

The Hated Snow Princess

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This is my third story! w00t! Anyway, this is about a girl named Yuki, she is a princess in the land of Snow. However, she is hated because she is the daughter of the cruel king. Please Enjoy!

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Chapter 1 - Princess Yuki	2
Chapter 2 - The Pervert and Breakfast For 3 Please!	4
Chapter 3 - The Surprising Truth- Good or Bad?	7
Chapter 4 - The Great Escape~ Part 1	9
Chapter 5 - The Great Escape~ Part 2	11
Chapter 6 - First Days Of Hell	12
Chapter 7 - Hana and Touji	15
Chapter 8 - Sparkly Stick	18

1 - Princess Yuki

PROLOGUE

Why must people always hate me? My father is the king, the all-powerful guy. I have NOTHING to do with all the cruelty the king of our land of Snow is causing, or his decisions for that matter. I wish I, the princess of our land of Snow, with lavender hair and grey eyes and ivory skin. I, the 14 year old princess of the Snow, could have been born a common girl. I wish I could sing my heart out to the world, which father has forbidden me to see. All I wish, is for happiness...

CHAPTER 1

"Yuki! Get out of bed!" the maid called. I can't take the wake up maid, no matter how much I tell her its my one day off, she'll keep pestering me. One time, she even took the mattress from under my body! The ungrateful little...

"I'll get up when I want, Kohiko!" I called back, waiting for her to do something completely over the top so I could have her fired. I heard her storming up the wooden stairs louder than an elephant stampede. Kohiko slammed open the door, revealing her red face, I could have sworn I saw smoke coming out of her ears.

"You will get up right now, Miss Yuki! I will not tolerate such behavior from the king's daughter!" Kohiko screamed. I heard her mumble something too but couldn't tell what she said. She continued screaming so I got up and walked to my big (and old) Victorian dresser, then looked at her with an annoyed expression indicating I would get up obediently.

I bet you thought that I would be a dark and anti-social person just because of the prologue! Well, your quite mistaken. As much as I hate being royalty, I still have friends. I mean, just because I don't enjoy that person in my life, doesn't mean I can't enjoy the other ones.

As for what I look like, I say nothing special, although the court advisers and other castle staff would disagree on a dime. Lavender hair and grey eyes, with matching ivory skin. I wish I looked differently so I could sneak out of the castle every once in a while, but lavender hair is really hard to not notice.

"I should wear a baby blue kimono today!" I say to my dresser, gently pulling out the exquisite kimono from the drawer. "Yeah, this is perfect for today," I whispered. I put it on with ease, and brushed my hair. The door was closed but Kohiko's incessant foot-tapping could be heard through it.

I went to the door and opened it, the foot-tapping stopped immediately and instead my arm was grabbed by the maid. "Time for your breakfast, princess Yuki," she told me. I simply sighed. Sometimes Kohiko seemed like a real you-know-what, but sometimes I could also hear caring in her voice.

This was only part of the reason I could not disobey her. I also couldn't disobey her because it was said that if you disobeyed someone like her, you would get struck with a curse to no love. I couldn't take not falling in love. Of course, some would say I had another reason. They would say I had a crush the size

of Japan on Kohiko's son, and must look and sound like a lady whenever he was around. I'll admit, he's cute, but I've seen better. (I think)

Kohiko sat me down in front of the pancakes and taiyaki. She hurried into the kitchen to fix her own breakfast. I ate quietly and looked around with each sweet bite. There was nothing to look at and wonder what it was because I had seen the dining room every day of my life. I sighed again with a sad feeling.

For some weird reason, I felt eyes on me. I turned every-which-way and still saw nothing. "Who's there?" I called. No answer. I stood up angrily. "Ugh, don't make me ask again!" this time I made it sound like an order.

I saw a shadow to my left and brought my right hand to grasp the dagger I had hid in the sash tied around my kimono. I looked coldly at the figure which finally stepped out from the shadows.

"I'm sorry princess Yuki," the guy said. I realized it was Kohiko's 14 and a half year old son. I could tell I got really red because when I reached up to my face, it was burning hot.

"Oh my gosh! I-I'm sorry Shika-san!" my voice had gone from 'obey-or-die' to 'what-will-I-do?!'. I hurried over to the rapidly bowing teen-servant. "Wh-what is it you w-wanted?" I asked. I don't know why I stuttered so much saying that, maybe I did like Shika-san. Oh no! What if I liked him a lot?!

Shika was short for Shikagano. But he likes me to just call him Shika-san. Heck, with a name that long, I liked the short-version too! Shika-san has nice, black, semi-spiked hair. Plus, he was tall. Tall as he is, he's not nearly as high as the lead court-official. That guy was nice too, but not nearly as nice as Shika-san.

"I came to give you your birthday present. It was not ready in time for your actual birthday, but I still wished to give it to you," Shika-san said while he bowed again. I blushed a bit, he had never given me a gift before. I took the neatly-wrapped present from him so he wouldn't have to bow any longer.

He stood up straight revealing his features. He didn't look cute today, he looked handsome. Wait, I shouldn't be thinking that about my friend. "Th-thank you," I blushed. I couldn't help it! Who could help it? One look at Shika-san and any girl would blush! I still don't like him like that, though.

"Your welcome," he replied with a smile. "Well, I'll get in big trouble if I don't get back to work, so see you later!" With that, Shika-san walked off with a happy spring in his steps. I sighed and held my hand to my forehead. I must have been sick, I'll check with Kohiko if she's not too busy later.

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Well, that's it for the first chappie. Hope everyone liked it!

I've already typed the next few chapters so updates should be pretty quick.

