

By LinetteFox



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This is a fan-made novel based on the Pretty Cure series by Toei Animation. The ship of Darrmachi and Darren's yumesona belong to him. Please support the source!

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Calm Before the Storm



Le calme avant la tempête

BEYOND THE EARTH, there is a plethora of other worlds beyond the comprehension of civilians. By chance, so many have fallen in the plight of the universe's dark era. Either from being conquered by another, or naturally outgrowing itself. The planets always have ways of renewing themselves, but people can get vicious in the meantime of hardship. I pity those who have been so hardened that they can only think of themselves. But I relate to their drive to protect what remains. During my time as a Precure, I have protected so many different people from their demise. I have also fought people just as diverse... All encounters are destined to change us, aren't they? Even if subtly, they weaved our path to the future.

The breeze flowed through my hair as my senses filled with the scent of crisp autumn air. There was an inner turmoil between excitement and fear as I walked down towards the bus stop. It was the summer after graduating from Middle School, and high school waited atop the hill. My name is Akimoto Komachi. I was sixteen years old when this all began. Despite being this age last year, I stayed back a little longer. You see, during our third year, monsters called Nightmares started popping up, and I joined the Precure 5. We defeated them at the start of the next year, but right when we believed peace had been won, a new group, Eternal, emerged. To stay by our comrades, we held off on going to high school, but now, with all our threats vanquished one year further, we have finally made it. My reminiscing was interrupted by my dearest friend, Karen.

"Good morning, Komachi," She greeted formally, holding her bag before herself.

I would return the gesture with my own nod. "Morning," We both smiled as we sat near the center of the bus. Her bag went on the floor in front of her feet, as I hugged mine.

"Are you nervous?" She asked sincerely.

“Only a little,” I would respond, hugging my bag tighter. “I just wonder how those four are doing.”

“We’ll see them later,” Karen smiled understandingly as I agreed. Once pulled into our new chapter, we got off the bus and walked through the gates. There were already so many students bustling around, and it was at last our chance to join. While walking side by side, I spotted another first-year student with dark skin and brown fuzzy hair. He was asking an upperclassman for directions, and my eyes lingered a bit too long before Karen reminded me. “We should hurry. What were you looking at?” She noticed and followed my gaze. But in my distraction, he must’ve left on his way.

I fidgeted with the strap of my bag in an embarrassed manner. “Right, let’s not be late!”

“Yeah...” Karen raised a brow in confusion. However, I wouldn’t have had an answer if she had kept asking.

We left class that afternoon feeling relieved by how well it had gone, and continued talking as we looked for a place to eat lunch. To my surprise, as soon as we were around the corner, I spotted him once more. Karen has been my best friend for a long time, so she saw right through my shy demeanor. Immediately, I shook my head out of shyness, but she waved to him nonetheless.

“Hey there, I’m Minazuki Karen, and this is my friend,” she said, giving me a chance to introduce myself.

“Akimoto Komachi, and you are?” I extended a hand to shake.

“Komachi, huh?” It almost sounded like he had heard it before. “Just call me Darren!” He returned the gesture happily.

“Would you like to eat lunch with us?” Karen asked, and he smiled.

“The two of you are welcome to join me if you want!” Darren smiled, and my heart swelled with warmth. The three of us left for the courtyard and sat on a bench. We each retrieved our lunch boxes from our bags, and as I took my chopsticks, I grabbed a pinch of rice when Karen bumped my shoulder as if urging me to say something. Nothing can bloom if we can’t even befriend the source of these feelings.

“Have you enjoyed your first classes thus far?” I asked pleasantly.

“Alright, I nearly got lost getting to some of them!” He laughed lightheartedly. The rest of the afternoon went on just as well, with pleasant conversations against the rising nerves. At some point, I could tell he was anxious, too. Even when I stopped to give him time to share, he pushed it down. We parted when classes were to start again. The day pattered on like a storm, flying high on through it, like a bird between expressions. My heart seemed to quake like energetic clouds, eager to storm. Quaking as class after class and soul after soul passed each other by. Experiences of before become tools to keep face towards the new, so to summarize: I had fallen in love at first meeting.

We walked by the Natts' House after school. This was essentially the Precure's secret base, a jewelry store run by Nuts as a cover for our shenanigans. However, Nuts has been stuck in Palmier for ages with his king duties. But of course, right as we walked by. The other half of our team appeared.

"Karen! Komachi!!" Nozomi ran over, nearly tripping on a pebble, but was grabbed by Rin at the last minute. She's pulled back to her feet, rubbing her head in embarrassment. "I got too excited, teehee."

"Don't teehee me, we're already in our third year, you should know by now," Rin complained with hands on her sides. Urara laughed as she filled in between Rin and me.

"I only wanted to catch up so we could walk together!" Nozomi bounced as she refuted her childhood friend.

"How can you be mad at that?" I smiled at her enthusiasm.

"I don't even know," Rin chuckled. These three girls would complete our team; the five of us have been friends forever, it feels like. The excited Nozomi cut beside Urara, taking her arm and mine, looking towards the house.

"I wish Milk were walking with us too..." Nozomi lamented.

"It has been a while since any of them have written to us..." Urara placed her palm over her eyes like a visor. Looking from the house over towards the lake as if scanning for the mail carrier.

"We should revisit them sometime," Karen chimed in, causing me to nod.

With a soft expression, Rin added her two cents. "How about this weekend?"

Everyone pried their gazes from the sapphire to address one another. Nodding or otherwise agreeing to the sentiment before pushing down the path. Releasing my arm, Nozomi sped up, then turned to walk backwards, Rin raising an eyebrow as if to remind her of the previous argument. But alas, Nozomi could not be stopped.

"When I go to check on the rose garden, you can all come with me!" The pink girl raised her hands to emphasize the invitation.

"I can't wait!!" Urara cheered, pumping her fists before her chest. Running after our leader.

"Hey, wait up!" Rin joined the jog. I smiled at Karen, who shrugged. The two of us slowly followed our friends out of the park.

"How about we study together?" I suggested in a shout, wanting more time to spend with all of them. The course changed towards Karen's manor. A cheerful tone as we swapped adventures from today.

Amber beams shone as the last blinks of the sun, the rays hitting the gazebo's arches. Two sounds reigned supreme, the chatter blend of laughter with the studious business of scribbling practice. On occasion, some biting of chips or admiring the flowers that bloomed in Karen's garden. Nostalgic breezes gently brushed our hair, with

chestnut tigers drinking their fill before their trip. Their auburn striped wings folded above their abdomen before their proboscis uncoiled.

“So pretty!” Nozomi complimented the little butterfly, standing up to get closer. Across from me, Rin zipped up her crimson sweatshirt, following Nozomi’s gaze before her attention was drawn by a falling leaf.

“It’s gettin’ kinda cold for this,” Rin was rubbing her elbows.

“We can move inside then,” Karen suggested, picking up her notebook. Urara and I helped pick up the table before I caught Nozomi’s expression.

“They’re called chestnut tigers, pretty huh?” I asked, hugging my notebook and gripping the bag strap. “This one is preparing to migrate towards Hong Kong or Taiwan.”

“I didn’t know they migrated...” Nozomi responded. “Will they return in the spring?”

“No, probably not,” I shook my head, frowning. “This is the next step of their life, one of which they can’t return from.”

“They travel to find warm places for their eggs,” Karen explains, standing on the other side of her. “If they don’t, there won’t be as many of them next year.”

“Something wrong?” Urara stood on the opposite side of Karen with a script in her arms. Her homework had been completed, and therefore, practice for her next audition was coming close. Then Rin stepped beside me with her sports bag, likely for practice of her own later.

“You’re both high schoolers, Rin and I graduate from Lumiere soon, then it’ll be Urara’s turn the next year...” As Nozomi started, we watched as the butterflies left together but inevitably parted ways. “Coco and Nuts are too busy to visit, Syrup and Milk have their home lives...” She proceeded, at the start of summer, we said we would visit Palmier every three days. But I had to help the family with the shop, was writing my novel, Karen was engrossed in medical studies, both of us had to get into our ideal high school, Rin was watching her siblings, practicing soccer, and designing jewelry, and Urara auditioned for more and more musicals. In short, chasing our dreams led to moments like this becoming rarer. “What if when we all go to different schools, we stop being friends?”

“Doubt we’d let that happen,” Rin spoke next.

“You hardly hear of middle school friends who stay together as adults... What if...” Nozomi worried. “It’s a journey we can’t come back from?”

A quenching at my heart, everyone watches the now lonely insect flutter off through the sunset. The silence lingered a little too long for comfort before Rin shivered. “We’ll worry bout it later...”

“Right...” Karen responded as we filed into her house with our respective studies.

“I can’t wait to visit everyone on Saturday,” Urara broke the ice. And we all agreed with hope, fighting the grip at our hearts. If I lost anyone here, I’m not sure how we would cope.

“Even so, if something ever happened to this, I think we’d be okay,” I spoke up, trying to help while still being realistic. “We would always have friends, even in that future... So not like we would be alone.”

“Maybe our group will just grow from here,” Urara chimes in optimistically.

“Komachi’s already made a new friend,” Karen added, earning a nod from me as I remembered our lunch with Darren.

“Yeah? What’re they like?” Rin looked at my thoughtful expression. It felt warm as we sat around the living area, with me driving everyone through our day. At one point, Urara is scratching her chin rather theatrically.

“Komachi... you speak of him so fondly, like you have every moment memorized, do you by chance...?” My face boiled red as the yellow detective sniffed me out. The rest of the girls stand up in excitement.

“You should’ve seen her face earlier, there’s no doubt,” Karen nods properly.

“Congratulations!!” Nozomi cheered.

“You should tell him!” Rin encouraged me.

“I should, but I’m a bit nervous...” I raised my hands as they closed in.

“Don’t be, you totally got this!!” Nozomi pumped her fists.

“Tomorrow, when you see him, after school, maybe in the courtyard or the roof...” Urara tried helping with ideas, daydreaming herself.

