasi kung anong ayaw ko e.

Babaeng talaga 'to.

“Pag natapos, sunod ka.” I sighed, sign of my defeat. Ngumiti naman siya, and that made me smile too.

Umakyat kami sa kwarto niya. Pinagmasdan ko ang buong loob ng kwarto niya. There were weird looking things, may cabinet for countless medicines and most of the colors are white. It resembles a hospital room.

“Dun tayo.”

Tinuro niya 'yung balcony ng kwarto niya, tumango lang ako at pumunta dun. Nahuli siya dahil kinuha pa niya ang gitara niya. Umupo ako dun sa isang upuan habang dun siya sa rocking chair.

“Oras ko na ba para kantahan si Travis?” She asked, looking at the sun, that's about to set.

“Maaga pa. May two hours pa.”

She pouted her lips again.

I chuckled.

“But I think, she can sing right now.” Ngumiti naman siya. Tu-tugtog na sana siya nung bigla ko siyang pinigilan at inagaw ang gitara niya. “Pero, let me sing for my not-unknown-anymore caller.”

Bigla siyang tumawa. Tumango naman siya.

“Everytime I think I'm closer to the heart of what it means to know of who I am. . . I think I've finally found a better place to start, but no one seems to understand.” I started playing. “I need to try to get to where you are. Could it be you're not that far?”

She gave me a sincere smile.

“You're the voice I hear inside my head, the reason that I'm singing. I need to find you. . . I gotta find you.” I looked down when she started looking at me seriously. Nagiinit ang tenga ko. “You're the missing piece I need, the song inside of me. I need to find you. . . I gotta find you.”

But I already find her, right?

Andito na siya.

Sa harapan ko.

“Travis.” I looked at her when she called out my name. “I--I love you.”

I froze.

“So much.”

Halos mabitawan ko ang gitara niya nung narinig ko 'yun. I never heard such a sweet voice. It sounded wonderful. My heart pounds uncontrollably like I've been chase by those monsters in Temple Run. No kidding.

Like I've been running endlessly.

But I'm very happy.

“I love you, Travis.” Without any hesitation, I kiss her. Letting her know that I love her back. I do. I do love her.

I let her rest before leaving her room. Lumabas ako ng kwarto at hinanap si Khris para makaalis na kami papuntang bar. I found him talking to someone over the phone. When I met his gaze, dun niya agad binaba ang phone niya.

“Tara.” Iniwas na niya ang tingin niya sakin at dire-diretsong lumabas. Is there something wrong?

Or am I hallucinating that I just saw tear on his cheek?

Nakadating kami ng bar at ginawa ang trabaho namin. Me on guitar and vocals, Khris on drums, George on bass guitar and Tom on lead guitar. This is our second time to

play on stage at buti naman nagiging okay.

Pansin naming lahat ang pagiging tahimik ni Khris. But we chose not to bother him. Kasi alam namin na dalawa lang ang posibleng dahilan. It's either Lyra. . . or it has something to deal with Norilae.

At sana hindi 'yung last option.

Tumambay muna kaming lahat matapos naming tumugtog kasi daw "It's friday night and we should have fun and get drunk." Sinabayan ko nalang ang trip nila. May kasayaw na si Tom and George. Looks like they're getting laid tonight?

Mga playboy.

Naiwan kami ni Khris sa table. At ang nakakapgtaka, tahimik lang siyang nagpapakalasing. Gusto kong magtanong pero natatakot ako sa isasagot niya.

“So what's up?” He suddenly asked.

“Anong what's up?”

“Kayong dalawa ni Nolae?”

Ewan pero bigla akong kinabahan.

“O--okay lang kami.”

“Dating na ba 'to?” I chuckled for I thought it was a joke. Pero mukhang hindi. Seryoso ang mukha ni Khris.

“Ayaw niya ng commitment.”

Tahimik lang kaming dalawa.

Ininom ko ang laman ng boteng hawak ko.

Masakit.

“Okay lang naman e. Naiintindihan ko kung bakit.” Oo, naiintindihan ko. Mas madali 'to. Less hassle. Walang dapat intindihin. Ayun 'yung point niya. Pero in some aspects, nasasaktan talaga ako. Dahil nagkakaroon ako ng limitations.

Limitations na panghimasukan siya.

Limitations para alagaan siya.

“That's good.”

Good?

“Good? Anong ibig mong sabihin?” I really find it ridiculous. Bakit mukhang gusto pa niya ang naging status naming dalawa ni Norilae?

“Kasi kung kayo. . .” he said then drank up his beer. “I’ll force you to break up with her.”

What the?

“Anong kahibangan ‘to, Khris?” I frankly asked him.

“Don’t ask me that, Travis.”