Read&Review please

## 2 - The Pervert and Breakfast For 3 Please!

I finished breakfast and took the dishes to the kitchen so they could be washed. That day would be busy, I could already tell. I took the present up to my room and set it on my dresser. "Maybe I'll take a walk with Mero today," I said happily to the dresser.

Mero was my fox, and a very cute one at that. She and I had been together since I was five, and nine years later we still got along pretty well. She liked to squeak at me for no apparent reason, and would turn 'demon-child' whenever she sensed someone was not as honest as they said. This is why I take Mero with me everywhere.

I strolled out onto the castle steps looking for Mero's fluffy orange tail. Out of nowhere she hopped onto me from behind with her haunches set on my shoulders and her paws comfortably resting on my head. Mero liked to do this often as her way of getting out of walking. Fortunately for me, she wasn't that heavy, so carrying her was easy.

"How about the village today?" I asked the fox. Mero barked in agreement and lightly swatted my back with her tail like I was a horse. "That won't make me go any faster, just so you know," I told her bluntly when she continued her swatting. Mero merely whined and ceased moving her tail.

When we reached the gates of the castle, I was stopped by a guard. "Princess! You know as well as me that you must have an escort out," he called down to me. I sighed in annoyance while Mero whined too.

"But just this once, please?" I called back. He shook his head. I sighed again and motioned to a nearby guard to follow me at a distance. The guard stayed back about 30 yards while we walked into town. I earned a lot of cold stares from the townspeople, I couldn't blame them though. Most of them hated me because I was the daughter of the cruel king, they thought I was just like him. I waved to the kids on the street, but when the children tried to wave back, their mothers or fathers would smack their hands down and whisper to them loudly about "She's a demon girl, don't wave at her!" and "Wave at her and she'll order that fox to attack you!".

I smiled sorrowfully and continued on. I looked back a few times to check on the guard, he was still there following me with a serious look on his face. "Some guards take their jobs too seriously," I muttered to myself.

The walk was cut short when I was stopped by a man from walking into a candy store, he didn't even work there! The man that ran the place was telling him to let me in, we knew each other well. But the man blocking me was persistent so I waved goodbye to the owner sadly and started my journey home.

I passed the guard on my way home. "Did he bother you, princess?" the guard asked quietly.

"Not at all," I replied. I didn't want the man to get arrested, after all, I had seen he had a son.

I was back in my room after dinner, finally. I hadn't been told a local samurai was visiting for dinner. It was obvious he was a suitor. I didn't like him much, plus he was almost 25 years old! I don't know why father even allowed him access into our home, he must have seen my faces every time that man cooed over my features, must have heard all the comments on my body.

So I walked back up to my room happy that the suitor was gone. I hope he'll never come back. Shika-san was in the room as well as Kohiko, standing against the wall behind the suitor. He would make funny faces whenever the suitor would try to tell a joke so that I would laugh. I will thank him, but with what? Ugh, life is starting to get too complicated.

"Hey Kohiko?" I called out. The maid entered the room.

"Yes, princess?" Kohiko asked sternly. "Is something wrong?"

"No," I answered. Kohiko grunted as if she was angry at me for calling her in for no apparent reason.

"Then what is it?!" she asked irritated.

"Thank you for being my maid," I said softly. After a few moments, I heard Kohiko walk out of the room. I was smiling to myself. I really don't know why I did that. After that, I crawled into bed and fell asleep, the day had been a long one anyway.

The next morning was a lot like the previous one at the beginning of this story. Kohiko yelled at me for being lazy, saying that an ordinary princess would be up without being asked or forced out.

"Yeah, yeah," I teased. "You say that, but do you really mean it?" Kohiko bore a surprised expression.

"Of course I meant it!" Kohiko loudly replied. "Why wouldn't I mean it?! I mean everything I say!"

"Okay, whatever you say, Kohiko-chan," I smiled when I said this. I could tell Kohiko was shocked when I added the '-chan' suffix to her name. I thought I saw a slight blush form on her face, but it was probably a figment of my imagination. I asked her to have the chefs make sticky rice with teriyaki chicken for me, but make a lot. She left the room not knowing I had a surprise.

Somehow, I remembered that today was the day I gained Kohiko as my personal maid. I also wanted Shika-san to be there so we could have breakfast together. I went to father to ask permission for both of them to eat with me at the same table. After a long argument, he finally gave in. I thought I heard the floor squeak a few times but I think it was just Mero playing her cunning little tricks.

I sighed happily while I walked to the dining room because the aroma of food cooking had finally reached me. "I wonder if they know how much more to make? Oh well, nothing can go wrong today," I cooed at my own idea. "I wonder what it's like to be a maid?" Hey, I don't know what being a maid is like, I should try it someday.

I looked at the huge standing clock as I passed by, it read 11:35 am. I realized the food would be done in 15 minutes so I thought I should go get Shika-san and take him to breakfast.

I finally found Shika-san in the rose garden helping out the new gardener shape the plants into perfect hearts since it was almost Valentine's Day and White Day. I told the man I needed Shika-san for a while and noticed the old man wink at Shika-san, like he thought we were a couple or something! I put on a fake smile to mask my annoyed feeling. Sometimes I can't take things like this. I guess I can't take a lot of things.

So we made it to the dining room just in time to an angry Kohiko who practically interrogated me as to why I was late and why I had Shika-san.

"I can't tell you! Just sit down with Shika-san while I go to the kitchen real quick!" I told her. She could tell I wouldn't budge and accepted her defeat, taking a seat across from her son.

I rushed into the kitchen and told the chefs to get the food on plates and take them out to Kohiko and Shika-san. The chefs strolled out in a straight line while I followed behind. The two looked very surprised when I smiled cheerfully at them. The food was placed in front of us and I shooed the chefs away.