“We’re not allowed on the roof,” Karen shot briefly.

“You’re creative, you’ll think of something,” Rin clapped both Karen and Urara’s shoulders. The four of them smiled supportively.

“Thank you, I’ll do my best,” I nodded with a determined hand over my racing heart. “If the moment arises...” To that, we went inside, the shadows of roses dancing against the window behind us.

The week threaded on with classes once more. Working away towards our dreams, I carried some books through the library. Placing down some Grimm’s tales and similar. Then from my bookbag, I donned the holy grail of my notebooks. Sitting down with the click of my pen, I began analyzing the books. As I dove through the world of fairy tales, my eye caught a truth. Walking by the entrance filled my heart, and I could not help but walk over. My eyes met his while my notes were squeezed against my chest.

“Oh, hi again!” Darren stopped. “You know it was nice having lunch with you two yesterday, hope we can do it again.”

“Yeah, of course,” I smiled pleasantly. Beating in my heart, I remembered my friends and their encouragement. This was as good a time as any to ask, but at the same time, I worried it was too soon. We had only known each other for a few days, and life is unlike the books behind me. Still, I take a deep breath, starting to whisper. “W-would you-”

“You still like reading, don’t you?” He passed the table, sounding appreciative. *Still?* How did he know that? I could not think of where we met before starting school.

“I was studying them for ideas,” I said, standing beside him, lowering my notebook so my heart had room to calm down.

“That’s so cool! For a class?” He pondered, which I shook to, walking around to sit behind the table. I placed down my notebook and was more at ease talking about my work.

“Well, I’m a writer, you see. Find it useful to be well read,” I explained, watching him view my book in awe.

“That’s even cooler!” He encouraged, sitting in the chair beside my own. “Can I see?”

“They’re just notes... Not a real story,” I rubbed the back of my head. “But if you want to...”

“That still sounds interesting,” He nodded, taking the proffered book and flipping through the inspired notes.

“Thank you,” I said gratefully, now at ease, and finally asked. “Want to walk home with me after?”

“Sure, sounds fun!” He agreed in a friendly manner. That evening, we left the building, running into Karen briefly. She immediately saw us together, my best friend smiling happily for me. “Hello, Karen!”

“Hello, you two,” Karen greeted properly with a nod.

“Want to walk with us?” He asked, with that look in his eye of having to tell us something, but to give the two of us solo time, Karen apologized.

“I would love to, but I have a lot of studying to do,” Karen gave an excuse, wishing for us to have more time alone. She smiled as she lifted her head in apology, being sure to tell something important to me in between. “I’ll see you at Natts House tomorrow.”

“Of course!” I nodded, waving as she left us.

“Oh, right, the Natts House!” Darren lit up, earning a brow raise from me.

“You’ve heard of them?” I scratch my chin, looking for the right explanation to not reveal anything.

“Yeah, I have to go there actually,” Darren asked excitedly, the sun lowering on his back. “Can I come with you?”

“Well...” I fidget a little in my excuses. The truth is, we’re meeting there on Saturday to visit the Cure Rose Garden. So, as much as I would love to, I won’t be able to invite a civilian, but I’m sure everyone would like to meet him. “The owner lives out of town, so we’re preparing for the reopening.”

“Well then, I can help out!” He seems adamant about going, so I need more lies.

“We wouldn’t want to bother you. How about stopping by on Sunday? I’ll introduce you to everyone then.”

“Sure that works...” He seemed a bit disappointed, though he stayed optimistic. “I would love to meet your friends!” He smiled happily, understanding. “Thanks, Komachi, you’re so kind.”

“You’re welcome,” I returned the expression, feeling warm as we proceeded through the resting town. At some point, I even had hoped it would last longer than it would for the sun to set. When I reached my house, he looked excited by the sweets shop my parents run, so before bidding farewell, I let him have some daifuku to go. My smile remained while he rounded the corner out of view.

At the same time, in the Palmier Kingdom. Little did we know the turmoil brewing in neighboring lands. While Milk was sweeping the palace floors, Syrup flew in a rush, changing from his flying mode to a regular fairy. He entered the window, startling the bored caretaker.

“Mirruuu!!!” She flailed her arms, hitting the bird over with her floppy rabbit ears. Standing over the bruise-rubbing friend, she let out. “Don’t startle me like that-miru!!”

“Sorry-ropu...” Syrup complained before standing up, reaching into his satchel, and rummaging around. “It was urgent-ropu,” He claimed, taking out a letter. Milk took it in her paw, flipping it twice before ripping the top.

“They were attacked, why-miru? The Chataigne Kingdom has always been a peaceful nation-miru...” Milk immediately grew worried, pacing a little as she was about what to do. “We’ll take the refugees here in the castle, go alert King Coco and King Nuts-miru!”

“Got it-ropu!” Syrup waddled past towards the throne room.

“I’d better be ready to call my teammates-miru...” Milk nods determinedly, heading for the exit. While in the palace entrance, some guards who were helping scared fairies can be overheard.

“He hasn’t come back from the woods-ken...” The worried fairy lowered his cat ears. The guard set their spear against the wall to console the other fairy.

“None of the other groups have seen Darren either-robu...” A droopy-eared guard runs over to bark. He had been helping the crowds of fleeing fairies get through the wall.

“Darren’s gone-miru?” Milk recognized the name of the person she always wrote to since the Eternal incident. Knowing how he admired Precure’s world, the thought came in quickly. “He didn’t-miru...”

“They said to welcome all survivors in, and left to set up defenses-ropu,” Syrup returned in a hurry.

“Another emergency-miru! Darren went to find Precure all on his own-miru!!” Milk shakes her friend. He rubs his head while sitting up afterwards.

“We’ll ask the others when they visit-ropu. We have to prevent more injuries right now-ropu,” Syrup is panicking too, but isn’t sure the wall can hold. “We can’t lose Palmier again-ropu.”

Milk nodded in understanding, picking up her Milky Palette. Turning into Kurumi, then glowing purple as she ran out towards distant smoke. “Of course, this had to happen right before our reunion...” She walked up the hill, monsters perched in the forest, two shadows floating above them. “Let’s end this quickly!” Her red eyes shine from the angle of the light before her transformation blows up, momentarily scaring away the darkness as she stabs through the forest. The guards scramble behind her; several monsters can be heard crashing against the floor. They managed to scare the enemy into a retreat, but something ominous remained in the air.

Feelings of Tranquility Blossom



Des sentiments de quiétude éclosent

LEAVES DANCED AROUND OUR HAIR before drifting past our sight. Then it gently dipped to lie on the pond, our backs to the Natts House. I reached up to push a green strand behind my ear, eyeing the light that glistened from the water. In due time, the steps to the Rose Garden opened to us, and promptly we ascended around the spiral. The doors opened welcomingly as the autumn air dispersed to flood with the scent of billions of flowers. Not even seconds onto the path until from the gazebo in its center ran the fairy Milk, who leaped into Karen's arms excitedly. Behind her stepped Syrup, who smiled while being picked up and greeted by Urara and Rin.

"It's so pretty!" Nozomi danced around, admiring the garden.

"You're its guardian, shouldn't you be used to it by now-ropu?" Syrup asked, raising a wing to his beak.

"Still though!" Nozomi raised her arms before pouting at the comment. Rin placed a hand on her shoulder, and she erupted in cheerful laughter. I turned towards the sun, shielding my eyes before realizing it was pointless. Because a shadow veiled its light already, everyone frowned towards it. But before we could make out what it was, the moment we grabbed our respective CureMos, the light flashed in our eyes like normal.

"It wasn't just me, right?" Rin faced everyone, searching behind pillars, then between the eye-rubbing Nozomi and concerned-looking Urara.

"No one could miss it-ropu..." Syrup exchanged a look with Urara before turning towards Milk, who shrugged before looking up at Karen.

"Could it be-miru?" Milk is prepared to fight.

"It can't be, they retreated-ropu! And how would they get in the garden-ropu?" Syrup yelled at Milk, not wanting to believe it.

"Nozomi probably left the door open-miru!!" Milk pointed both paws in outrage.

"I swear I didn't!!" Nozomi complained. "And what are we fighting about?" While they are arguing, my attention is drawn to where a chestnut tiger is flying away. Then to

the trembling roses that soon stumbled up our senses. Everyone spread out, readying our fighting stances as the top of the center gazebo collapsed and legs sprouted out like a turtle shell. Its stomps send us scattering across the field, Nozomi plowing down the hill so fast she lands in the roses. After making distance, Rin jogged down to get her up, while Urara brought Syrup to a safe area, and Milk was enveloped in smoke, bursting out as Kurumi. The six of us, despite the varying positions, were in perfect sync. I flipped open my CureMo so fast it practically flew out of my hand before I could catch and follow the script etched into my mind.

“Precure...” My thumb glides across the left petal, then the right, and finally the center rose-shaped button. The top screen blooms with a green light. In the momentary trance, I can hear the echoes of the other four having done the same in unison and their corresponding colors blooming. “Metamorphase!”

Then the trailing sounds of Kurumi’s stylus across the buttons of her Milky Palette. “Skyrose Translate!”

An orchestra of colors warmly spiraled around our arms, encasing us in our respective lights. First up from down the hill is Nozomi, who held her arms behind herself, spinning, clenching her fists as the scalloped gloves pop from the light of her lower arms. Then she hugged herself like a butterfly in a cocoon before bursting out with her hair and uniform done, raising her face to the sky as she felt the rush of power. Simultaneously, beside her, Rin does something uniquely similar, quickly pinching her arms and legs together as flames burst into place her matching red uniform. Urara flew forward and spun her heels and leggings, popping on first, then her skirt, while she turned her back, rotating upright. Then she leapt back dramatically with her full outfit in place. Then, for me, I hugged myself as I felt the power flowing across my entire being, part of the light scattered around my face like leaves in the wind, and promptly after the rush, I released my arms long enough to spin and have the entire outfit appear. Fifthly, Karen elegantly spun with water swirling in sync with her unfolding arms until it grew into a full bubble. The bubble pops with her fully transformed. As a grand finale, Kurumi stayed in place, blue rose petals doing her hair into huge, wavy twintails reminiscent of Droopy rabbit ears.