He called me Travis.

He’s serious.

“What the hell is going on, Khris.”

“I want to ask you that.” He smirked. “Why didn’t you tell me she’s skipping medications?”

Ano?

Hindi ko alam 'yun!

“Ha? Ang alam ko she only skipped once!”

“Oh really? But why the hell did she stop seeing her doctor last last week?” I froze. Wala akong alam. Di ba lagi niyang kasama si Lyra? Ba-bakit ganun?

“Hindi ko--”

“Too late now.” He looked up like he's stopping something to happen. “She's getting worse.”

I wish everyone deserves happy ending.

No failed marriages.

No more yearning for happy love.

No more sacrifices.

No more crying.

Happiness.

Life,

I beg for it.

The Chapter 9

Hinila ko si Norilae palabas ng kwarto niya. I heard her soft giggles. Ang sarap talaga pakinggan ng mga tawa niya. I smiled at her at mas binilisan ang pagtakbo, humabol naman siya.

“**Bilis, slowpoke!**” I said while pulling her. Tumawa naman siya ng tumawa.

“**Slow down, Travis! Don't get to excited!**” She said between her laughs.

Pano ba naman ako hindi maeexcite? I don't want to spoil this day. She just asked me out. Yeah, you read it right. She's the one who asked me out. After hearing it from her at matapos niyang maayos ang mga gamit niya sa bag niya, hinigit ko na siya agad palabas at ito nga tumatakbo kami.

First date.

“Hey, san kayo pupunta?” Bigla kaming napatigil nung nakita namin si Khris sa may salas.

“Nanakawin ko muna si Nolae ha?”

“Ha?”

“I asked him to have a date with me, oppa.” Nolae said while gasping for air.

“YOU asked him?”

I chuckled. Nolae nodded while forcing not to laugh. It's not wrong for a girl to ask a boy for a date, right?

“Bye! Babalik ko siya, promise!” sabi ko nung hinigit ko na ulit si Nolae palabas. Pero bago ko sarhan ang main door, “Pero ibang usapan na 'yun kung sabihin niyang mag-tanan na kami.”

“WHAT--”

SLAM

“Ang baliw mo!” She let out a laugh again.

“Dali! Run for our lives, Nolae!”

And we run away like we're chasing someone. Running with smiles on our faces. This will be a great day. I hope so.

For I admit, I don't really feel good right now.

“Gusto ko dun!” tinuro niya 'yung isang tindahan na puno ng mga kung ano ano.

Pumasok naman kami sa loob. Napansin ko puro "cute" at pambabae halos ang laman ng shop. Napatingin ako kay Nolae at mukhang natuwa naman siya sa nakita niya. Tumakbo siya dun sa isang part ng shop.

“Uy tignan mo 'to, Travis. Bilis!”

“Alin?”

Napatingin ako dun sa mga tinuro niya. Napatitig nalang ako dun. Mga manika, 'yung mga couple. Iba't iba 'yung outfits nila. May nerdy, may goth ata tawag dito? May emo din, dancers, and likes.

“Miss, ito ito.” Nolae pointed out a couple at napangiti ako dun nung nilabas yun nung sales lady.

Music Couple?

“May hairclip yung lalaki?”

Natawa nalang kami dun sa couple dolls. Yung babae may blue hair tas nkabonnet. May hawak siyang gitara. Tapos 'yung couple, may shirt na may print na earphones. Natawa lang talaga ako dun sa hair clip.

Pero sabi ni Nolae, sikat na dolls daw 'yun sa Korea. AOD? Angel of Dream ata?

“Gu--gusto mo ba?” I asked her.

“No. No.” bigla niyang nabitawan 'yung manika. “I just find them cute.”

Bigla siyang umalis at tumingin naman sa iba. Napatingin ako dun sa saleslady at may nakakaloko siyang ngiti sa mukha. Alam ko ang ibig sabihin niya. Napailing nalang at ngumiti sa kanya.

Mukhang naintindihan naman niya ako kaya umalis na siya.

“San mo gusto pa pumunta?”

“Dun tayo sa playground.”

Sumunod naman ako at pumunta kami sa playground. Madaming bata. Playground e. Biglang bumitaw si Norilae sa kamay ko nung nakita niya 'yung swing. Sinundan ko lang siya.

Umupo ako sa bakanteng swing sa tabi niya. I smiled at her, casually. Nagsimula na siyang magswing at ang sarap titigan ng nasa harapan ko ngayon. Isang masayang anghel kasama ko.

Gusto kong matuwa ng sobra.

Pero sa tuwing iniisip ko ang saya, biglang sumisingit ang mga sinabi sakin ni Khri nung sabado. Di ko mapigilan ang sarili kong malungkot. Gusto ko man siyang tanungin pero . . . natatakot ako sa dahilan niya.