"What is this Princess Yuki?!" Kohiko asked sternly. I merely smiled cheerfully to her, then turned my smile to Shika-san.

"What does it look like? We're eating breakfast together!" I replied happily. I took my pair of chopsticks and invited a reluctant Shika-san to do the same. Shika-san hesitated but then started to eat his food as well.

Now it was just me and Shika-san eating like no tomorrow and staring at Kohiko. She had started eating a few minutes back but was eating like there was no today! She barely had 4 rice grains in her mouth at a time! Let alone the delicious chicken she had barely touched that I was eyeing.

Suddenly, a huge BOOM!!!! Could be heard from the castle grounds and we dropped all our chopsticks and ran to the entrance doors to see what was going on.

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Okay, second chappie declared-DONE!!

I realize this is slow-paced, but the next one will have some funny parts I promise!

Please Review

3 - The Surprising Truth- Good or Bad?

A/N: Well, here is the third chapter! I am a few chapters ahead of schedule, so updates are still going to every few days! =D I'm starting to get a little writer's block, but I'm still speeding along. Ok, just a FYI to those who care. BYE!! Read and Review PLEASE!!!!

We hurried to the end of the hall and peeked through a window. I got so angry I growled. Out there, making horribly loud BOOM!'s and BANG!'s with fireworks, was the perverted samurai suitor from the night before.

"What does he want?!" I shouted to no one in particular. My angry fists were closed so tight that my knuckles had turned white. I turned around, fixed my composure to look surprised for the samurai, and shuffled out of the entrance doors. Seeing me (and my body which he must be smitten over or something) the samurai waved. I waved back with the same surprised expression.

"Hello sir," I said through clenched teeth. The samurai hopped down from his horse and passed his firework launching people. The man bore a stupid grin on his face. The pervert strolled over to me and took my hands in his. I just knew that my face had the most grossed-out look on it. Then the man kissed my hands!

I snatched my now slobbery hands away from the samurai. "YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO--," I began. But I couldn't finish my rage-shout because the samurai had stood up from his bow abruptly and pushed his hand over my mouth to silence me. But that wasn't the worst of it. The next thing he did threw me off guard completely.

"I shall love you foreveerrrr my geishaa princessss!" the man started. *"And we can be together forever!!!!"* Not only could the guy not write a song, he couldn't SING it either.

I shoved his hand away from my mouth wearing the most angry expression ever worn. "GUARDS!" I screamed. Guards from everywhere rushed over and man-handled the man back to his horse. I was laughing on the inside but knew I couldn't show it.

"A most peculiar man, Princess Yuki," I heard Kohiko say. After that, I heard her shuffle off, probably to tell father the events that had just happened. I sighed in annoyance and watched a trembling Mero make her shaky tracks over to me. I bent down so she could hop onto my shoulders again. I saw the samurai looking at me with a hint of lust in his eyes and inwardly cringed.

"Uh, Shika-san?" I called to the teen-servant, my eyes still on the samurai. Shika-san stepped forward to my side to show he was listening. "Will you go with me to the samurai?", I asked. Shika-san nodded in response and we both (Mero is still there) started to walk down the castle steps together.

As we walked towards the man on his horse, I noticed his face wearing a surprised expression when he saw that I wasn't alone. But that wouldn't stop him from apologizing like a whipped dog! Nope!

"I am terribly sorry princess," the man said with a 'sorry' expression. He did have a truthfully sorry face, but I couldn't let him get off with something as pathetic as that. Now it was interrogation time! I put on a fake smile for the guy.

"Who are you, exactly? I know you had dinner with me and my father last night, but that's it," I asked. Who knows, I might need his name for 'a WANTED' poster later on. A glimmer of hope could be seen on his face.

"I am Kojinamurusa!" he answered. Just how many people are going to have long names like that?! "But to you, Princess Yuki," Kojinamurusa continued. "I am just Koji! I'll always be Koji! Just for you! KO-"

"ALRIGHT!" its official, I had reached boiling point with this guy. "Now Ko-ji, what do you want? Do you need help or something?" I asked Koji irritated. He smiled with delight like he had been waiting for me to ask that. I didn't think that was a good thing.

"Ahh, Princess Yuki. Beautiful Princess Yuki..." Koji started with a serene expression. I glared at him to get on with it, I'm pretty sure that prediction from the previous paragraph is true. "I just wanted to meet my future wife is all!" Koji told me excitedly. Kojinamurusa's words hit like a bolt of lightning aimed directly at me.

"Wha-what?!" I replied stunned. "What are you talking about you disgusting samurai?!" My words sounded like venom in my ears, which was fine with me as long as those poison words were sent to Koji. The samurai looked stunned, like he thought I couldn't be like that, well was he in for a treat!

"He is telling the truth, Yuki," came a deep voice from behind me. I turned to see father, the almighty king, staring down at me with his beady eyes. Kohiko was standing behind father, I had started to shake, I couldn't believe all this was being thrust onto me now of all times.

"But it c-cant be! I-its not true!" I choked out angrily. I was near tears, and my body was shaking so violently that Mero had to jump off. I felt Shika-san's hand touch my arm, it was warm, and it soothed my shaking a little.

"Yuki, I want to see you in my private study, now," Father said firmly. I couldn't believe this all was coming at me on a day that I planned to be happy even though I would be stuck in the castle inventing stupid games after breakfast anyway. Father began to walk up the castle steps to his private study, I followed him warily feeling everyone else's eyes on my back.

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Well, third chappie done. I re-read it, and I think its pretty good.

Thank you, until next time!

Please review.