“The great power of hope!” The newly transformed Nozomi slid her right arm up to the heavens, gripping her left hand in front of herself. “Cure Dream!”

“The red flame of passion!” Up next, Rin clenches both her fists, angling her right behind her hip and opening one to keep the left hand before her. “Cure Rouge!”

“The effervescence of bursting lemons!” Secondly, Urara lowers her right arm in front of herself, bending her left elbow to keep the other over her bow. “Cure Lemonade!”

“The green earth of tranquility!” My turn, I keep my right arm on the side, palm lifting to face the floor, while my other hand raises over my bow. “Cure Mint!”

“The blue spring of intelligence!” Karen raises her left arm from her side while plunging the right one into place over herself. “Cure Aqua!”

“The blue rose is my secret emblem!” Kurumi places her left hand on her hip and extends the right out, her palm facing the non-existent audience. “Milky Rose!”

The colors all explode as we come together as a team to say. “Yes! Precure 5!!” We were released from our transformations, and the turtle stomped out flowers as its tail swished to knock over pillars. Everyone scattered almost immediately. Rouge did backwards somersaults to the left of the hill, Dream dashed right. She looped around, passing Lemoande, who joined her in dealing a double Precure Kick to the monster’s abdomen. As it reeled its tail to swat at the pests, Aqua and I grabbed the opportunity to jump in the way. Her eyes widened as the blue cure hurdled away.

“Karen!” From the corner of my eye, I caught Rose darting by to help her up while I was gripping the rough marble to prevent myself from meeting the same fate.

“I’m okay!” Aqua can be heard responding as her and Rose’s hands clapped together. It doesn’t take long to feel Rouge at my side, grabbing around the same spot, then Dream and Lemonade squeeze in on either side of us. Exchanging glances with everyone, we all collectively nod.

“One... Two....” Dream muttered, straining with everyone else to keep the tail locked in place.

“Heave ho....” Rouge took a deep breath, and so did everyone else as we used the tail to lift the fiend off the ground. With our combined strength, we spun the monster around in a large swoop. We gained speed, letting it spin three times before our hands released it. From the force, the gazebo made a big crater a good distance away from us. Lemonade was clapping while Rouge exhaled and Dream held her palm above her eyes, trying to see where it landed. Aqua hammered a punch down, burying the monster before Rose attempted to do the same. Only the beast tucked itself in the shell, making itself spin this time. When Rose’s heel hit this, it tripped her up. After she faceplanted in the dirt, she torpedoed between Rouge and us as it launched itself after her.

Aqua, who was a distance away watching this, calls out. “Watch out!” Instead of running, I came forward, exchanged glances with worried Aqua, encouraging Syrup, and someone else? A little fairy in the grass? His paws are rolled up in little fists as he cheers silently. I listened to the racing steps of my friends across the grass. Then my hand raised instinctively, the world moving in slow motion. “Pretty Cure! Mint Protection!!” Around me, a barrier shone through the field; the shell harshly chipped against it, causing me to flinch slightly. But I held up both my hands to strengthen the force field as it’s trying to break through.

“If we stopped its movements...” Rose strategizes while Rouge crossed her arms and Dream turned to Lemoande.

“We got it, Komachi!” Lemonade stepped forward, moving her arms behind herself. She waited for me to remove the barrier in that second. “Pretty Cure! Prism Chain!!” She roared while whipping forward chains made from yellow butterflies. She used this to ensnare the turtle, uprooting roses as she tried not to be flung around by it.

Dream hugged her so she wouldn't join the roses. With their combined tug, the spinning stopped, as so do all its other movements. Aqua had finished regrouping, her fists leaking water.

"What're you doing?" Rouge followed her movement.

"This coward can't hide forever! Pretty Cure!" And with that, Aqua calls out while sprinting by, skidding to a stop near the entrance of the shell. "Aqua Stream!!" The water shot right inside, and the monster cried out in agony before being shoved out the tail hole. The gazebo's roof plows a circle as it rolls down the hill and slams down, little water drops watering the missed grass. Still not done yet, the monster roared. The giant lizard tried to crush us. Lemonade and I at one foot, Aqua and Rouge at the other. To save us, Dream and Rose used the shell to launch themselves, punching it forward. In a near second, I saw Syrup distracted by the other fairy. I swooped down to catch them both, and feeling the pinch on my back, I found myself tumbling through the brush. Only deterred a little, I push my knees up to sit, checking on the two fairies who were thankfully unharmed.

"Ah, you're hurt-ren!" The second one cried over my scuffed face. To him, I shook my head, rubbing the scrape and dusting the soil from it. Knees locked but not staying down as I rose, running in time with the team who sped around me. We leapt high into the clouds. I loosen my grip on them as the monster barrels past where we dodged. "Syrup, I leave him to you."

"Ropu!" Syrup agreed, a puff of smoke surrounding him as he jumped from my arms, beneath us, Syrup emerged into a plane-like form with a convertible roof. I hugged the scared fairy close, patting his head while the six of us were floating down.

"Don't cry, we'll all be okay," I tell him gently, waiting for him to be ready before landing on Syrup's head, letting the fairy drop into the passenger's compartment. Syrup rolled up the roof, turning on the screen so his guest could see the fight from inside. He dipped slightly as I launched back over to where everyone was flying. The bird flapped his wings, made distance from the ground where we all landed. We glared in determination, our fluerets being drawn, Milky Rose was standing on Syrup's head as we pointed our swords at the target.

"Pretty Cure Rainbow Explosion!!" The five of us shouted, roses bloomed from the tips, and merged into a big rainbow that crushed the monster. Our eyes followed the garden-purifying sparkles that rained from the explosion. Our hair flowed in the breeze as the gazebo was put back together, and flowers bloomed where they had been previously torn. We heard Syrup and Milky Rose poofing into their human forms, dropping into the grass behind us. Then, there were sounds of relief as Milk and Syrup hugged the fairy. The five of us glowed one last time before our transformations returned to the CureMos. We smiled while joining the fairies' celebration.

"What were you doing!?" Kurumi scolded her friend after hugging him. "Are you okay!?"

"I'm sorry, I wanted to find Precure and save Gaufre-ren! Just like you did for Palmier-ren..." The fairy responded to her fear with admirable drive.

"You could've gotten lost, you're too nice to fool suckers as I did! What would you have done for food!?" Kurumi continued, Syrup trying to calm her. And Nozomi shot a glare, still salty about being one of the many victims of Milk back then. But she's held back by Urara.

"It's fine, I gained a human form and pretended to be a student-ren!" He explained, raising his paws to demonstrate. From the smoke came...

"Darren?" As I muttered it, my friends gasped, and Rin elbowed me slightly in shock.

"That Darren?" Rin asked, to which I nodded.

"Your true love?" Urara clasped her hands together dreamily, pushing between Rin and me.

"Ah! How'd he appear here? Did he see you transform!?! Oh, and where'd that fairy go?" Nozomi panics, and Karen gets in her way to catch her up.

"The fairy and Darren are the same person," My childhood friend explained to Nozomi, who let out an 'oh'.

"Wait, what?" Urara is shocked to hear what Karen said.

"Flew by you, too, huh?" Rin sighed at Urara and Nozomi. I laughed a little at their antics, stepping forward.

"I was gonna tell you, but didn't want to interrupt..." Darren looked down, and I smiled. My friends are holding back the urge to scream at the cuteness, urging me on as Syrup and Kurumi urge on their friend.

"If you told me you wouldn't have to sneak in here," I responded calmly.

"I wanted to respect your space, but then I felt something and had to make sure you were all okay," He chuckled embarrassingly. "Of course, I knew you'd be fine, since you're a Precure. But still... I want my friends to be safe!"

"That's so sweet!!" My kind grin widened, cheeks warm from the blush. "I saw you cheering me on, and I could stand back up thanks to it," I explained, then donned an open palm. Taking the cue for the moment, the others moved over to the gazebo. Watering Flora's seed and making sure the structure was not too damaged. Outstretched, I wanted to admit one last thing while we're both revealing our truths. "Um... I have enjoyed hanging around you; this might be too soon. But I really do love you, and would like to stay together when possible."

"Ahh, is that so?" He took a step back, face growing as red as mine. He awkwardly looked at me before nodding. "I think that feeling's bloomed too, watching you fight was incredible!" He took my hand, and a rush of love came between us. "Sure, let's be partners. If you want to, of course..." When he says it, I can hear a bunch of baited breaths, spotting my friends covering their mouths with expressions of how adorable it is.

“Of course!” I nodded, taking his hand, moving closer. Lifting his hand, making sure he’s okay with it before placing a little kiss. That evening, all having returned to the Natts House together, the fairies begin to explain what happened as we all speculate about this impending new threat on the horizon. It hasn’t been so long since we met, now with our new friend and determination. The mystery to save his home from the backstabbing kingdom of Chataigne is pulled into just as big a swing as the budding romance. Speaking of budding, unnoticed by us was Flora’s sapling, which suddenly grew three inches in the corner. From what power had inspired it, I do wonder.

Somewhere, as a drastic change of pace, a lone butterfly entered the skylight of a tower. He morphed into a human, heels tapping down the hall towards the throne room. Inside is what appears to be a lady; she sits with the cape of her robe trickling down the steps like water. And hood so droopy only her old nose can be seen, she crinkled it, running her nails against the arms. As the bug man ascended, he passed a child with orange hair, the other villain sipping some tea.

“What news do you bring?” The voice looms from the cloaked leader.

“The Gaufre Kingdom is in your care..” The loyal servant’s wings folded behind his back. Antennas lowered with his head as he bowed again.