Ang hirap ng may limitasyon ka.

Ang hirap ng wala kang magawa.

Ang hirap ng wala kang alam.

Ang hirap.

“I love you.” I said out of the blue. Na kahit ako nagulat sa sinabi ko.

“Ha?” sabi ni Nolae na mukhang naguluhan sa sinabi ko. Di niya siguro narinig dahil sa pagswing niya.

“I love you.” I said with louder tone.

“Ano?”

“Sabi ko mahal kita!”

Bigla siyang tumigil. Natulala siya sa pagsigaw ko. Napansin ko din na napatingin samin 'yung mga taong malapit at nakarinig sa sinabi ko.

I bit my lower lip. Nakakatawa kasi ang reaksiyon niya. Namumula ang mukha niya at halos mahulog 'yung panga niya.

“I love you, Nolae.”

Nakarinig ako ng bulungan namin sa paligid. Napangiti nalang ako. Damn this. Hindi ako ganito pero bigla bigla nalang ako. Alam niyo ba 'yung halong kaba at saya? Corny

alam ko. Pero. . . ang sarap sa pakiramdam e.

“T--travis.”

“I love you.” ulit ko. Tumayo ako sa swing at pumunta sa harapan niya. Hinawakan ko ang dalawang kamay niya at huminga ng malalim. “I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I LOVE YOU!”

I sang it out. I don't care what others think. I just want to let this angel to know how I love her so much.

Na hindi ko kakayanin pag nawala siya sakin.

“I--I love you, Travis.”

That made my heart skip a beat.

I can't live without her.

Nagulat ako nung biglang tumayo si Nolae at hinalkan ako. Natulala ako.

That same feeling.

CloudTen?

ThirdHeaven?
Reincarnation after reincarnation?

Lupa, lamunin mo na po ako!

Pero joke lang pala. . .

Di ko kayang iwanan ang anghel na 'to.

Umalis na kami sa playground at dinala niya ako dun sa may garden spot ng park.
Umupo kami sa ilalim ng puno kung saan walang tao.

“B--binili mo?” yan ang agad na sabi niya pagkabukas ng bag niya. Napatawa nalang ako. “How did that. . .”

“I bought them when you're not looking.” I chuckled.

Pasimple ko kasing nilagay sa loob ng bag niya 'yung couple dolls. Masaya ako at mukhang natuwa naman siya.

“Oh.” Nagulat ako nung bigla niyang initinulak sa dibdib ko 'yung babaeng manika.

“Bakit?”

“Tig-isa tayo.” She smiled and stooped down her head. She blushed. “Treat that as you treat me. Think of it as me.”

Napakamot nalang ako sa batok. So parang kami 'tong dalawa? Dapat namin alagaan? Di ko alam kung bakit pero nakaramdam ako ng mabilis na pagtibok ng puso ko. Masyado na ata akong masaya.

“I will.” I smiled weakly.

“Para hindi mo ko masyadong mamiss.” She chuckled. So she's pertaining how obsess I am if I don't see her huh?

“Masama ba kung masyado kang mamiss?”

She smiled. Pero bigla agad nawala 'yun, “No.”

Kinabahan ako.

“Are you tired?”

“I'm fine.”

“But--”

“I'm fine, Travis.” She touched my cheek and stared at my eyes. Nanghina ako. “Ikaw dapat ang tanungin ko, pagod ka na ba?”

“Pagod? I won't.”

“Since that day, hindi ka na tumigil bumisita sa bahay para tingnan at alagaan ako.”

“Norilae, I won't. Gusto ko na alagaan ka.” I sighed.

Bigla siyang ngumiti at ti-*nap* ang lap niya. I gave her a 'What-do-you-mean' look. She giggled and pulled me to rest the back of my head on her lap.

I scoffed as she run her palm to close my eyelids and started humming of I don't know song. That voice. I can live with it for ages, and even forever.

“I love you.” I can feel her breath touching my forehead. “I love you, Travis.”

“No--” She pushed her finger against my lips.

“I love you.”

I sighed.

“So. . .so much.”

Wait.

Bakit parang. . .

“Are you--”

“Shh.”

I was about to open my eyes when she covered them with her palm and my lips with the other.

Naiyak ba siya?

Ba--bakit?

“I'm sorry.”

Ba--bakit?

“Sorry for disappointing you.”

You were never a disappointment.

Never.

“I love you.” Inabot ko ang kamay niya at tinanggal 'to sa mukha ko.

There a saw her.

Forcing not to cry.

“Nolae.”

