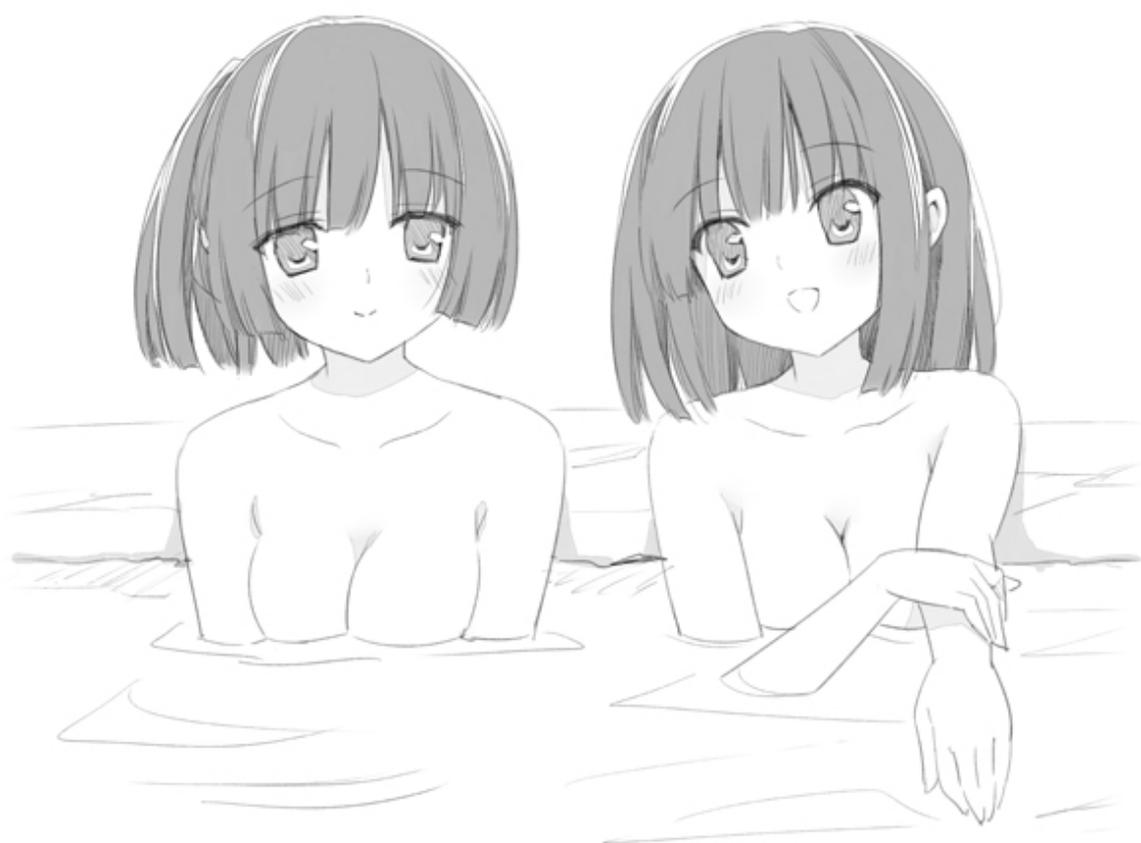


その花びらにくちづけを

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Caution:

This book has no connection whatsoever to the main story.

Reo and Mai casually barge in on this winter's latest light novel, "Bathed in Warmth"...

That's the setup here.

As usual, please don't sweat the minor details and just enjoy the story.

What if a Yuri Couple from St. Michael's Bumped into a Senior Couple at an Open Air Bath?

"For New Year's this year, let's take the whole family to a hot spring hotel."

I can't recall whether it was Mom or Dad who made the suggestion, but because I'm usually stuck helping out at home since both my parents work, the proposal was eagerly accepted.

And then... it was finally here. The day of the trip. With my beloved sweetheart, Kawamura Reo, coming along for the ride, I was having an absolute blast. Although this is Reo we're talking about, so I think she might have shown up anyway, even if she hadn't been invited... You could say she was just that much like a part of our family.

"It almost seems like you've become a member of the family lately, Reo."

"Mmm... hahm... What, Mai?"

"Hey, what's in your mouth?!"

"Huh? Hot spring manju. The ones we bought earlier."

Her expression said this was totally normal, but I beg to differ.

"No, what I meant was, why are you carrying around snacks when we're about to go into an open air bath?"

"But you're the one who said, 'You've gotta have hot spring manju when you're at a hot spring,'" Reo countered with bean jam stuck to her face.

Normally I would have said, "You idiot!" and told her off. Maybe I was just in a good mood from coming on this trip, but instead, her hopelessness just made her that much more endearing. Actually, I think this was Reo's first time visiting a town with a hot spring. From the moment we arrived, her eyes had been shining more than anyone else in my family. The sight of that alone was enough to send me head over heels.