“Oh?” Rises the witch, standing as tall as a giant. Her hand pierced down, pointing at the servants, before snapping. All windows reflect a different world. One showed humans going to school and work in the early morning, while the next depicts Palmier, Doughnuts, Crepe, and Montblanc Kingdoms helping refugees from Gaufre. Finally, it showed the Cure Rose Garden and the blooming sapling of Flora. The witch looked at it from the corner of whatever eyes lay behind her hood. “You followed those Palmierian brats there, but what came of that battle?”

“That was..” Backing up, the villain trembles.

“You lost, didn’t you? Hmph, if I went, they’d be put in place-” The redhead kicked her feet with a giggle. The only other person at the table was a silver locket lying open.

“I was humbly stopped by those named Pretty Cure 5..”

“Pretty Cure..” The witch lifted her chin in recognition. She raises her palms to the ceiling, claws towards the duo. “Squash them like bugs!” She closed her fist in front of the two. “Choga..”

“What is it, m’lady?” The man knelt at the bottom of the steps.

“Shinku..” Her voice trembles again.

“Yes?” Shinku stood at attention behind the tea table.

“Only once these vermin are crushed shall your wishes be granted,” She explained seriously, causing both villains to bow their heads. “Or else be doomed..” The Mistress lowered her head. Shinku hid her face, and Choga waited patiently. But once she waved

her hand, the butterfly was gone once more. Leaving Shinku to pour tea for an empty seat, drinking from both her own and the lonely cup.

It was the next weekday after the Cure Rose Garden. The sun was rising just as our feelings intertwined. While lagging behind Karen towards school, we daydreamed about our first date.

“So where are your favorite places to go?” While balancing on the retaining brick wall between the sidewalk and the grass. He flapped his arms slightly, tilting them to keep upright as he stopped.

“The library, I suppose.” I tapped my chin to eye the sky. Clouds gently drifted as I smiled to return the question. “What about you?”

“Back in Gaufre Kingdom, there’s this huge forest meadow! It’s super relaxing! Though can’t really go there right now...” His hands balled into fists as he pumped them before himself. Then hopped down to my level standing. “Let’s start there then!”

“Sure sounds fun!” I took his hand, energy matching his. After school, we had a little study date at the public library. Teaching one another about each other’s homes in the process. After we had finished reading *The Little Mermaid*, I had a hand on his shoulder, consoling him.

“It’s so sad... Who would write something like that?” He asked, taking the tissue I handed him to wipe his face.

“Sometimes people make things based on their own hardships. Hans Christian Andersen was forbidden to love whom he wanted; therefore, he wrote a tragedy reflecting what couldn’t be spoken.” I explained a little history from my research. Closing the book and watching him consider this.

“So a cry from the heart for things to change?” He flipped through the pages. Rereading the part where Littlest Beauty perished because her love couldn’t be reciprocated. Or even if it could be, the animosity between mermaids and humans couldn’t allow it. Just like how the author felt being rejected by the man of his dreams. A lot has changed in hundreds of years, rendering those beliefs obsolete. “I mean, if she hadn’t been changed by him, the journey she went on never would’ve happened... She would be stuck as someone else,” I share my own thoughts on the story.

“The prince was probably sad to have learned what happened,” Darren brought up, to which I nodded. I closed the book, slid it over for him to search for the missing story. Then he turns back the pages to where the mermaid rescued her prince, then where she walked beside him as a stranger. This adaptation had illustrations, so we go back to the simple moments before tragedy.

Later, we were walking through the neighborhood towards the park. Past where the original Natts House was, before we moved it to the shore of the lake. In fact, we

rounded that lake, his eyes shimmered off it in excitement. He requested to be shown this place after the library.

“You know, Milk and I swapped letters for years. She told me so much, but can’t exactly account for the real life’s beauty.” He explained with our backs to the meeting spot. Eyes wandering up where the stairs appear whenever we need to go to the Cure Rose Garden.

“I’d like to see the meadow you mentioned someday, too,” I responded, letting strands of hair bounce gently in the wind. I raised the back of my hand to shield my eyes from the sun-touched water.

“When it’s rescued, it’ll be the first place I show you,” He promised sincerely as we stepped up onto the porch. Then my eyes spotted everyone crowded around the front counter.

“Hey, what’s everyone doing?” I hurried over as they cleared.

“Flora’s seed! Look!!” Nozomi picked up the potted plant, hoisting it up to my eyes. Having moved too quickly, she stumbled, causing Rin to frantically catch her with everyone panicking at the flying sapling. In the nick of time, Karen caught it, landing with a loud thud.

“Jeez, watch what you’re doing!” Kurumi argued with Nozomi while taking the plant, and Urara handed a handkerchief for Karen to clean the soil from her forehead.

“Thank you...” Karen stood up, taking it. Darren and I blinked in confusion at the scene.

“Translation?” I covered my laugh.

“What she meant was Flora’s seed has started to sprout!” Rin explained on her embarrassed friend’s behalf.

“Oh yes, I see!” My hands clapped as I watched Kurumi secure it on the counter.

“Flora?” Darren asked for context. You see, when Eternal attacked, they were searching for something called the Rose Pact. With it and the Palmis, they would be able to visit the garden. The Boss, who held a grudge against its guardian, Flora, would be able to stamp out the flowers, thereby destroying the people of Earth. After a grueling battle, we defeated that evil bunch, but like a butterfly after laying their egg, she perished with no trace but a seed. For the following year, we have been tending to it as she wished. It’s illogical; trees take a long time to grow, though this sprout has become a sapling in one night.

“I noticed it after everyone had gone-ropu,” Syrup explained, hopping down from Urara’s shoulder. He waddled over, looking hopefully at it. “Our work is finally paying off-ropu!”

“That’s so cool! I hope it can bloom more and more!” Darren said admirably, and the group took a moment of silent peace. Urara smiled down at Syrup, Nozomi hugged Rin in excitement, Karen and Milk exchanged smiles, the latter in the arms of the former, and I took the hand of Darren. The sun beat down from the window like a spotlight of

hope. Then, a sudden splash shifted all attention out the window, and we all rushed out to the porch, back to the pop of Milk's shift to human form. Glares point behind the house to the sight of a butterfly's shadow veiled by sunlight. The leaves of one of the palm trees sagged under his heels as the wings folded to make his humanoid form clearer. Those green eyes opened to survey us, antennas twitching.

"Who are you?" Karen asked before water sprinkled us, our eyes grew wide while forced to turn our backs to the mystery. From the lake roared a Plesiosaur, better known as the cryptid of Loch Ness. Or at least the beast resembled such.

"Sitaaaaa..." The dinosaur raised its long neck. "...rrannnnn!!" Then came crashing towards us. And as swiftly as it did, the six of us girls were enveloped in light, then emerged high above the scene after transformation. My hand rose promptly, the disk of green spawning.

"Emerald Saucer!" It shot into the creature's neck. Then, the next pounced Cure Dream, folding her arms before herself as she launches through her Shooting Star. Meanwhile, Aqua and Rose deal a double Precure punch to its back. Water spouted everywhere as I landed first on the path around the river, noting Rouge helping Dream out of the water, Aqua and Rose before me, and Lemonade on the porch beside Darren.

"He must've summoned it-ropu," Syrup nodded towards who was perched behind us. During the interrogation, I sprinted forward as Lemonade passed me, alternating punches and kicks as the beast was recollecting itself.

"Go Precure!" Darren cheered.

"Who do you work for-ropu!?" I catch Syrup poofing into plane mode and rocketing after the butterfly man. The enemy pulled the black mask higher over his nose, gray hair flying in the wind as he dodged back and forth. While ricocheting from our attacks, suddenly the monster's head bumps us onto its back. Its flippers hit us back in place, then with a deep breath, the two of us were plunged under the lake. My eyes caught the summoner being chased by Syrup. Lemonade elbows me, gesturing up to our blurry friends. I then listen to her muffled shout as her light is nearly blinding from the magnifying properties of the water.

"Precure, Prism Chain!" The yellow butterflies shoot far out of the lake. I hit the flipper away, grabbing Lemonade as the chain is grabbed by our friends. The two of us, along with the monster, bungee high over the Natts House. Once on the high ground, the six of us Precure kick it into the dirt. Lemonade falls forward, coughing out the water while I lean against a tree, catching my breath.

"Do get up, Sitaran, we do not have all day," The villain straightened his tie as he hovered above the scene. He dipped into a bow as Syrup flew by him, bouncing to the rooftop as he held a hand over his chest, tightroping across the railing. He unfolded his wings, using them to deflect the fairy's attack. The monster dug its flippers into the dirt, curling its neck as it strained to move on land.

"Are you okay?" Darren asked while Lemonade and I stood up.

“Yes, thank you,” I nodded, wringing out my glove before slipping it back on and raising my fists. Lemonade stood behind me to the left, matching my courage. Dream and Rouge moved onto either side in front of us, while Aqua and Rose stayed behind us in similar positions.

“Ropu!!” With a flash of light, Syrup was plummeting to the dirt as the villain flapped his wings before the sun. Flying above the monster, antennas twitching in disapproval. Lemonade nearly slipped off the porch, shooting over to defend Syrup’s newly formed crater.

“How bothersome,” He pulled his gloves tighter around his wrists, running fingers through his hair before landing with a loud clap to the porch. The six of us scattered as he swung a kick, trying to knock all of us down at once. In his failure, his blank green eyes narrowed before an explosion erupted from his fingertips. I swiftly caught Darren, then summoned one of my force fields for Rose and the two of us. In the time this enemy took to enter the fray, the monster slipped back into the water. Faster in its element, Sitaran raised its head, swiping it right as we leaped to dodge.

“Dang it!” Rouge exclaimed. She shifted her weight mid-air to drop a kick on its forehead.

“Ugh! Quit moving!!” Dream complained while attempting to grab the monster. Then suddenly the villains swooped in to launch her into the horizon. “RAW!!”

“Dream!” Rouge shouted while landing with Lemoande, and I. Rose shot around the lake, giving a salute in her departure.

“I got her,” Rose winked before kicking up her speed.