Bigla niya akong niyakap. Iyak lang siya ng iyak. Bakit? Anong problema? Sinubukan kong tumayo. Niyakap ko siya ng mahigpit. Bakit ka umiiyak? Sabihin mo sakin. Anong problema?

Sorry para san?

“I love you.”

“I love you too.”

She tightened her hug.

Like she's saying something.

Like she wanted to pertain something.

And I don't like this. . .

Please don't.

Nakadating ako sa bahay matapos kong ihatid si Nolae sa bahay nila. Pinauwi niya ako agad. Masyado na daw kasing gabi. Kelangan na daw namin pareho magpahinga. Pumayag nalang ako.

Pagkapasok ko ng bahay, sinalubong ako nina Mama at Ate. They offered me dinner but I declined. Wala akong gana.

If I could just wiped those tears away.

If I could just take the pain away.

If I could just let her forget everything.

Ayoko na siyang makitang umiiyak.

Pumasok ako sa kwarto ko at binagsak ang katawan sa kama. Ipinikit ang mga mata ko. Iniisip kung anong pedeng mangyare bukas. Iniisip kung anong pedeng mangyare saming dalawa.

Pero ba't ganun?

Bakit nasasaktan ako?

Those tears.

They mean something.

***Ring. . .ring. . ***

Inabot ko ang phone ko. Nagulat ako nung nakita ko ang pangalan ni Norilae. Sinagot ko naman agad 'yun.

“Hey babe, missed me already?”

I felt goosebumps when I heard a guitar playing.

["Wish I be the one, the one who can give you love. The kind of love you really need. Wish I could say to you."]

“Nolae?” I let out a husky voice. What the hell is happening?

["You need someone willing to give the heart and soul to you. Promise you forever. But baby, that's something I can't do."] She's starting to be out of tune. Please stop. Please make her stop.

“Stop this Nolae!”

["I know I'll only hurt you, I know I'll only make you cry I'm not the one you're needing, I love you goodbye. . ."]

“Stop this !@#\$, Nolae!”

Narinig ko ang paghikbi niya.

Umiyak.

[“You'll someone who'll be the one that I could never be.and give you something better than the love you find with me.”] Sht. Sht.

“Nolae! Sabi ng tumigil ka na!”

[“Leaving someone when you love someone is the hardest thing to do, when you love someone as much as I love you.”]

Kinakabahan ako . .

[“Oh, I don't wanna leave you. Baby, it tears me up inside but I'll never be the one you needed.”]

“Stop this sht Nolae! Sto--”

Don't say it!

["I love you, goodbye."]

At dun ko nalang naramdaman ang pagpatak ng luha ko.

"I--I don't like this. I'm going to hung u--"

["I'm. . sorry Travis."]

That's it?

So that's why she asked me out for a date!

For this fcking farewell?!

"I'll hung up. Please do sleep. I'll see you tomorrow."

["That's impossible."]

What do you me--

["I'm leaving, Travis."]

"You're kidding, right?"

She sniffed and sighed, ["And beyond possible of not coming back."]

"Stop this sht, Nolae. Alam mong ayoko ng mga ganit--"

["I'm sorry."]

She's crying.

Please don't cry.

"I love you. I'm sorry, Travis." She said while sobbing.

Please do wake me up if this is a nightmare.

Please stop this.

It's killing me.

It's . . .

“**Nolae please don't do this to me.**” I begged. Tears continue to flow down. I don't want this. I don't like this. Please. “**I -- I.**”

[“Goodbye, Travis.”]

And I heard a disconnected line that I never wish to be heard.

She hung up.

She said...

goodbye.

The Chapter 10

I sighed. It's been 2 months since she left. Nagpunta siya ng ibang bansa para sa medications niya. Khris explained me that her kidneys began to fail and her pancreas is in bad condition if not cured.

They might kill her.

She could die.

Nakagraduate na kami nina Khris pero wala si Norilae. At hanggang ngayon wala pa din siya. I just might lose hope if this continue. Alam niyo ba kung gano kasakit? Yung umaasa ka na dadating siya at makikita mo siya sa tapat ng pintuan ng bahay niyo. . .

Pero hanggang tumatagal.

Nauubusan ako ng pag-asa.

Nasasaktan ako.

Pakiramdam ko, gusto ko ng sumuko bawat araw. Why did she leave? Am I not enough to be at her side? Kung kelan kasi e. Kung kelang ibinibigay ko na ang lahat lahat ko.

“Oy Travis. May balak ka pa bang pumasok?”

I just shrug when I heard her.

“Travis.”

“Don't call me Travis.” I coldly said to my sister. She must be stunned of hearing it from me.

I just sighed. Wala na akong gana pumasok. I feel so miserable. Sobra na ba 'tong nararamdaman ko? Pero ang sakit kasi talaga e.