"It's my fault for saying that, but there's no food allowed in the bathing area," I said tenderly, to which Reo turned red and said, "I understand," and averted her eyes.

Ooooh, is she cute or what?! If she gets any cuter I might just have to take her right here. And the fact that we're both naked isn't helping any...

"Ohhh, that's such a cute butt, I just wanna rub it...♪"

"Huh? Did you say something, Mai?"

"N- No, nothing... Ah-ha-ha..."

As I was greeted by amorous feelings, I washed Reo's body in the indoor bathing area before we stepped into the outdoor bath. Reo seemed a little on edge, this being her first trip to an open air bath.

"What's the matter? Hurry up and get in, the water's great."

"O- Okay..."

Maybe she was just uneasy about bathing outdoors, but she was glancing around nervously.

"Ohh, are you... scared, by any chance?"

"O- Of course I'm not scared!"

"Oh, it's shallow enough even for your feet to touch the bottom, so there's no need to worry♪"

"Grr, I'm not so short that my feet wouldn't even touch the bottom in a bath!"

"Heheheh, is that so?"

“Sheesh, Mai, you’re always such a bully!”

And with that, Reo finally submerged herself in the bath. I don’t know whether it was deliberate, but she sat down a little ways away from me. I could tell from her back there was an obvious air of tension about her.

“Come on, Reo, it’s your first time at a hot spring. Try to relax a little more... Oh yeah.”

I felt my mischievous side becoming aroused. As luck would have it, we had the entire open air bath practically to ourselves, so this might be my chance.

“Hehe... I’m gonna get your boobs underwater, Reo♪”

I silently crept up on Reo without being noticed.

“Hehehe, just a little more...”

I could just picture it now, Reo, full of adorable rage, screaming ‘M-M-M- Mai, you pervert!’”

I reached out with my hands, *squish-squish...*

“...Wait, huh?”

Wh- What?! Why was my chest being squeezed?!

A pair of hands had suddenly appeared from behind me. There was someone groping my chest.

“Hm? Shizuku... have your breasts gotten a little bigger?” the person said casually, continuing to squeeze my chest.

Who is Shizuku? Obviously I had been mistaken for someone else.

“Uh, excuse me... I’m...”

As I tried to explain that she had the wrong person, there was suddenly a loud splash in the water.

“Huh? Reo?”

“W-W-W- What are you doing squeezing Mai’s breasts?!”

There stood Reo, having heard the racket going on behind her, enveloped in an aura of fury. Her gaze was focused on the person behind me.

“Grrrr... You! Get your hands off her this instant! Or I’ll bite you!!”

“R- Reo, calm down, this is just...”

Oh no, at this rate she might go into a rampage. Surely she wouldn’t wreck the bath, would she? No, this is Reo, so she probably would.

“Huh, they really are bigger... I guess you’re still a growing girl, Shizuku♪”

“Ahhh, ohh... If you squeeze them like that, I... Hnn.”

The hands groping my chest still hadn’t stopped. Actually, they were doing some pretty obscene things...

“Hnnnyunyunyuyu?! How long are you going to keep fondling her?!”

“Shizuku, are you embarrassed? You’ve been awfully quiet this whole time♪”

“Uh, um, could you two stop for a moment?”

What am I supposed to do in this situation? As I was racking my brain over how to deal with these two who weren’t listening to a thing I said, a new figure suddenly appeared. When she saw us, her eyes opened wide in surprise. Huh?! This person... Wait, could this be Shizuku...?

“Eris... How could you... Rubbing another girl’s breasts in such an indecent manner?!”

At this other girl's appearance, the one behind me suddenly took her hands away.

"T- There are two Shizukus?!"

I turned around to see a lovely golden-haired girl looking from me, to the other girl, and back again in shock. It seemed she had finally realized her mistake. Even Reo, who had been about ready to launch herself at us, stopped what she was doing and looked. Ahhh, good grief.

This was Shizuku, for whom I had been mistaken. Kirishima Shizuku-san, a third-year student at St. Michael's. And the perpetrator (?) of my groping turned out to be Kirishima-senpai's girlfriend, Shitogi Eris-san. She explained that she had mistaken me for her own lover, whose hair looked exactly the same from behind. I never would have imagined we would bump into them here... Oh yes, speaking of which, it seemed those two had won a trip to this hot spring in some sort of shopping district lottery.

"That's amazing. A lottery, huh...? That sounds nice."

I guess fortune follows fortune. Something that was a luxury for my middle-class family had just been dropped in these girls' laps?