“There are more of us, split tactics,” Aqua strategized. Looking between the rest of us. Darren was behind me, while Syrup nodded in Lemonade’s arms. I returned the nod from Rouge, watching her close the distance with the villain, getting into a fist fight. I came in from the side, tossing another disk of light. While the two of us hacked away at the summoner, we heard from behind us.

“Pretty Cure! Sapphire Arrow!!” Followed by the monster’s roar and Lemoande’s holler as she hammered kicks down onto it. Then a pink light reflected from the water as Dream shot over. The ground shook as Rose punched it beneath us, then leaped to send the villain crashing through the walls of Natts House. Everyone regrouped, the fairies watching the fallen as we Precure performed Floral Explosion to purify the monster. Once done, we entered the house, watching as Syrup poofed into a human and grabbed the sapling protectively.

“Precure, huh? Such grace... Forgive my lack of introduction, I would be Choga. Do watch yourselves,” He croaked as sparkles repair the damaged building around us. He held his shoulder, lowering into a bow. “Pardon me,” Then, just like that, he folded his wings around himself and vanished. We all collapsed our transformations.

“Is everyone okay?” Nozomi asked around as we recollected ourselves.

“Yeah, though it doesn’t seem like last week was a one-off thing,” Karen tapped her chin thoughtfully.

“This sucks!” Rin rubbed the back of her head. As Syrup hoisted the sapling back onto the counter.

“We’ll be okay, I’m sure of it,” Darren broke the ice, and we agreed. “It’s not like it’s something you haven’t done before, you’ll save the world like all the stories!”

“Thank you,” I responded with a smile. The team gathered around to head upstairs, eager to finally enjoy their after-school hangout. With the looming threat of weekly monsters over our shoulders once more.

Fairy Tale



Conte de fées

Once upon a time, there existed two more kingdoms. A place of love known as Gaufre, and a former land of hope lost to tyrants, Chataigne. Sometimes, fairies would go to the human world in search of Precure. From the tales of their neighboring kingdoms, Darren grew ever curious about humans. He would study what he could, but nothing could truly give him the sights Precure fairies were seeing. After the rescue of the Palmier Kingdom, he heard some of the cures frequented it. Thus went to see humans for himself.

“You finally made it-ropu,” Waddled over the fairy Syrup, who had helped deliver letters between him and his pen pal Milk. The two started writing primarily because he had so many questions about the other world.

“I can’t see her-ren...” Darren jumped up and down trying to see around the other fairies. He stopped and placed his paws on his chin, ears sagging as he listened to the gentle reader.

“Here I’ll help-ropu!” Syrup pumped his wings, then held them out. He let his friend climb onto his head. The tower leaned left and then right, causing Darren to flail his arms around. He looked forward, seeing the Three Little Pigs open on the lap of the green cardigan. But to his dismay, the face was blocked by palm tree leaves.

“No, the tree is in the way-ren...” Darren lamented as Syrup hopped two paces right, trying to get around it. They started to fall, but the girl finally noticed them, hurrying to catch the two fairies. She loosened her grip so Darren could stand on her arms. His mouth gaped open as he discovered me. Shyly, Darren hopped down, retrieving the book she had dropped to cover his face. He lifted it for her to take with a smile.

“Thank you,” She knelt beside them, pushing the dark green ponytail over her shoulder. Then took the book, dusting off her pants as she got up. Carefully stepping over any other fairies that were gathered around. “Are you and your friend alright, Syrup?” Her mouth pinched into a curious frown. But to Darren, it was no different than

the little mermaid's mysterious prince. Being his first time seeing a human, he was frozen in awe.

"I think so-ropu..." Syrup pulled his eyes from her, turning towards Darren, waving a wing in front of his eyes.

"I-I um... Sorry for interrupting your reading-ren," He spoke up, squishing the tips of his paws together.

"Don't worry, I'm glad you're both okay," She smiled gently before asking politely. "Do you want to sit closer so you can see?"

"Sure, if that's okay-ren!" He worked up the courage to say, following her back through the crowd. Followed by a few others, Darren was still hesitant, but she took him directly on her lap beside the other smaller fairies. She began reading once again. "You read so well-ren. What's your not Precure name-ren?"

"Thank you, it is Akimoto Komachi, pleasure meeting you," She nodded.

"She is Cure Mint-ropu," Syrup chimes in proudly from behind the crowd.

"That's so cool-ren!" Darren cheered, looking up at Komachi as she turned the page. "Komachi-ren?" He quietly muttered to commit it to memory. This must have happened over the summer. After saving Palmier and the Cure Rose Garden, we visited when we could. Together, we would tend the garden and Flora's seed, help with the restoration of the kingdom and its neighbors, and just hang out as much as we could before Karen and I started high school. I don't remember ever seeing the fairy again during my visits, possibly due to the distance between kingdoms.

The months went by faster than it should've. Each went about the same; we went to the park, and a tree was doused in pollen to run amok. Darren cheered us on as we vanquished it. Meeting up with friends after school, a traffic light, a trash can, a purse, randomly each week, sometimes even at school. This is quite exhausting after two and a half years of weekly attacks. Though I suppose it's how Precure all over the Earth will always work. But our romance did manage to tighten during intermissions.

This morning was like any other. Started with a chase through town, I was carrying Darren while Syrup flew overhead. Cure Rouge was leading as the rest of us kept up. Building after building was rammed through, Rose stopped to pick up a child, handing him off to a parent and telling them to book it. The monstrous truck was gaining. Dream shot by like a star breaking into the lead. Lemonade used her prism chain to swing out of the way via lamppost. Rouge lept and kicked a ball of fire. I landed in front of the buildings it's derailed towards, summoning Mint Protection around the civilians. At least one bystander is caught snapping a picture with their cell phone while the rest run away. Darren climbed onto my hair as I crossed my forearms defensively

above my head. The truck kept ploughing down the road when Rose grabbed it from behind with the help of Dream. They threw it onto its side.

“You did it-*ren!*” Darren cheered as all of us regrouped to defeat the monster.

“These things are getting annoying!” Rouge complained. Waiting a moment as I glanced up at Choga, who glared and vanished. Once we confirmed everything was okay, we jumped onto a roof to detransform. Then Darren poofed into his human form as we booked it up the hill towards school.

Somewhere else, Choga reemerged, dropping onto his knees. Crimson eyes open from the end of the hall. To his outrage, instead of being met by the mistress directly, he’s met with a taunting Shinku. She swirls a strand of hair in her finger, then flicks bangs out of her eyes.

“You know that’s the 13th time, how sad...” Her words only draw anger from her colleague. “We owe it to the mistress, y’know?”

“I am quite aware...” Choga growled, walking past the girl.

“How have you been hogging the spotlight these months?” The redhead follows slowly, hands behind her back. The two kneel as they enter the room, the witch standing above them.

“I request another chance,” Choga said deeply. To which the Mistress shook her head and then pointed to Shinku.

“Finally, my turn?” She pointed at herself, then curtsied. Grinned as Choga glared, then poofed away to cope things out.

Noon was young when we arrived at Komachi. That may be confusing, but my family renamed their sweets shop when I was born. Since it was the weekend, Karen, Darren, and I were on the way to a study session. Which, of course, demanded snacks for afterwards. I approached the front, where my sister greeted us happily. “This is the boyfriend you told me about?”

“Ah, um, yes, Darren, this is my sister Madoka and father.” After Madoka was named, I introduced the man stirring mochiko and water, who nodded silently. Watching as Madoka came out from behind the counter to shake Darren’s hand.

“Nice to finally meet you!” She said.

“Same,” Darren responded, it makes me happy to see them getting along.

“Can we have some daifuku to go, please?” I asked.

“Of course,” Madoka gave a thumbs up and went to place some in a paper bag. “So, where are you from?”

“Oh, that... Gaufre...” Darren scraped his mind for a good answer, but Karen was able to cover. It’s a small country overseas, most haven’t heard of it...” Being the wise one, my family is easily convinced. I take the bag, thanking the two as we hurried on our way. Releasing the fear of almost revealing the fairy kingdoms through a collective exhale. But on the way, I spot a girl our age, her attire is like gothic lolita, a deep, almost black

blue dress with white frills. Orange hair trails the walkway as a rose crowns the right-leaning bangs. Her eyes widen when she spots Darren, and she accidentally crashes.

“I’m sorry! Are you okay?” Darren held out a hand. She looked at him in confusion before glancing over the rest of us. Dusting off her skirt to curtsy politely.

“No, it was my bad, I got distracted...” She avoided eye contact, tapping a fingernail against a locket around her wrist. “You!?”

“Do I know you?” Darren was astonished. She looked between him and me, though hard to tell what she was thinking.

“Is everything alright?” I asked her as her eyes narrowed, pushing Karen and me aside as she forced through to keep walking. Looking a bit wobbly in her steps.

“That was weird...” Karen mentioned. Darren rubbed the back of his head as we proceeded on our journey.

The redhead warily stopped in an alleyway, leaning against the wall. She opened the locket as she knelt in the grime, the image of Darren colliding with that of her lost love. Tears of rage swelled, a second pair of eyes opened in the darkness. The emerald glow revealed Choga, who had his back against the bricks that shatter when she tried to punch him. “God forbid I check on you.” He glared. “You see the resemblance, do you not? Perhaps too fragile to continue-”

“No, it’s not to my detriment; it can be used... Somehow,” Her eyes locked to the ground, the butterfly man crossed his arms.

“Could you not just kill the Precure and take him?” He suggested causing an idea to grace her features. She stood in excitement, clapped, and spun around.

“How cute...” Her muttering earned a brow raise as she hopped off towards the post office.

The sunlight reflected from the lake, then split through the windows of the Natts house. Pillars of it warmed the bud of Flora’s tree, as well as our sweet-filled hearts. The bud had grown a month ago when we went to Angel Land on a date. Then, each progressing week grew the bud ever further. Between homework and fights, we patiently wondered what it’d grow. As for then, nothing but the sound of scribbling filled the room. Well, until our pink-haired friend slammed her head down on her books dramatically.