Tumayo ako sa sofa at nilagpasan si Ate. Lumabas ako ng bahay. I blankly stare everywhere like I don't care of what surrounds me.

Have you ever felt so lifeless?

I was never allowed to know anything about Norilae's condition. I was forbidden to know where she is. I was not entertained. My feelings were useless for them. Like they don't care if I suffer knowing nothing about Nola.

And it sucks.

Kasi isa si Khris sa mga nagsabing wag ko ng isipin si Norilae.

Nasasaktan ako kasi ayaw niyang ipaalam sakin.

Kahit si Lyra at Rica pinaiwas niya sakin para wala talaga akong malaman.

I walk in the middle of nowhere.

In the middle of Summer afternoon, I found myself in front of Lee's Residence. I rang the doorbell. Unlike before, hindi nila ako pinapapasok. Bakit? Dahil alam nilang kukulitin ko lang sila about kay Norilae.

They don't trust me anymore.

Nagulat ako nung biglang may tumulong luha sa kamay ko. It's my tear. Kelan pa ako umiyak? Pinunasan ko ang basa kong pisngi at sinubukan parin ang lahat para makapasok sa loob ng bahay nila.

"I just want to talk to him." I begged.

Nagmamakaawa ako.

Gusto ko lang malaman kung ano ng kalagayan niya.

“Sorry po. Pero hindi po talaga pede.”

Please. . .

“**KHRIS!!**” I yelled. I know he's inside their mansion. I know he's in there, watching me.
“**KHRIS! KAUSAPIN MO AKO!**”

“Sir T, tigilan niyo na po 'yan.” saway sakin nung guard.

“Palabasin mo dito si Khris! Nagmamakaawa ako manong. Kelangan ko lang siyang makausap! **KHRIS!!**”

Lumabas 'yung guard sa gate at pinalayo ako.

“Sorry po Sir T. Pero pinagbilin po ni Sir Khris na---”

I pulled myself away from him. “**Kakausapin ko lang siya! Damn! He's my bestfriend!**”

“Pero sir--”

“Khris!! Lumabas ka! Don't be such a coward!” I screamed. I don't care what they think of me now. I don't care. “Fck it, Khris! Don't make me--”

“Make you what?”

Nagulat ako nung biglang lumabas si Khris kasama si Rica. Nagpumiglas pa rin ako dun sa hawak ng guard nila. Sumenyas naman si Khris kaya naman binitawan na niya ako. I glared at Khris, but he still gave me a blank expression.

Like he was not my bestfriend.

Like he was somebody else just living inside Khris' body.

“Please, T. Leave. It's no use.” biglang nagsalita si Rica. She didn't mean it. Alam ko. Parang napipilitan lang siya sa sinasabi niya.

“Nasan na si Norilae? Hindi ako aalis dito hangga't di niyo sinabi kung nasan siya!”

“Bakit? susundan mo ba siya? O tapos pag nasundan mo siya, anong mangyayare?” that cold voice.

“I deserve to know, Khris! At ano naman kung sundan ko siya? Atleast I'll be there! Andun ako para--”

“Why? Sa tingin mo ba dahil nasa tabi ka ni Lily, lalakas siya dahil mahal ka niya?” He smirked. “Gusto mo bang ulitin ko ang dahilan kung bakit siya nagpapakamatay 2 months ago?”

Yes I know.

Alam ko ang dahilan.

[FLASHBACK]
2 months ago

“Where is she?!” Tumakbo ako papunta dito matapos kong marinig ang huling tawag saakin ni Norilae. “Where is she, Khris?!”

I grabbed his shirt and pinned him against the wall.

I glared at him but he just mocked at me.

“Stop this T.” Napatingin lang ako kay Lyra. “She. . .She already left. Kaya wala na ding mapapala ang ginagawa mo.”

She's avoiding my gaze.

She's about to cry but she's trying not to.

“Ghaddammit! Bakit hindi niyo pinaalam sa kin?!” I pushed Khris but he seems not to care. “Alam mo namang maha--”

“Bakit? Can you save her with that love?!” Khris seriously looked at me. “Can you make her systems better by loving her?!”

I froze.

“You're the reason why she stopped taking her medicines! Fck it, T!” He pushed me away. “She wanted to die, Travis! Gusto na agad niyang mamatay para makawala ka na agad sa kanya!”

Makawala agad?

“What do you mean?” I asked. Pero natatakot ako sa magiging sagot.

“She can't let you go for she loves you so much!” He gritted his teeth. Trying his best not to hit me. “Kaya naisip niya na bakit hindi nalang ikaw ang mag-let go. Na pag namatay siya, matatapos na lahat ng paghihirap.”

