Y2V4.5 Epilogue

When Hearts Touch One Another

After our holiday on the luxury cruise ship ended, we boarded a bus and returned to the Advanced Nurturing High School.

Since then, I spent my days going back and forth between the dormitory and Keyaki mall. You could almost call it lazy and self-indulgent, and I think I’ve spent the time rather insipidly.

During that time, the number of people I hung out with increased incomparably to last year.

There were the members of the Ayanokōji group, Sudō and Ike, who I’d been friends with from the beginning, Ishizaki and Hiyori from another class, and in the end, I even had a little chat with some members of Ichinose’s class. Even if I told myself from last year, I wouldn’t have believed all the things that had gone on.

And then───

“Ahh, today’s the last day of summer vacation…”

Sitting down on the bed with a poof, Kei looked up at the ceiling and muttered gloomily.

My girlfriend, Karuizawa Kei, and I had been regularly going on secret dates so that we could reveal our relationship once the second semester started. Today would be the last one.

While we shared a somewhat uninvigorating time; it was by no means an uncomfortable one.

If we hadn’t been friends who’d known each other for a long time, I might’ve been impatient to say a few words and felt a bit muddled.

“From tomorrow, it’s okay for me to tell others about my relationship with you… I feel kinda nervous.”

“There’s no need for you to force yourself to tell people. I won’t be held responsible if your status drops.”

“I’ll absolutely tell them. Even if something happens, you’ll protect me so I’ll be fine. Right, Kiyotaka?”

Kei said it jokingly, but they were unmistakably her true feelings. By clinging to a strong host, parasites were able to protect themselves.

I finished the last sip of my coffee and sat down next to Kei.

I squeezed her slender hand and she gently squeezed mine back.

“Kei.”

At that moment, I pressed my lips onto her soft lips.

“K-Kiyotaka…”

“Were you surprised?”

“Y-yeah, I was surprised. C-couldn’t you give me a little more...advanced notice?”

Rather than with words, I answered her question with actions.

I grasped her shoulders gently and pulled her close.

“Mmm…!”

A second kiss. The moment out lips touched, Kei’s shoulders jerked upwards slightly, and I could feel her surprise.

I quickly separated from her lips, and while she was relieved, she looked at me with eyes that also seemed to regret it.

“…You caught me off guard again.”

“Really? I thought it was rather normal.”

The only way to learn the timing was to repeat it over and over again.

“At least, my heart wasn’t ready for it…”

“Then, are you ready for it this time?”

“Eh?...Yeah…”

With that, she nodded her head and closed her eyes, showing a gesture of acceptance, and I kissed her again.

The previous two kisses only lasted for a second or so, but this time was different.

Five seconds, ten seconds and longer.

And then, moving our lips gradually, we repeated the kiss like little birds pecking at one another.

In that passage of time that felt like only Kei and I were frozen in place…

It was the last day of the summer vacation of our second-year in high school. Kei and I learned about kissing and took another step forward together.

The first half of the curriculum of love had finished and we moved into the second half.

From now on, we would go about our school lives with pride as lovers.

By doing that, it was possible that we may get into a bit of trouble.

Even so, we would face up to the challenge hand in hand.

Slowly but surely, one step at a time, as the seasons change from summer to autumn, from autumn to winter.

Our relationship would be imbued deeper and deeper and become indispensable to us.

While tasting her lips repeatedly, my thoughts involuntarily drifted off towards the future.

Before long, when the season of farewells approached, this romance would enter its final phase───

Because it’s a given that it will face an arduous trial.

When Karuizawa Kei is separated from her host, she will have to stand up and look forward on her own.

That was the most important thing in this curriculum of love.