“Are you okay?” Darren stood in concern.

“It’s too hard!” Nozomi panicked.

“It’s only been a few minutes,” Rin placed her hands on her sides as Urara poked Nozomi with her pencil eraser. The girl sat up, showing the paper to each shoulder.

“You are actually quite close,” The legs of Karen’s chair tapped the floor as she scooted closer to help Nozomi with her math. “Can you show me how you got this number?” Though our homework is different from theirs, we had taken similar tests in

our third year. The door swung open and closed behind Syrup as he poofed into his human form and dropped a bag of mail on the counter. Kurumi got up to help sort through the letters from home. I looked over to see her raise a brow at a flyer.

“A ball?” She read out loud, shuffling through other envelopes. Before eyeing it again and flipping it over. Led by a longing to know what it was, I left the chair to approach. Darren followed and soon too everyone else.

“Like a dance? A fairy tale dance?” Nozomi lit up, bouncing on her heels. Moving the painted castle so everyone gets a chance to see. The center of the supposedly marble drawing was silhouetted with waltzers. How romantic it would be to take a lover by the hand in that moonlight, imagining such, I exchange a look with Darren.

“That’s amazing!” Urara clapped in excitement. “We should all go together!”

“Don’t we find this suspicious?” Rin asked with a sigh. Taking another letter from the counter. Darren specifically looked over Kurumi’s shoulder as she read one. While they went over the report, Rin continued. “Most of these are about how the fairy kingdoms are doing, then a random dance in between that?”

“You raise a fair point..” Karen agreed with the caution. The rest of us paused the celebration to think about this. I examined the poster for clues, noting the location of the ball. Which seems to be a fancy resort somewhere in town.

“Has anyone been to this place before?” Darren asked, looking over my shoulder.

“Never heard of it,” Rin replied with suspicion.

“We’ll be careful,” Karen placed a hand on her shoulder as she determined. Retrieving her hand as she looked around at everyone. “Besides, we should investigate in case a monster does appear.”

“Right? Plus, it’d be so fun!” Nozomi cheered, earning a chuckle from me.

The resort was castle-like and a bit out of place, as if appearing from magic. Stars twinkled overhead as we ascended the marble steps. My silk glove gripped the layered skirt to help it trail my steps. Moonlight helped to highlight the pale green embellished flowers spiralling down the hemline. My heel top piece sent an echo across the entrance way as I raised my hand for him to place his in mine. Eyes closed into a smile upon meeting him there, our expressions matched as we regrouped with everyone.

“You’re so cute!” Nozomi bounced in her pink gown, the shipper in her gushing as she shook the tuxedo-wearing Rin. Urara held her hands together, admiring the romance as Syrup straightened his tie. Kurumi grinned with Karen’s hand in hers, then the seven of us entered in extravagance. Music graced our ears, the crowd laughed, danced, and shared treats. We cautiously looked around, then saw two groups of couples file in. Those with suits bowed as those with gowns curtsied. Then the couples came together.

“That looks like fun!” Nozomi pointed out whimsically.

“We came to investigate...” Karen reminded to our dismay.

“But it’s not every day you get to be at a ball!” Nozomi argued. So Karen and Rin both relented.

“Just stay alert...” Rin placed a hand on her forehead, then blushed a little as Nozomi offered a hand. Then we joined the lines in our respective duos. Some of us blinked around to figure out how it was done. Urara, who had probably learned it from a play, demonstrated by backing up into Syrup. She lifted his right hand, stepping three pegs to the left as she gripped it. Once all joining in with the line dance, it didn’t take long for everyone to waltz. We spun without much care in a world besides each other. Then Darren lifted my hand above me, so I could twirl it back into the circle. Even if it was our first time, and we weren’t as graceful as some other couples, it was pure bliss. It was rather late into the night that the dancing ended.

“You two were great!” Nozomi cheered, Rin sitting on a fancy chair behind her. Rubbing her shoes after Nozomi had probably stepped on them a bunch.

“Thanks a lot!” Darren said happily.

“Are you okay?” Karen asked Rin as she and Kurumi returned.

“Nozomi sure knows how to do damage,” Kurumi insulted Nozomi.

“Hey! I didn’t do it on purpose!” Nozomi argued exaggeratedly.

“Hey now...” Darren is trying to break up the fighting. Urara with Syrup regrouped with us last. The former scanned up to the balcony of the ballroom. We all followed her gaze curiously. It seems the host has finally shown herself.

“Sorry for being late, good evening everyone!” The redhead we met outside of my family’s shop was there. She looked into my eyes almost threateningly. “What lovely dancing that was! Well, I hope you all enjoy the party!” She waved, walking away to sit and watch.

Kurumi stopped everyone. “Something feels off...”

“Is it the girl who’s late to her own ball?” Rin asked. The girl spiralled down the steps from the balcony to the dancefloor. Her heels resounded with her iris gown gliding behind her. A glove lifted to Darren. Frowns spread as we watched the scene. I took Darren’s hand, confirming to her we’re together.

“Hello again,” She curtsied properly.

“Evening...” Karen replied. “Did you need something?”

“I do...” Grinned Shinku, then pointed.

“Clearly, he’s already taken,” Rin let out bluntly.

Shinku was angered by that and approached. “You have to remember me...”

“This must be a misunderstanding-” Darren spoke for himself. “Yesterday?”

“No, from before then,” Shinku urged. Everyone was as confused as they were cautious.

“Nothing, sorry...” Darren raked his brain for where they had met.

“Come with me then, I’ll find a way to jog your memories!” Shinku pleaded, but when he backed away, all of us looked at her in a mix of concern and anger. “Then...” She snapped a finger, and the chandelier dropped down. The eight of us scattering, protecting one another. The gold spikes grew into legs, stabbing towards us. The ball erupted into colors as we leapt into action like always. Rouge burst forward, her punch getting flung away. Aqua kicked with Rose beside her, then dodged a waving candle. Lemonade sent a prism chain from the balcony, tying up its legs. I sprinted to block attacks directed towards my partner. Dream shot herself before changing course at the last second to avoid catching her uniform on fire. I deflected another stab towards Darren, though the leg wrapped around and sent me into the ceiling. Rouge caught me when I fell, and Lemonade got thrown into a table of food. While the six of us were distracted, Syrup alerted us that Shinku had Darren. From the back of the room, I rushed, jump-rope over an arm, Dream cut in to pull down the mentioned arm. Rouge aided Dream’s lifting of the monster as I slid under a whip towards Aqua and Rose. The former blocked Rose from impact. My heels pattered against the tile as I launched, reaching towards Darren as Shinku hit Syrup away from helping him. She hovered as my ankle was snagged by the monster. I’m dragged a little an inch away, which felt like miles that my beloved was carried over the room.

“You got this, Komachi-ren! I trust you’ll save me-ren!” Darren cheered even with panic evident. I kicked my legs free, reached at the last minute, only for the villain to disappear successfully. The ground hit hard when I fell back down. Lemonade covered her mouth. Aqua rushed to help me up, Rose behind her.

“They took him...” Dream was shocked. “Why?”

“We have to go after him!” Rouge shouted.

“How? We don’t know where they went or...” Aqua is interrupted by the monster. Hearts raced, and I was too worried to continue. Having seen this, Rose spawned the Milky Mirror, pointing it forward.

“Metal Blizzard!!” She commanded to defeat the sitaran. Everyone gathered around, helping one another up.

“Are you okay?” Aqua asked, and I gave a wary nod.

Then I turned towards Syrup. “Can you take us to the Chataigne Kingdom?” I asked while kneeling to help him up. Then I checked on my friends. “If she works for them, we have to go. Even if there’s no coming back, Darren... We’ll save you!” Syrup collected himself, popping into flying mode. Wing turning into steps for us. Determinedly, we entered the compartment on his back. As we set off above the castle, it slowly vanished back into an empty lot of grass. I thought of Darren being held captive by one he didn’t truly love. My heart quaked like the sea foam turned mermaid. I am certain he must’ve been feeling the same. Then, put simply, my wish was for him to. “Stay safe...” Something bloomed back at Natts House from the prayer of protection.

Love is the Key



L'amour est la clé

We flew above the fairy kingdoms, already transformed. The air brushed our hair as we skipped over Palmier. Then over the Doughnuts Kingdom, making it carefully over the sea. From the screen, we surveyed what remained of the land from old battles. The walls of the Gaufre Kingdom came into view. The barrier between it and Chataigne was broken. Since the inhabitants evacuated, it's no different from a ghost town. Aiming for the castle at the center of the hill. Abruptly cutting us off, the leaves crashed into Syrup from a tree made monster.

“Sitaraan!!” The monster spat more. Syrup opened the convertible’s roof, Rouge grabbed the tips of the prism chain Lemonade used to throw her down.

“Precure, Rouge Fire!!” Rouge burst into flames, spun around to defeat the leaves. Once having released the light butterflies, Lemonade dropped down to kick the monster directly.

“Go on ahead! We’ll catch up!” Rouge shouted, and Lemonade finished the sitaraan so Syrup could haul the rest of us deeper into the kingdom. More monsters stomped after us, but Rouge and Lemonade kept them at bay. Over the village, a few fairies cowered. But stepped out, only to tilt their heads curiously before fleeing back into their houses as a monster crashed down the road. To this, Milky Rose dropped down, ran, and caught it before it could crush any innocent fairies. She releases it, then uppercuts to send it high into the sky. Dream shot through via shooting star, slicing the monster in half, and defeating it in a puff of smoke. Syrup picked up the pace while I glared at the castle ahead.

Perched in her throne, the Mistress scratched her chin. Watching the cures advance from one of the window reflections. One depicted the bursting fight that Rouge and Lemonade

took charge of. The second was Rose and Dream helping bring peace to the fairy village. The third had Mint and Aqua hurrying through the maze of a castle. Finally, there was Flora's blossom, which the Mistress kept tabs on since it was now unguarded. The light slowly diminished as the sun went behind a cloud. As such, Choga lit a candle so they wouldn't be blinded. As he did, the Mistress stared at him.