“Per--”

“She doesn't want you to suffer T! Masyado ka niyang mahal! Kaya ayaw niyang magpakahirap ka dahil lang sa kalagayan niya! Tama na, Travis! Tama na!”

Pumasok na siya sa loob ng bahay nila. Lyra followed him, crying.

Crap, Travis.

[END OF FB]

Sino bang may sabing ayoko siyang alagaan?

Sino bang may sabing mapapagod ako?

Sino bang may sabing mahihirapan ako?

Ito ang gusto ko.

Ang alagaan siya.

Kaya nga hindi ako sumuko di ba?

Tears began to fall again.

“Please, Khris. Please.” I don't know what I'm doing but I just found myself kneeling before him. “Para na din akong namamatay.”

“No, Travis. I can't let you kill my cousin. No.” Tatalikod na dapat siya nung hinawakan siya ni Rica. “Not you too, Rica. Napagusapan na natin 'to!”

“Pero kuya, wala din namang mangyayare. Just let him know.”

“Khris! Please.” I yelled. “Please, I beg you.”

Tiningnan ako ni Rica saka ulit sa kapatid niya. “Please. It's been two months.”

Khris deathly stared at her twin sister pero nawala naman agad 'yun. “America. It's her operation yesternight. We're still waiting.”

America?

Operation?

“Ba-bakit hindi niyo man lang pinuntahan?!” Napatayo agad ako. Dahil sa inis at galit.

Pinabayaan lang nila si Norilae na magisa?!

“Ayaw niya kaming makita, T. She doesn't want us to be there for her.” Rica said weakly. “She said that she won't take the transplant kung andun kami. Galit siya samin.”

She cried.

“Tulad ng nararamdaman mo. Masakit din para samin, T. Dahil wala din kaming magawa.”

I bit my lower lip, trying to sink in every details. Ang sakit.

“Tara na, Rica.” tinawag na siya ni Khris. Rica smiled but I know she feels miserable.

Naramdaman ko nalang ulit ang hawak nung guard sakin. Pinanuod ko lang na lumayo sakin ang kambal at itulak ako nung guard palabas ng gate.

Pero natigilan ako nung biglang lumabas ng bahay si Lyra na umiiyak.

Pumiglas ulit ako sa guard.

Hawak hawak niya 'yung phone habang tumakbo siya papalapit kay Khris.

Iyak siya ng iyak.

Yung. . .

Yung result ng operation ni Nolae.

Sht.

Ayoko ng tumatakbo sa utak ko.

Wag naman sana.

Pero. . .

Please, wag.

EPILOGUE

[NW: How do I breathe](#)

Diabetes Mellitus

It's a disease in which your blood glucose or blood sugar is too high. Your pancreas loses or fails to produce insulin, worse it doesn't make any. Insulin is a special hormone in giving energy . Without it, glucose takes over your blood.

Having a very high glucose may give serious problems with your *heart, eyes, kidneys, nerves, gums and teeth*. It destroys certain cells in pancreas. More or less, you could **die**.

And if you have this kind of disease, *you have to take insulin for the rest of your life*.

And that's what Nola refused.

She stopped taking them.

That's why it ends here.

She ended it here.

I can feel my cheeks being damped again for the nth time. I swear my eyes won't get tire of it. Like it was a pro in crying. Like I've been keeping it for so long that I can't take much more, so it gave up.

“Sht these tears.” I mumbled.

I've been cussing nonstop, too.

For I thought it can lessen the pain if I put them in words.

I was and still fooling myself.

Damnit.

Why does it has to be this painful?

Ring. . . Ring. . .

Inabot ko ang phone ko sa side table. I saw Khris' number flashing at its screen. Pain follows.

Oo, hanggang ngayon umaasa ako na pangalan niya ang makikita ko.

I answered his call but refuse not to say any hellos.

["Just checking if you're still alive."] He chuckled. What now? ["And I think you still are."]

Yeah. But I hope I was not.

["How are you?"]

I gritted my teeth.

What the hell does he want?!

"Are you crazy? Aren't you the one who don't want to see me? Ikaw nga nagpalayas sa kin! Ikaw ang nagpalayo! Gag0 ka?" I calmly said but there's a hint of anger with my words.

["Alam ko."] He mocked.

What the?

"Yeah. I guess you're happy that you're getting in my nerve Lee." I said. He's really pissing me off. "What's with the chuckles anyway? You're happy Nola's gone?"

I said with my sarcastic voice.

“Or your happy that I can't be happy?”

[“What the eff are you talking about? Me happy about it?! Jesus! I never thought that you'll be this dense!”]

That's it. I don't want any talks.