With the misunderstanding resolved, Kirishima-senpai asked forgiveness for her partner's rudeness, and Eris-san apologized as well. I instinctively felt embarrassed being apologized to by two of my seniors, but I was more concerned with that lottery drawing than having my chest groped. Just as I was going to ask where that shopping district was, Reo said, "Hey!" trying to get my attention.

"M- Mai... I've never seen these people. When in the world did you make friends with them?" Reo pulled me aside to ask me, showing her usual fear of strangers.

"What's with that pouty look? Are you feeling jealous again?"

"I- It's not that... You're just leaving me out, since you all are having so much fun talking."

"Left out...? But we're all students at St. Michael's."

In fact, Kirishima-senpai as well as Eris-san were both local celebrities at St. Michael's. I had heard there was even some kind of fan club called "Lily Platinum." It would be just like Reo to not know about that either.

"Hey, how do you know them anyway?"

"Ohh, Kirishima-senpai and I are both members of a secret society at St. Michael's, the *Black Bobbed Hair Society*."

"Ahem... I am honored to be serving as its 49th president."

"Th- That sounds like a pretty mysterious group..."

"Oh yeah?"

"So... what kinds of things does your society do?"

"If I told you, it wouldn't be a secret, would it?"

"Hnnnn, Mai, I can't believe you'd keep secrets from me..."

As she said that, Reo eyed my and Kirishima-senpai's hair for the hundredth time.

"I get that you both have bobbed hair."

"And that's all you need to know."

"Hmm... It's hard to tell Japanese people apart," Eris-san murmured while similarly eyeing our hair.

"Ohh, Eris..."

At that point, both Kirishima-senpai and I exchanged glances and shared a laugh. I wondered if that had somehow resolved the issue. But no sooner had I thought that than...

"Hey, Shizuku... Is this *Itty Bitty Titty Committee* girl an acquaintance of yours too?"

"Hh?!!"

Eris-san pointed at Reo's chest as she said those outrageous words.

"Hrrggh?! Who are you calling itty bitty?!"

Reo stomped the floor of the bath and began to rage. Hot water was splashing everywhere.

"Honestly, Eris, you mustn't go around saying such rude things all the time."

"But... But... it's the truth, isn't it?"

"That's... Well, that may be, but..."

Kirishima-senpai glanced at Reo as she answered evasively. Her gaze was fixed on Reo's tiny breasts. This only fanned the flames of Reo's fury even more.

"Raaaaah! Everyone's ganging up on me and making fun of my chest!!!"

"Ah, that wasn't my intention..."

"Reo, let's try to be a little more respectful in front of our elders, okay?"

"Hrrh! Hrrh! Hnnn! Hnaaah!"

It was no use. Reo's rage had no end in sight. She had turned so bright red, I thought steam was going to start coming out of her ears.

"That's it! I'm going to avenge Mai... I'm going to grope *you* now!"

"Huh? Wait, what?! She's... Hyah! Ahhn~♪"

Grope-grope. Grope.

For reasons I couldn't begin to explain, Reo began to squeeze Eris-san's breasts.

"Whoa?! They're big... I can't believe they're so big..."

Even though she had already started, she seemed awfully shocked by the size of Eris-san's chest for some reason.

"I... I absolutely, positively refuse to accept breasts like these!!!"

Grope-grope-grope. Grope.

"Aaah, if you keep rubbing them like that, I... Yaah♪"

Seeming half-desperate, Reo went crazy squeezing the giant set of breasts.

"Nn, hnn... Your hands are so small compared to Shizuku's... Ah, it feels kind of weird... Ah♪"

"W- Wait a second, Eris, don't tell me you're getting turned on?"

"O- Of course not, Shizuku. How could I enjoy having my breasts touched by anyone but you...? Ah, hnn!"

"Take that! And that! And some more of that! Squishy-squishy-squishy~ Get smaller~ Get smaller~ Get smaller~♪"

"Ah... Stop, don't! Ahhn♪"

"Eris! You really are enjoying it, aren't you! Grrr... I don't even care anymore!" Kirishima-senpai accused her partner, almost on the verge of tears.

And Reo, totally oblivious to the situation, continued obsessively fondling her chest.

"Hmph, I've got plenty more chest-shrinking spells where that came from!"

Reo... Spells? Don't tell me that's what your "Get smaller~" a minute ago was supposed to be.

"...Sigh."

Well, whatever. I'll just let her do what she wants.

Sitting next to the three rioting girls, I casually soaked in the hot water and gazed up at the sky. Ahh, what a lovely night sky. It's good to take some time like this every once in a while to forget about the daily grind. It's important to relax and take your mind off the everyday hustle and bustle of saving money and special sales.

"Ahhh... The water's great."

That's how the rest of the evening at the hot spring leisurely wore on.

The End

A Kiss For The Petals – Comic Market 81 Bonus Story

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