"You want me to take care of them?" Choga asked in a bow, then took off the moment she nodded. Shinku entered the tower as he left, dragging Darren behind her. She then stopped at the bottom of the steps to the throne.

"He doesn't remember me at all!" She complained to the witch as Darren ripped from her grasp, shaking his head.

"Maybe because I'm a completely different person, I don't know what happened-*ren*... But this can't be right-*ren*!" Darren argued. Shinku considered his words with a head tilt.

"Don't listen my dear, and try to have patience. Once the enemies are gone, he shall regain his memories, I assure you," The Mistress pulled the strings back. Smirking that her minion's anger towards Precure grew. Darren looked from each battle then to the flower.

"What are you going to do with that-*ren*?" He asked. But only to receive an evil chuckle from the cloaked woman. She focused on Shinku.

"Them reuniting could be detrimental to our goals, be sure he stays contained..." The witch glanced at the footage of Cure Mint's group encountering Choga. Shinku silently brought Darren to a cage just in case. But even if things seemed dire, Darren was given hope by the view from the windows alone.

He looked down at the floor in a huff. "Stay safe..." There's nothing more he could have wished for while waiting.

Our heels pattered against the marble floor. Syrup clung to Aqua's ponytail as we spiraled up the staircase. We stopped at a crossroad. Three identical halls teased our senses. "Not so fast, Precure..." Choga's wings flapped as he dropped from a portal. Landing before us, at the sight of him, we charged forth.

"Where is Darren?" I asked with a punch to his forearm. After blocking, he launched me with a kick, then Aqua looped around with a graceful karate chop to his side. And I used the wall to send a kick back at him. "Tell us where he is!"

"I may have seen him on the way out," Choga shrugged indifferently, swooping overhead to grab our wrists. Syrup fell for Aqua to catch in her free arm, but soon the three of us crashed through a wall alongside the bulleting villain. As the dust cleared, he stood over the destroyed guest bedroom. "Probably with the Mistress by now."

"Mistress?" I questioned. His hands glowed, signaling for us to jump out of the way. After the blast separated us, Syrup hopped onto Aqua's head so she could hold her

Aqua Ribbon. From the bud formed a stream of water which hardened into a sword, and she used it to slice towards Choga.

Then shouted towards me when he pried his own sword from a suit of armor he backed into. “Komachi, go on ahead. I’ll handle him!”

“Got it!” I nodded, watching the blades spark back and forth, confirming she had it under control before rushing down further. To myself, I pondered that the mistress would likely be in the throne room. From that hunch, I should know where Shinku and my beloved had gone. After having looked in a few doors, I found deep maroon carpet. Following its red up to the room I sought, I carefully pushed the huge door open. I made it to the center, then looked to the side at the sound of his voice. Before I could rush towards the cage and the enraged Shinku.

“Watch out-ren!” He cried once we locked eyes, and a chill ran down my spine. I quickly summoned an Emerald Saucer to shield with. Before my eyes, the witch appeared, scratching the shield before jumping away. I shifted my weight, a brow raised.

“You are?” I questioned what had already been assumed to be the mistress. Behind me, Shinku shrugged and walked around to stand to the right. My eyes glanced towards Darren to ensure his safety, even positioning myself in the way of the cage. Then raised my fists as the two villains regarded me. I raised my hand as Shinku pounced first, catching her fist with the arm cuffs of my uniform. Then stepped aside to launch my own punch to send her stumbling across the tiles. A snap of magic sprang from behind, sending me skidding before I fixed my footing to charge ahead.

“You got this Mint-ren!” Darren cheered as a fist collided with the mistress’s face, only for Shinku to pierce behind. She grabbed my wrist and flung me far into a stained glass window. Somehow landing with not even a snapped back, I hurried to shield with Mint Protection. Watching both opponents carefully from inside the forcefield. Her hands swiped to despawn it before she launched to kick Shinku. Then cartwheeled aside to dodge a blast of magic from the Mistress. She scanned the room, looking at the tiled floor, the maroon carpet dragging up the stairs, and the curtains to match near either window. There was also a cauldron off to the right of the throne, and the cage was beside a marble pillar to the left. My priority was to get Darren out of that cage, and then I could go all out. She sprinted up the steps, though her front flip was interrupted by Shinku’s fingers stabbing into her left arm warmer. I waded through three more pointed attacks, then grabbed her wrist, kicking the enemy down to the floor. I shielded again with a saucer as the Mistress’s magic slammed against it. I counted on it dissipating, and swiftly boomeranged it through the curtains behind me. When they came crashing down, I grabbed them, leaping over the two and letting the curtains drape over them. As they struggled beneath the fabric, I caught the saucer.

“Please step back,” I told him, then sliced through the bars. Darren jumped up into human form, hugging me close. “There there,” I consoled him. Then we pulled away for me to smile, keeping a grip on his shoulder. “You’re not injured?”

“No, I’m okay!” He nods. “Thank you, Komachi!”

“I’m glad, woops-” I exclaimed as I pushed him behind me to shield Shinku’s grabbing. “It’s not exactly safe to chat.”

“Give him back to me!” Shinku shouted in desperation. I swiped my forearm to push her away, yet she struck back. I endured my position.

“This has to be a misunderstanding. Whoever you’re looking for, it isn’t me,” Darren spoke up.

I turned towards him. “Did she hint at any reasons for doing this?”

“I resemble someone she knew, that’s all I gathered...” Darren replied as I deflected more punches from Shinku.

“You have to be him!” She shouted, then wound another punch. I caught it with my left forearm.

“I’m sure we can work this out,” I glared sharply. Punching back to make distance between us. “Tell us what happened to inspire this.”

“Just give him back!” Shinku screamed, sending me snapping into the wall.

“Komachi! Are you hurt?” Darren rushed over, yet the Mistress shot at him.

“Watch out, it’s dangerous!” I shot, but when I rushed to help him, Shinku swooped in to kick me away. It seemed as though we were being ripped apart each time we reached for the other. But even so, we were undeterred and kept running to meet up again.

“You’re not getting away,” The Mistress stepped in to shoot two streams of magic. One whipped me into the floor, then the other dragged Darren away.

“This keeps happening again and again, but I won’t give up...” I pushed against the tile to stand. Holding my shoulder before raising my hands defensively. I blocked two punches from Shinku, skidded back by the third punch. “You can’t take someone against their will, and even if you have your reasons, this is Darren. If you miss them that much, maybe we could help find who you seek...”

“Shut up!” Shinku cried, latching onto my arm and lifting me over her head to slam into the ground again. I kicked her up into the ceiling and darted away. I head for Darren, yet the Mistress’s magic sent me rolling down the steps, spilling the cauldron as I reached the base. I shot an Emerald Saucer at the witch, then hurried back towards my love.

“No matter how many times we’re separated, we’ll always find one another!” I declared despite the attacks from both ends. I leapt high above the two as they crashed into each other, my pigtails waving beneath as I looked down at Darren. I landed, kicked the villains down the stairs, then freed him from the magic. Holding his hands. In one of the windows, the image of Flora’s tree was sparkling.

“That’s the truest form of love, isn’t it?” Darren smiled happily. The flower on the said tree finally opened, gleaming brightly.

“Indeed,” I agreed, feeling a power surge throughout me. It is similar to whenever I transform, a strand would lead around the steps. The two of us would go into a light waltz as my uniform glowed. As he dipped me, my hair grew out, each ponytail splitting and becoming wavier. Then the larger strands curved once ankle length to make cute little hearts. The butterfly tiara slid to the right side, becoming more of a hair clip, its tips sharpening, and the wing tails swirled out of my eyes. The light green fades to a yellow, and the central rose became a paler peach color. Then we swayed in the gown that draped me between forms, my jewel glows as its bow pops to match the clip. From it swirled sky blue fabric that looped my puffed sleeves. The ruffles sort of fell, but arm warmers grew oversized past my knuckles with peach looped at my elbows. We swooped around once more, then met closer, once our lips met, my dress snapped, the lighter green of the bodice and skirt splitting. Underskirt grows poofier with littered stars across it. The overskirt is ruffled with a white hemline. Then he lifted my hand to twirl me, and as this happened, one sock glowed up over my left knee. “Tranquility of love, Beau Mint!” I curtsied.

“What!?” Shinku exclaimed.

“Impossible...” The Mistress’s anger oozed through the room. Looking back at the tree and the flower that had bloomed. Then down at me, who had truly blossomed. She shouted in fear. “Shinku, get them!”

To that, I snapped forward just as fast as she did. But this time, the swipe of my hand fell stronger against her forearm. And when Shinku tried to knee me instead, I hovered, doing a loopy loop. She took off as well to fly at me as I darted over to dodge. The two of us smacked against one another, causing light to spark everywhere, then we flew again, doing a U-turn on the other side. Meanwhile, I caught Darren cheering as the Mistress judged from afar. Then punched hard, only for her to return with a spin kick. But leaves scattered as I blocked, floating back before flying over again. Spinning to propel myself faster through her. She slumped to the floor with a gasp. I hovered, then heard the door creak, turning with a smile as Cure Aqua entered with Cure Dream and Milky Rose behind her. Syrup clung to Aqua’s ponytail.

“Is that Komachi?” Dream exclaimed in excitement.

“Darren, you’re safe-ropu!” Syrup waved. Crashing from the window, Cure Rouge and Cure Lemonade came.

“Everyone!” Darren greeted him as he moved closer. Even I descended, and the group forgot about the villains for a second.

“Was that really your best idea?” Rouge scolded Lemonade.

“Oh look, everyone’s here!” Lemonade greeted. “Your dress is so pretty!”

“Thank you,” I curtsied proudly. Choga burst in as well so that all three villains could witness us. Cure Aqua handed Syrup off to Darren for safety, then the five cures ran beside my flight as we charged. Shinku rushed, nails sharp as thorns, as she slashed at Rose, who karate chopped and slid to the side for a Dream Shoot to purify by. Meanwhile,

Choga blocks a punch from Cure Aqua, then his wings burst into flames from Cure Rouge's power. To the left of me, in rage, Shinku sliced between Rose and Dream in a swift motion.