“Tangna. Tigilan mo nalang ako Khris.”

I hung up his call and throw my phone away from me.

But fck it. Nung narinig ko ang pagkabagsak nun, tumayo ako para lumapit at kunin yun. Sht. I saw my phone off and unable to power up. Nasira ko. Ewan ko pero dahil dun nanghina ako.

Tangna.

Oo na. Umaasa ako..

Na may iba pang tatawag.

Putchang buhay 'to.

Pinilit kong ayusin ang phone ko pero ayaw niyang mabuhay. I hit the bed and sighed

deep. Ipinatong ko ang ulo ko sa headboard at nagisip. Nababaliw na ata ako.

Lumapit ako sa MP3 ko at nagshuffle ng kanta.

Most of the songs she sang are saved in here.

I bit my lower lip when I heard and imagined that she's the one actually singing it. I'm really hopeless. Ang sakit. Mas lalo akong nasasaktan pero bakit parang mas pinipili kong maging masokista?

6:38PM

I opened my eyes. Hindi ko napansin na nakatulog na pala ako. I removed my earphones and put the player in stop. Then I heard knocks on my door. I just stared at it. Still fooling myself I can open it by my eyes. Foolish Travis. You're really out of your mind.

“Travis, someone's here.”

I don't care.

“She wants to talk to you.”

**Dug. . .Dugdug. . .Dug. . **

She?

Who's she?

“She really wants to see you.”

I immediately got out of my bed and opened the door. My eyes wide open. I looked at my sister giving me her infamous sweet smile. She nodded and walked away.

My heart.

Ngayon lang ulit tumibok 'to ng ganito.

Ngayon lang ulit naging masigla.

Ngayon lang ulit naging masaya.

I nervously take my steps down the hall going to the living room. Step by step, my heart increases its palpitation. This suffocation of excitement. I'm feeling it once more.

Please.

I can feel it.

Andito siya.

Once I got my feet inside the living room. I froze for I saw a familiar figure. Electricity ran through my veins. Weird hotness began to explore my body.

I was about to take another step when she faced me.

“Hi T.”

Damn it, Travis.

“Oh. Hi Lyra.”

Tangna Travis. Hanggang kelan ka pa ba aasa? Hanggang kelan mo pa papaasahin ang sarili mo sa taong wala na? Kita mo kung pano umiyak sina Khris nung nalaman nila ang resulta ng operasyon. You were there to witness their pain.

And to let yourself be informed that it failed.

I looked at Lyra and shook my head. I really can't believe it. Mas lalo lang akong nasasaktan.

“How are you?”

Ewan ko pero biglang kumulo ang dugo ko, “Pinagtitripan niyo ba ako ni Khris?”

“H-ha?”

“Tama na! Utang na loob!”

Tinalikuran ko siya at bumalik sa kwarto ko. Napabuntong hininga nalang ako. Kung pede lang batukan ang sarili ko, kung pede lang magpabugbog, nagawa ko na. Please, sabihin niyo naman sakín na tigilan ko na ang kabaliwang 'to.

Coz I've been feeling this pain and it kills me.

Please make it stop.

Kinuha ko ulit ang phone ko at umaasang mabuhay 'to. Pinindot ko ng pinindot 'yung power key at bigla akong napangiti nung umilaw 'to. It was my first smile in days. I actually smiled and wonder if I'll be able to smile after it.

Pero nagulat ako nung biglang nag-ring ang phone ko.

Pero bakit nga ba ako umaasa?

I answered the call, **“Tama na Khris. Pede ba.”**

Pinatay ko ulit 'yun at lumabas ng kwarto. Nakita ko pa din 'dun si Lyra pero nilagpasan ko siya. Rinig ko ang tawag niya pero mas pinili kong talikuran. I got out and walk going to somewhere I hope I can have peace.

Naglakad ako at nakarating sa school, *my alma mater*.

Graduation was a fail.

Kahit nagkaroon ako ng awards, hindi pa rin masaya.

Wala na kasi siya nung mga panahong 'yun.

I shook my head and went straight to that room. That room where I actually felt her for the first time. That room where I felt the first paradise existing. Thinking of it makes my heart jump.

I opened the doors and found the same comforting ambiance like it used to be.

Papasok na sana ako nung biglang tumunog ang phone ko. Nakita ko ulit ang pangalan ni Khris kaya ni-reject ko ang tawag. Itinago ko ulit yun sa bulsa ko saka pumunta sa desk ko.

This place.

Umupo ako sa upuan ko nung tumunog na naman ang phone ko. Nakita ko lang ang screen at nakita na naman ang pangalan ni Khris. Ano bang kelangan niya?

Ni-reject ko 'yun pero tatawag na naman siya.