## 4 - The Great Escape~ Part 1

**A/N: Well, yet another chappie. This is no longer a "new" story. \*tears\* I am so happy you guys like this, so keep loving it! Hope this is good. R&R please!!**

Me and father had made it to the private study. I sat down while he took his seat behind a large desk with papers scattered all over it. Tears still slid their way down my face silently. "Yuki," father called my name like a dog. I nodded slightly to show him I was ready for whatever he was going to say. "Me and your mother... both agreed to this when you were born," he told me. I winced when he mentioned my mother.

Mom had died a few years ago when she was attacked by assassins on her way to the Konaro kingdom to visit my aunt who ruled there. The assassins had first robbed my mother and her party, and then went back to kill them. The only reason I'm still happy is because I know mother wouldn't want me to grieve too much.

"Another thing we both decided, was that you would go away from our kingdom to a special palace in the mountains..." Father paused, but a forceful glance he gave me told me he would continue. "You are being sent there to be a part of the wedding plans." My shaking had nearly subsided, and I was silently building enough courage to speak to the tyrant of the Snow Kingdom.

"But... what if I don't want to?" I managed to squeak out just loud enough for him to hear. He raised one of his menacing eyebrows which were questioning me without him saying a word. "Wh-what if... I don't want to get married to the samurai?" I asked all too nervously. Sometimes, I thought my father was a wolf, a wolf who could smell your fear, and all your other emotions. It felt like he could get the answer out of me doing nothing but look at me.

"Well, Yuki, if you don't want to be married to him, that doesn't matter at all. This was decided before your time, and it cannot be changed," he told me sternly while standing from his chair. "Besides, who else would you marry?" With that, my tyrant of a father, left the room. Two maids came up to me and guided me out of the private study.

"Are you all right, Miss Yuki?" one of them asked when we were almost there to my own bedroom. I nodded and rubbed my eyes for the thousandth time, attempting to halt the flow of salty tears. "Its alright Miss Yuki, I'm sure everything will turn out ok," the other maid also reassured me as we came to my door.

"Thank you," I whispered to them, both the maids bowed and left quickly as I shut the door and collapsed on my bed. I knew I was in for a night of no sleep, and a lot of tossing and turning, so I didn't bother to get under the covers. I sat up and leaned against the wall, hugging my knees as if in one last attempt to isolate myself from my father and Koji.

A knock at my door jolted me back to reality. I kept to my isolated position. "Come in," I called out. The door opened revealing Kohiko. She shut the door behind her and shuffled her way rather quickly to me.

“Yuki,” Kohiko said. I was shocked that Kohiko didn’t address me how she usually does. “Pack your things,” she ordered. Kohiko reached behind her to reveal three small sacks, which she handed to me. I reached out to take them, and Kohiko tugged me off of the bed and over to my dresser, opening various drawers and stuffing clothes into two of the sacks.

“What are you doing?” I asked, it was going by in a blur. Was Kohiko helping me escape? Why? Why would she risk her life to get me out?! “You shouldn’t do this! Stop! You cant do this!” I yelled to her. Kohiko payed no attention and continued stuffing clothes into the large bags. I dropped the bags and Kohiko picked them up and tied a rope around them to keep them closed securely.

“I cant answer just yet, now come. We need to pack enough food,” Kohiko told me in a ‘hurry-it-up’ tone. She started to walk out the door so I ran out after her, still in a daze. It only took 5 minutes to get down to the kitchens, where I was surprised to find Shika-san there waiting for us.

Kohiko walked right up to him and they both started shoving food into the small bag. I must have looked stupid every time Shika-san stole a hurried glance at me, standing there dumbfounded. I slowly came into realization, they were indeed helping me escape. I could feel tears rising again, half happiness and half regret for letting them do this.

The two servants finished and tied the food bag to the other two bags. They rushed to me and handed me the sacks, and started to run with me towards the doors. Somehow, we got through the entrance doors unnoticed. Me, Shika-san, and Kohiko ran as quiet as possible down the path to giant gates.

“We wont get past the gates, what about the guards?” I asked nervously, seeing Kohiko make a subtle glance at Shika-san.

“Don’t worry, Yuki,” Shika-san told me. He didn’t address me formally either. (for some reason, it made me feel happy) “We have a plan.”

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**I have a feeling, this is shorter than the other, which I apologize for.**

**I really wanted to leave a cliffhanger, if you have any cool and awesome ideas, tell me!!!**

**Was this good?**

**Review PLEASE!!!**

## 5 - The Great Escape~ Part 2

**A/N: This is really short, I had more to it, but it didnt go along with the escape. Next chapter will be called 'First Days of Hell' or something. As usual, Read & Review!!**

I watched a faint smirk pass over Kohiko's face. Our small group ran up to an idle cherry blossom tree. Kohiko slipped a dark brown cloak from behind her sash. She handed it to me signaling me to put it on. I did so slowly and watched on edge as Kohiko ran out from behind the tree and up to the gates, where she met a guard that stepped from the bushes.

I couldn't hear what they said, but Kohiko gave a subtle nod in my and Shika-san's direction. This must have been a signal to come out because Shika-san pushed the hood of the cloak over my head and then grabbed my hand to lead me out to the gates.

"Keep your head down, Yuki," Shika-san warned in a cautious voice. As we neared the gates and that opened and were passing through, all the guards were giving us cheerful faces.

"Good luck, brave one, were happy you can get out of that wretched job!" the guard Kohiko had been conversing with shouted to me. Me and Shika-san passed Kohiko, she told me a quick 'farewell' and Shika-san continued to tug at my arm.

"Aren't you coming?!" I asked, the sound of desperation clear in my voice. She shook her head 'no'. I understood then and everything that had took place that night started to sink in. "Kohiko! Don't leave me!" I yelled out to her with a higher level of desperation, I was still being dragged further away from the castle. Tears streamed down my face when Kohiko turned her back and the gates closed with a thud. It felt like she was deserting me, which I knew she wouldnt do. "No...", was all I could whisper before finally giving in and following Shika-san willingly.