"Why are you doing this still?" I asked, defending with my forearms. Choga lept through, drilling into Cure Rouge, who punched him.

"The Mistress would have granted our finest desires, lost love, and the hopeless to get such, could be truly happy!" Choga mused proudly as he kicked Rouge away, then received a blow from Aqua.

"But hurting others is hardly a way to get such things. Just stop taking other people's love, and we might be able to help!" I explained while flying to meet Shinku's dark energy. We exchanged punches and kicks.

"What do you know?" Her voice cracked a bit. "My husband is dead! There's no finding him again, to even have the semblance of that back... I'm willing to take it all!"

I could only eye her in shame as I took a few kicks. The little mermaid never wanted her prince to suffer; if he had seen what happened, and had gone down the path Shinku had... "Are you sure a replacement would satisfy you? It isn't healthy to chase ghosts..."

"Shut up!" She screeched. Managing to swipe a hit to my face, causing me to double back. In anticipation, I managed to seize her next punch, defending myself from each following attack.

"Please listen!" I bounce back, she blocked the punch. Then I spun around to kick her from the side. "I'm sure your partner misses you a whole bunch and is sad seeing you rip others apart." To this, her brows sharpen, and my heel finally sends her into the glass shards about the floor. I land, waiting for the dust to settle as Darren steps closer to stand beside me. Taking my hand as we watch the stage clear for her to rise shakily.

"Try to remember what he would've wanted," Darren said firmly. Shinku, despite glancing at a photo from her pocket, shook her head.

"I don't... No! I'm not being tricked!" Shinku cried while trying not to trip over shards. I bounced on my heels, hovering away slowly.

"We're not doing anything like that, it's just concerning..." Darren added as he stayed near. Feelings are conflicting since she did horrible things, yet she was suffering so much herself. I could only imagine, based on my own relationship, how the death of him could bring me down so low like Shinku is. How could I help one recover from such a tragedy? I exchange a glance with Darren as we part in sync. I punch whenever Shinku does, dodge when she kicks, trying to hide my feelings of shame towards her predicament. "The witch could be manipulating you!" Darren added as he got a safe distance.

"Villains tend to do that, y'know-ropu?" Syrup said from Darren's arms. I huffed out a breath, continuing to either block or counter attacks. Meanwhile, Choga flung Aqua across the field for Rouge to run after, only for Dream to shoot in from behind.

“You can’t find hope by tearing down others!” Dream shouts before Choga’s wing slaps her away, and he flies near the ceiling. To that, Lemonade uses Prism Chain to catch, then creates a crater by planting him in the tile. Trying to hold him in place as Rose rises with a Milky Rose Blizzard. In the light of the blue rose, Choga purifies, his true form being revealed to be a fairy that plops against the ground.

“That’s one down,” Rouge brushed sweat from her face. Aqua was rolling her shoulders as she left Rouge to congratulate Rose. While Shinku is distracted by the falling of her teammate, I hold fire. Watching her glare from my friends, to Choga, then the Mistress. While their main boss seemed indifferent about the defeat, Rose bent down to check on the fairy. Not letting him off the hook, of course, just making sure he isn’t injured as he squirmed in her hands.

“Where might I be-cho?” Choga seemed confused.

“You don’t remember?” Lemonade asked.

“You’ve been attacking us for months now!” Rouge yelled at the fairy.

“I did-cho?” His antennas sagged as he held his chin.

“No...” Shinku shook her head. “I can’t continue without him!”

“It’s a journey you’ll have to go on, even if painful...” I explained to her, but she kept shaking her head as she backed away. I stopped hovering to extend a hand, but she refused still.

“No... Ugh!” She exclaimed and then pointed to her leader. “Explain yourself!”

“It only takes a little heartbreak to unleash a person,” The mistress gives cryptically. Shinku looks absolutely betrayed. Conflicted, she kicked me away before aiming a punch towards the mistress herself.

“Now she’s fighting everyone,” Rouge complained before blocking an attack with her arms. Rose defended the confused fairy while Shinku went on with her fury. While she went back and forth with punches between herself and Cure Dream, I looked off to the side. The Mistress was stoic as ever, but raised her hands towards Shinku and Choga.

“Rose, watch out!” I shouted so Rose knew to jump over the beam of darkness, and part of the wall toppled over thanks to the missed attack. Even so, having missed the purified minion, the other was still engrossed. Taking Dream with her as the two slam against the floor. I turned to glance at Darren, seeing Lemonade rush to help Dream while I went through the smoke. I hovered over Shinku with a cough as dust cleared, glaring a bit.

“Why? I was promised I’d get to see you again...” A tear trailed down her cheek. Beside us, Dream helped Lemonade up. When the Mistress tried again to dispose of her pawns, Rose, Aqua, and Rouge fired in. The first kicked while the latter two punched. The Mistress waved the long cloak of her arms, blocking. But this did not deter my friends; Darren and Syrup walked through the chaos to stand to my right.

“What was he like?” I asked gently as she placed the back of her hand on her forehead.

“As kind as he was handsome, deserved the world...” Shinku rolled onto her side, eyes narrow towards the gleaming bracelet. His picture was all that remained of what she lost, and our hearts go out to her. Dream did a double-take, looking at the photo and Darren.

“They do look a lot alike...” Lemonade held a hand over her mouth. Kneeling beside the opened locket. Syrup picked up the locket somberly. I landed very cautiously, holding out a hand. Though soon an attack got past my friends. Swiftly, the six of us regrouped. We spawned our Cure Fleurets, though I got to be the center for once. Then we performed Floral Explosion. But the Mistress had other plans; instead deflected the power with her own. And the giant roses fell towards Shinku; we couldn’t pull out of the attack, and thus, while we were so close.

“I’m coming to see you...” Shinku muttered in her fading away. As soon as we broke free, Dream fell to her knees. As Akimoto Komachi, I’d never want to kill anyone like this. I’m never really quite sure how to react to this mystery, though I do give myself peace of mind imagining the enemies who were purified got reborn in some way elsewhere. And don’t have to suffer or be evil anymore. My fist clenched at the sound of the Mistress laughing. Couldn’t she at least leave her pawns to rest in peace? To that, I had to end it all. My brooch glowed powerfully, and I summoned my Emerald Saucers; then they sharpened, mounting to my knuckles. I flew at sonic speed.

The blades blinded the room, and the enemy hollered as she withered away. Well, purification is deadly like that to them for some reason. Even though Precure implied we are meant to Cure things, some foes get destroyed by such. But then a blast of magic scattered us, and the mistress stood in the window shards. Then my focus is on the Mistress, from the reflection of broken glass on the floor, I catch a glimpse of Darren silently pumping his fists. And from the encouragement, it was like wings flourished on my back, and I managed to land a punch of magic down the old woman’s face. She countered the mint leaves fluttering around us with some withering energy. Then lugged the energy towards me, yet I barrel rolled just in time. Then swept around to kick her in the side. As she was sent into the left wall, she shot into the darkness, sending me the opposite way. My fingers dug into the cracks behind me. I crouched in preparation against the wall. “Pretty Cure...” I declared, and energy swirled around me. The discs of light that I normally throw spawn and then sharpen as I hold them between my fingers. Then I launch with sharp punches to the Mistress. “Beautiful Emerald Strike!”

And just like that, it was over. Darren rushed to hug me. Syrup hopped towards Lemonade, Rouge, and Dream fist bumped. Aqua checked on Choga for injuries as Rose looked for any other sinister auras. I picked up the locket, sympathy inspiring tears from Darren and me. “I can’t forgive her, but it really is a shame...” I told Darren.

“Let’s go home,” He kept a hand on my shoulder, wiping the tear away. I nodded, then turned to hug him. We slowly retraced our steps, the fairies of Chataigne thanked us for freeing them. Choga hid behind Rose’s shoulder before she turned into Milk and

landed in front of him. But with the help of both her and Syrup, it did seem he would get his life back. On our way home, we walked through Gaufre, Nozomi, and Urara ran very fast through the meadow Darren had told me of. I stopped to watch a caterpillar on a flower. We also stopped at Palmier so Milk could bring the news to Darren's people. He turned back into a fairy to celebrate with his friends a bit. Finally, we were off towards home after the war.

Some time has passed, and the two of us are on a sort of celebratory date. We took a bus to a neighboring town of Hanamichi. It was the sort of thing he had read about when researching Earth that he always wanted to do. You see, in this town, there was a pink tree whose leaves were perfectly shaped like a heart. The sight brought a smile to us when we finally made it to that lookout beneath. The city shone so beautifully. My fingers dug into the railing, then caught his even prettier smile towards it. Couples would put locks beneath their shade, as a symbol of eternal love. So I had bought one for us before coming here. Taking it from my bag, we face each other.

"That was really frightening, wasn't it?" Darren rubbed his shoulder while taking the key in his hand. He fidgeted with it a bit as I admired the little pink lock.

"I'm glad everyone's okay," I smiled gently, and he nodded excitedly.

"Same!" He laughed a bit nervously. I step forward.

"Well, even if more shall happen in the future. At the very least, we have this." I held out the lock.

"Right!" He excitedly locked it around the bars next to other happy couples. Then, in the sunset, we leaned against one another.

"We hardly got a chance to enjoy the ball..." I brought up sadly.

"True..." He looked down as we turned to face one another, holding hands.

"Then, may I?" I ask, feeling warm. He nods, and we move in close, leaning in to kiss each other as the wind rustles the locks. A few pink leaves from the tree fell around us as well. But at last, the day was saved. And we get to spend the rest of our lives together. Though this moment feels as if it lasts longer than any lifetime. We finally broke apart. Stars are starting to paint the twilight as we just stood to admire how far we've come. A sweet moment to say farewell to our tale.

The End.