Reject ang ako ng reject.

But I gave up and just let it ring endlessly.

I looked at the wall clock, its 6:58PM.

Gabi na pero wala pa rin akong balak umuwi. I didn't bother if someone will find me here. Wala akong pakielam kung magalit sila. Pero kung pede lang sana dito muna ako. Ayoko munang umalis.

I can still hear Khris' calls.

Wala ba siyang balak tumigil?

Kinuha ko 'yung phone ko at para ireject.

Pero laking gulat ko nung makita ang ibang pangalan sa screen.

Nolae calling. . .

Bumilis na naman ang tibok ng puso ko. Na para bang gusto niya akong sakalin at mawalan ng hininga. Ta--tama ba 'tong nakikita ko? Pa--pangalan ni Norilae. Ang inaasahan kong tawag.

I pressed the green key, unable to speak.

["Sabi na nga ba sasagutin mo pag number niya ginamit ko e."]

"Sht." Napahampas ako sa lamesa ng wala sa oras. "Tangna Khris! Ano ba talagan kelangan mo!?"

["Edi ba 7PM na? Call time!"] He laughed again.

Bakit ba ang dali lang ng lahat para sa kanya?

"Stop calling! I don't need you!"

"Talaga?"

Nagulat ako nung marinig ang boses ni Khris na para bang malapit lang siya. I looked outside and found Khris smirking at me and holding the phone with his right. I deathly stare at him.

Pano niya nalaman na andito ako?

“Alis!”

Bigla naman niya akong tinawanan.

“Tama na Khris. Ayoko ng umasa. Pede ba?” I said with clear tone. I sighed. Gusto ko ng matigil 'to. Kaya kung pede. . . “Tama na.”

I stooped down and placed my head over my arms. Ayoko ng umasa. Ano pa bang kelangan kong gawin? Sawa na ako sa ganitong pakiramdam pero mukhang natutuwa pa sila sa pagiging ganito ko.

Tama na.

“Pasensya na pare.” Narinig kong sabi niya. “Gu-gusto ko lang naman malaman kung okay ka.”

“I'm not okay. Alis ka na.” Ibinaon ko ang mukha ko sa mga braso ko. Narinig ko ang paglapit sakín ni Khris.

“Sorry for being selfish. Sorry kung inilayo ko siya sayo.” He sounded sincere. “Natakot akong mawala ang isa sa espesyal na babae sa buhay ko. I carelessly made decisions without thinking of my bestfriend's feelings. I'm really sorry.”

“Well, Sorry din Khris pero di pa kita mapapatawag.”

Ako naman ang magiging selfish.

“I understand. Pero sorry talaga.”

Hindi ako umimik. Pero mas naramdaman ko ang paglapit ni Khris sakin. Papaalisin ko na sana siya nung naramdaman ko ang isang kamay na nakapatong sa kamay ko. I twitched

Dug. . . Dugdug. . . Dug..

Coffee.

T--that's not Khris' hand.

That's not Khris' perfume.

Tumingala ako at. . .

I saw a crying angel before me.

“Khris! Nakita mo na ba siya?!” Narinig ko ang boses ni Lyra. “Please make it fast! You can't make a blind wait!”

Natigilan ako.

“T--Travis, i--ikaw ba 'yan?”

She can't.

Having a very high glucose may give serious problems with your *heart, eyes, kidneys, nerves, gums and teeth.*

eyes.

“Please. Tell me that you're Travis.” She begged. Tumayo ako at hinawakan ang mukha niya. I stared at her opened eyes. “Travis.”

I can feel my arms' hair standing up.

“Norilae. . .”

And she put her arms around me.

“Travis!”

My heart beating so fast.

I hug her back.

She's here.

Andito si Norilae.

And I'm not letting go.

[END//]

A/N:

That's it!
End of my FIRST HELLO| BYE Series~
Lalalala~

And I must admit na PROLOGUE at EPILOGUE po ay ang pinaka-kahinaan ko. At hindi ko po alam kung pano ako magiimprove. Bigyan niyo naman ako advice. Desperada e!
Ajujuju~ >0<

Anyway. Hope you enjoyed reading this series/sequel? Can you give me your thoughts? I really appreciate comments/critics/suggestions. Keep it coming! And oh, may tanong ba kayo? Parts na naguluhan? Please let me know. Please with cherry on top~~ *0*

AND LASTLY,
THANKYOU READERS! Alam niyo na kung sino kayo. MARAMING THANK YOU!
SOBRANG SAYA KO. SUPPORTA at LAHAT, MARAMING MARAMING THANKYOU!

LOVEYOU GUYS!

-**KITINBABY** (Wattpad: www.wattpad.com/user/iamKitin)