That night I figured out why I didn't want Kohiko to leave me. Kohiko had become the mother figure I needed right when I needed it. She had taken the place of mom, she and Shika-san had become my true family since the moment I met them. Sure, I had father, an aunt and uncle and 3 cousins, but when could I depend on them be there for me?! Probably not until after the need for them to love and care for me had expired. But Kohiko cared, her and Shika-san both, and I could never thank them enough...

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I know this is short, murder me. But hey, it was good, and the next part is going to come in the next 3 minutes or so anyway.

Hehe, so, you like? I thought adding a little description of the 'mother-to-daughter' bond Kohiko and Yuki share would be good as a small sideplot.

Please Review!

6 - First Days Of Hell

**A/N: Yay! Next chappie! Yea, no reviews last chapter but that's ok. I'll update anyways. ^_^
Please Read and Review!**

It had officially been 2 days since I was sneaked out of the castle. Word must have spread fast that I, the Snow Princess had vanished with out a trace because every town we had passed through was abuzz with the subject.

I still wore the cloak, and at one resting place, people were giving me suspicious looks. Truthfully, I miss home, and mostly because Mero is still there. I couldn't really sleep at night, worrying what could have happened to her.

However, whenever my mind wanders to the miserable subject, I always figure that once Mero found out I had disappeared without her, she would escape the castle and come to find me. Hey, it keeps my hopes up, and I'll ask Shika-san if we can take a day off, to see if Mero really does show up.

Were on our third town already! I'm seeing more of our country I would have ever seen cooped up in that castle, so I have been cooperative. Shika-san doesn't order me around, but he doesn't let me slack off at all. Our breaks for lunch are 15 minutes. Sleep time is strictly 2 hours, and I'm starting to get into the habit of getting up early and on my own. Kohiko would probably be proud, but she wouldn't say it.

I have to admit, its really hard finding food. Last night, Shika-san taught me how to catch small game like rabbits and small birds. I was trying, I really was, but couldn't find it in me to stab the poor robin which was squirming around in my grasp. So I was sent back to camp to start a fire, while Shika-san fetched some other prey and cooked us rabbit. It didn't taste good, I remembered father once telling me it was an acquired taste.

Before we entered a small town, Shika-san told me we were heading towards a village in the mountains that only a select few on the outside knew about. What worries me is that he never goes into detail about what we'll do there. All I know is that its high in the mountains, barely anybody knows about it, and people there live a hidden life. Its very annoying. I almost yelled at him once, but decided if I did it would seem like I didn't trust him anymore.

I didn't wear the cloak anymore, but instead had to **DYE MY HAIR** to cover up my unusual lavender colored hair. My hair was now a very light brown, which lets just say isn't one of my favorite colors anymore. Also, Shika-san cut my hair so it that the longest strand of hair reached to my shoulder. Since my hair had always been naturally short and only reached to the bottom of my shoulderblades before we escaped the castle, he didn't have to cut that much. My bangs were always shoulder-length, so they weren't butchered at all.

Me and Shika-san entered the village and split up, me for supplies like hunting weapons and medical items such as healing herbs and bandages. I had half-a-mind to question him as to why we needed to get medical equipment, but decided otherwise and trotted of towards a street specifically marked 'traveling supplies'. Strange, ne?

"Ho-hum, ho-hum..." I mumbled miserably. I had found all hunting weapons and even bandages, but no healing herbs or other medical plants! I reached the end of the street and checked to see if I was still on 'traveling supplies'. I was. So I made another trip down the street, and about 8 other trips too, still to no avail.

I was starting to get mad right about then. "WHY DOES THIS STREET HAVE EVERYTHING BUT

MEDICAL PLA--" I was about to say 'plants', but was cut short when I heard something even more annoying behind me.

"Medical herbs, get your medical herbs here! Picked today!" it was an old man advertising for those STUPID little- well, you get the idea. I got really mad, but more at myself than at the old man and his wife running the stand. Throwing my hands dramatically into the air, I scurried over to the booth. Indeed, there was a huge sign indicating 'Medical Herbs and Plants'. Right about then I started wondering if it got there magically and that I was under a curse.

I chose a few and paid the woman, leaving before I made even more of a fool of myself. Shika-san had told me he would be in the market before we split up, so I walked, or rather ran, towards the street this time specifically marked 'market'.

After running down three quarters of the street, I finally found Shika-san. He was choosing the fruit carefully and throwing them into a bag. I saw he had a lot of other full bags as well, my mouth started watering as I imagined that night's feast. So, to make my small entrance, I walked nonchalantly over and waited until he paid. Shika-san saw me and smiled as he walked over.

I'm pretty sure I blushed that time, and I felt like punching myself for it. Lately, I've been noticing that Shika-san gets more and more handsome. As I said a long time before, he was NOT cute anymore. His hair isn't semi-spiked anymore either, it's grown down to his chin-length so now Shika-san keeps it in a hair-tie that I loaned him. He looks kind of funny, and I've gotten into the habit of calling him 'Pineapple-Head' because that just what he looks like now, a well-toned body, (stop it stop it! Cannot talk about him like that!) with a pineapple on it.

He's gotten a lot taller too, but denies it and says I'm getting tall too. Ha! I wish. I've probably grown, what, two inches?! That would make me 5' 4" so sounds good.

0o00o0

That night, and much to my dismay, we had no feast. In fact, we split half of a rabbit and had a small plum each. Strangely, we lost one of our blankets, and so me and Shika-san had to share the last one that night. I felt my cheeks a few times and I was burning hot, probably from blushing so much when Shika-san mentioned we would be sharing the blanket. I think I almost fainted! Thankfully, I didn't, that wouldn't have been good... my mind had gone crazy with the "wake up time, Yuki" possibilities.

The next morning I woke up a few minutes later than usual. I had gotten changed behind one of these tall bushes that seem to grow everywhere and produce small berries. If your thinking "Why would she do that? I mean, its got to be cold in a land of Snow!!". Well, your only partly correct. Yes, it is cold, but I've grown up here, and I can go out in a short skirted and sleeveless kimono and still be comfortably warm! Impressive, don't you think?

Shika-san had declared that day a rest day, noticing that I had been coughing quite a lot and that I had to breathe through my mouth most of the morning. I'm grateful because now I can wash all those dirty clothes! And come to think of it, if Mero was tailing me, she might find me soon! If she figured out that I was gone the morning after, I know she would be only a couple days behind me. With her animal instincts I can also be reassured that she'll have dinner every night.

Shika-san had departed from the campsite around noon, leaving me to wash the clothes in a small mossy creek nearby. It was somewhat painful to do so, 1) never having done the task in my 14 years of living, and 2) because after awhile, your back is strained bending over the chilling water trying to not slip in.

Luckily, I didn't slip, although I came pretty close at one time. '*Wonder when Shika-san is going to be back,*' I thought to myself as I hung the damp clothes on tree branches to dry. Leaning back against the tree, I inhaled a deep breath, holding it in a few moments before exhaling. I was truly tired. '*I hope we*

get to that mountain village soon, this is getting really tiring,' I thought to myself.

I leaned forward away from the tree and watched the mountains. "Looks about one more day and we'll be at the foot of the mountain," I told myself. The crunching of leaves tore my attention away from the mountain and to my left.

The sound stopped and the person or thing never came out, which made me very suspicious. Thanks to that hideous wig, if the people weren't Shika-san, it wouldn't be so easy to figure out who I was.

There's no way to hide my grey eyes, which are very rare in my country.

Whispers could be heard from behind the tall bushes. Sometimes they were excited, sometimes very serious. I knew that it couldn't have been Shika-san, because he would have stepped right out instead of prolonging my confusion...

~~~

Hee, yea! Cliffy again!

Hehe, hope you liked it! Yes, first bad days indeed...

The part with the market and the 'traveling supplies' aisle, was intended to sound like a bad shopping experience. Y'know, like how sometimes you go to WalMart and you cant find something and right when you least expect it, it jumps out at you. (...and you get super pissed?) (... you know you do. dont deny it!) (...it's nothing to be ashamed of)

Lolz Review please!

## 7 - Hana and Touji

“Excuse me!” I yelled to whoever was there. The whispers ceased immediately. “It would be better for you if you stepped out from there,” I continued. There was a hesitated shuffling from behind the bushes, and I saw a foot poke out. Then, the whole body of the young black haired boy followed. He was probably only nine, dressed in a shirt and dirty shorts along with some sandals..

A small girl with brown hair followed. She looked around eight, dressed in a cute but dirty blue skirt and gray shirt, wearing her own worn-down sandals. I felt my gaze soften at the sight, and I motioned for them to come over to my place. The boy smiled and the girl took his hand. They both raced over to me happy as can be. I smiled at them, and the two sat down.

“Hello there,” I said.

“Hi!” The children said in unison. As I looked closer at them, I noticed they were almost twins!

“What are your names?” I asked. They looked at me for a moment.

“I’m Hanako, but you can call me Hana! And this is Touji!” the girl named Hanako told me, pointing at her and Touji. “What’s your name?” she asked with her black pools of eyes, full of curiosity.

“Me?” I asked playfully pointing to myself. Hanako nodded. “I’m...,” I hesitated. *‘What should I do?!...,’* I thought. After thinking it over, I came to a decision.

“I’m Yuki!” I said happily. Hana’s face lit up.

“Do you like to go and see kami-sama too?!” she asked enthusiastically. I nodded with a smile. “Want to go with me and Touji-nii to see kami-sama today?” I tapped my finger on my chin playfully.

“Well, my clothes are hanging here to dry. Plus, I’m waiting for someone,” I told her, Hana looked crestfallen.

“Will you be here tomorrow?” she asked.

“I don’t know. Me and the person I’m waiting for are traveling around everywhere,” I told her. Hana had a sad face. “Hmmm... but maybe when the person I’m traveling with gets back, we can all go look at kami-sama!” I told her.

“Yay!” Touji and Hana cheered in unison. Just then Shika-san stepped into our area. He looked shocked when he noticed the two children. Shika-san looked at me questioningly and I smiled. It seemed to reassure him because he walked over to me, Hana, and Touji.

“Hello,” Shika-san greeted them hesitantly.

“Hi! Are you the one traveling with Yuki-nee?” Hana asked. Awww, how nice. She thinks of me as a big sister! Kawaii! (cute) Shika-san nodded, setting down a bag hopefully filled with food.

“Yay! Will you come to see kami-sama with us? PLEASE?!” she begged. Shika-san was startled but agreed, placing our things high in the tree. When everything was secure high enough to his liking, our group of four started to walk through the woods.

“Yuki...” Shika-san called quietly. “Who are they?”

“They are Hana and Touji, who accidentally found our campsite. Is there a problem?” I asked.

“No, its just that the girl seems to have become attached to you. We cant have anyone tagging along. Especially if they have parents,” Shika-san told me. I nodded.

I had become a little ticked at Shika-san, talking about such a dark subject in the middle of our happy walk! “Shika-san, I know what you mean. Lets just have a little fun today!” I told him. He sighed. Hana and Touji were standing ten feet in front, waiting for us. I jogged to them and we talked and laughed until the end of our walk, Shika-san trailing from behind.

After a few hours, most likely around 7:00 pm, for the sun was setting, we ended our walk. “Okay guys, this has to be goodbye,” I told Hana and Touji. Hana became sad, so did Touji. “Aw, don’t be sad. It was fun, right?” I asked.

“Yea...” Hana whispered. Suddenly, she burst into tears. “I d-don’t want t-to go!” she exclaimed. I bent down and hugged her. Hana cried for a few minutes more before stopping.

“Its alright, Hana-chan,” I told her softly in attempt to make her feel better. Touji hugged Hana as she started to cry again. “I’m sure your mom and dad are waiting for you at home right now,” I continued. It didn’t work, and Hana just cried harder.

Meanwhile, lets check in with Shika-san who just stood there watching like a heartless, EMOTIONLESS-- well, he stood there looking dumbfounded. A few times it appeared he was going to say something comforting to Hana, but he didn’t.

“Speaking of which, where are your mom and dad?” I asked, pulling away. This question had racked my mind ever since I first saw them. I mean, why would someone leave two children outside to wander into the forest?!

“Mom-(hic)ma, and d-(hic)daddy died,” Hana said through hiccups. I looked questioningly at Touji, who nodded “yes”. They had lost their parents too. Okay, so only my mom died, but ever since then it seemed as though dad had died with her, only living on the outside. This was when he started to rule with such coldness.

I looked at Shika-san, my eyes pleading to let the two stay.

“Yuki, I need to talk to you,” Shika-san told me sternly. “Alone,” he ordered. I reluctantly pulled away from the two kids and followed him to the other side of the clearing where they could not hear us.



“We had an agreement. You showed me that you understood; we cant have any more people, let alone children!” Shika-san told me. It kind of felt like Shika-san was acting like Father when he would order me around. I cant really explain it, but right then, I despised Shika-san.

“They have no parents! Are we supposed to just LEAVE them?!” I argued. I would not hold anything back, I didn’t regret arguing with Shika-san, he had to understand. “They have nowhere to go! I cant let that pass, especially if I have to rule this very country one day!”

Shika-san looked completely shocked that I had talked back to him in such a way, I never yelled at anyone unless they had SEVERELY ticked me off(which was rare enough, I’m quite patient).

“Yuki, we cant, I don’t know if the place we are to live in will accept them. Me and mom only arranged for me and you,” Shika-san replied. At this, I was at a loss of what to say.

“Please...,” I pleaded one last time. I stared at Shika-san; I saw his eyes falter with what seemed as guilt, but it was only for a second. It was silence for at least three minutes before Shika-san spoke.

“We’ll see how far we can get them...,” Shika-san said in a barely audible whisper. I could feel my eyes light up with happiness. I jumped at him and gave him a hug before going back over to the two orphans. I think I saw a tinge of pink gracing his cheeks in the moonlight, but I cant be sure.

“Hey...,” I called to them, at Hana’s side yet again. Both of the children looked at me. “Were going to the mountains. You can come with us if you want,” I told them.

Hana hugged me, Touji hugging my leg. “Arigato, Yuki-nee!” Hana exclaimed. I stood up with her still in my arms and looked thankfully at Shika-san. I saw a smile flash, but it disappeared just as soon as it came.

Hana and Touji detached themselves from me and bear-hugged a startled Shika-san. He was frozen for a moment, but then gave in. Shika-san pulled away a few seconds after-- much to the displeasure of the two children.

“But you need to earn your stay!” he told them, trying to sound stern. Hana and Touji nodded and saluted him in a playful way. I laughed and began to help Shika-san retrieve our things from the tree.

Shika-san started to cook a something over the fire, along with apples. While the thing was cooking over the fire, Shika-san pulled out a blanket from the bag he had brought earlier. So when everyone went to bed, me and Hana shared a blanket, while Shika-san and Touji shared the new one.

I’m not mad at Shika-san anymore. It would appear he does have a heart as well as emotions. Jeez, the amount of things I have to repay Shika-san and Kohiko for sure are building up.

**A/N: Yes, you hate me for not updating in forever, dont you???**

## 8 - Sparkly Stick

### Chapter 8

The next morning I woke up to smell breakfast being made. Looking around, I saw Shika-san already starting to pack things. Occasionally, he would stir the leftover meat. I greeted him and stretched.

“Want some help?” I offered. Shika-san gave me a quick nod, so I resigned myself to stirring breakfast. By the time Hana and Touji had woken up, breakfast was made and set into the bowls with spoons.

“Wow!” the two shouted. I watched as Hana gulped down her soup like a ravenous vulture (much like the night before), while Touji ate slower and... less messy I guess you could say.

Shika-san finished the packing and grabbed his own bowl. I had finished a few minutes before, so I took interest in trying to find ways to climb up a nearby tree. I failed immensely each time, falling on my last try.

Shika-san had bolted towards me and caught me in the nick of time. It was a... strange position to say the least. Shika-san's arms were snaked around my waist and back and my arms were wrapped around his neck for balance. I blushed as red as a tomato, as did Shika-san. It seemed as if he was leaning closer, of in his own world, forgetting that two CHILDREN were nearby.

I felt a tug at my sleeve, turning to see Hana. “You know...,” she began. “You and Shika-sama are like a married couple!” Hana finished with a wide smile. Shika-san nearly dropped me and stood as I stumbled and found balance.

“Wh...what?” I heard Shika-san stutter. I looked at him through the corner of my eye; he was frozen in the middle of standing, looking ready to faint.

“You and Yuki-nee-sama act like a married couple!” Touji repeated for Hana. A torrent of very, very awkward silence followed for the next five minutes, and I couldn't help but break it.

“W-well, I'm sure its not like that... r-right?” I stuttered as I stood up, nervously starting to rub the back of my neck.

“But, it IS like th-,” Hana started.

“Time to go,” Shika-san said out of nowhere. He gathered our things and was off at a running pace before any of us could say ‘aye-aye, cap'n!’. I grabbed the hands of the two children and raced after him, onto another day of our journey. Hopefully the last day of walking. Walking, walking, walking....

(OH GREAT! I WAS SO LOOKING FORWARD TO IT!! .....NOT!!!)

0o00o0

“Th-thank kami-sama....,” I panted. I suppose that you, the awesome listener of my crazy story, would like to know why I am so horribly tired. Well, before the flashback begins, allow me to bring you up to date at where we are.

Remember that mountain I was looking at just the day before? Well, at noon sharp today, we have finally made it to the foot of that very mountain. I’m not the only tired one; Shika-san, Hana, and Touji appear to be just as tired as me. So, on with the flashback!

Begin

Shika-san has FINALLY slowed down. Thank kami-sama! He stopped, interestingly, in front of another very small village, consisting of about 10 houses and a market. Although its so small, it sure was beautiful. All the houses looked antique, but Shika-san told me that the homes had stood for more than 100 years. Amazing, ne?

“Yuki, we must keep going. I’m sure we’ll be able to come back here after we get settled in a few days,” Shika-san told me. I was currently investigating a peculiar little shop, filled with strange incense sticks and small toys. Hana had followed me in, she started to pick things up.

“Hana, you cant do that,” I warned her. She gave me a nod, putting the item back and withdrawing her hands.

“Come on, Yuki,” Shika-san told me again.

“Yea! Come on Yuki-nee-sama! I wanna see the mountains!” Touji commented.

“Okay,” I replied with a smile. I retrieved Hana, and our group started on its way again. Hana seemed nervous, fidgeting quite a bit. I was going to ask her what was wrong, but figured it was some silly kid thing and shoved the thought to the back of my mind.

.....Boy, was I wrong.....

We were a whole 30 yards from the village when we heard the screams of a mob coming towards us.

All heads in our group turned. My jaw dropped, it seemed the whole of the village POPULATION was running after us(the mothers carrying small children including infants).

“D-did we do something wrong?” I asked the air nervously. The mob was upon us now, the woman who owned the previously said shop at the head. “Umm, yea?” I asked uneasily. What had gone wrong?! Did they know who I was?! IMPOSSIBLE! My hair is dyed, and... and... and...

“No, of course not! Oh brave one....,” the woman trailed off. She bent down to Hana with a soft

expression. Am I missing something? Has Shika-san, Hana, or Touji ever told you anything about this incident? Oh well, ignore that.

The woman put a hand on Hana's shoulder. Hana tensed. "Brave one, you have chosen the toy. The chosen toy of the winter sorceress! YOU are the chosen one!" the woman screeched. I glanced at Hana's face. The poor girl, she looked scared(don't forget oblivious) out of her mind.

"Wha-what are you talking about old lady! I-I dunno what you talking 'bout!" Hana replied nervously.

"But, child. You are THE ONE. All the memories of your past lives must be flooding into your mind this very second," a member of the stampede commented. Hana threw a small stick with shiny sparkles all over it at the woman.

"IT WAS SHINY SO I TOOK IT! PLEASE LEAVE ME ALONE, YOUR SCARRRIIIINNNNGGGG MMEEEEEEEE!!!" Hana wailed, falling on her butt. I looked at Shika-san, who was looking at me. We nodded, thinking the same thing.

The Plan:

1st priority- get the heck OUT OF THERE.

Grab the kids and run, run like there's no tomorrow!

The plan was carried out flawlessly. I grabbed Hana off the ground and bolted, Shika-san trailing at my heels behind me with Touji. After several minutes, I dared slow down to look back. The village and mob was nowhere in sight. Still unsure, I listened for a few seconds. No, no rumblings, the ground isn't vibrating.

THANK KAMI-SAMA

I looked around, we were at the foot of a mountain. We were all tired.

End

Yes - oh yes - that crazy lady thought Hana was a 'chosen one' or something. But, whose to say she isn't? Maybe Hana just wasn't THAT chosen one.

"Well, almost there," Shika-san said, breaking the silence.

"Yes," I replied. A few more minutes passed. From nowhere, as usual, my stomach growled. Shika-san looked at me as well as the two children. I smiled sheepishly. "Snack time?" I asked.

"Yea, whatever. Just something small though," Shika-san answered, tossing a pear to me.

"Domo Shika-kun!" I thanked him, biting into the sweet pear. Ahh, such tasty bliss...

"-kun?" Shika questioned. My peaceful moment cut short, I looked at him. I swallowed the last bite of

the small fruit.

“What, is it a crime now to call you ‘Shika-kun’?” I asked him, grinning in a playful way. “Well then, Shika-kun, I’m going to be one bad criminal from now on. And I like the way it sounds, so get used to it!” I told him with a big smile.

“Tch,” was all he said.

“Shika-kun! Can we get going now?” Hana asked cheerfully, earning a weird look from Shika-kun. HA! He cant get me here. “Puhwease?!”

“Fine,” Shika-kun answered. “Follow me closely, its kind of steep.”

Things had been going so well. I was following Shika-kun, and trailing behind me was Touji and Hana. About a good 5 minutes into the journey up the mountain, I heard the horrific topic mentioned this morning.

“I told you, Touji! They really ARE like a married couple!” came Hana’s oh-so-cheerful voice. And then, the truly horrific part. “You owe me five bucks!” she added. What has this world come to?