

# Regen(Rain)

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*Yoji expresses how he feels about the rain...but then Aya comes clean.*

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# 1 - Rain

It was madness, he knew that.

But then, the rain brought that. Madness, grief, joy, life...everything.

He stood quietly in the middle of the empty park. Everyone had gone away at the first signs of rain. But he stayed. He liked the rain. He liked the park. Especially when it was empty. So he smiled, watching the horizon as the darkness slowly wrapped over the sky, dim clouds rolling overhead. Small drops of rain fell over him, he park, the cement.

"It's raining," a voice said from behind him.

He did not have to turn. He knew that voice. The smile did not disappear. "I know."

Suddenly, the drops didn't fall on him anymore. Aya held an umbrella over his head. "Youji--"

"I know what you'll say," Youji interrupted. "You don't like rain. It's inconvenient. It's messy. Rain means muddy paths and traffic jams and too many people in the bus." He stopped and turned to the younger man. "Doesn't it?"

A small smile quirked on Aya's mouth. "I didn't say that."

"You were going to."

A pause. Then, Aya admitted, "Not exactly. But, yes. You're quite close."

Tap-tap-tapping on the ground. Falling, harder every few minutes.

"I love the rain," Youji told him softly, as if in a dream. "It's full of madness."

"You like madness?" Aya brushed some red strands from his face. His voice was flat but it held a hint of amusement.

"I think we're all quite mad," Youji replied. "At least, at one point or another." He shrugged and turned to Aya. "Don't you think so?"

"Yes." But now, Aya's voice was serious. He was not looking at Youji. "Especially us."

"Especially us," Youji echoed, agreeing.

Thunder rumbled, a little menacingly. It was from a distance, though. The dusty cement was turning black from gray because of the rain. Slowly, slowly, then turning harder. Rain.

"Rain," Youji said suddenly, "is like the full moon. It affects people. Makes them pure." His voice dropped a notch, as if he was speaking to himself. "Maybe...that's why...I like it. I want...to be pure again." A pause. "Don't you wish that?"

"I..." Aya stopped, then went on: "I think it's too late."

"I know," Youji replied sorrowfully. "Goddammit, I know."

And with that, he stepped out of the umbrella, stretching his arms as if to catch every drop that fell from the heavens. Aya watched, fascinated, as Youji hummed a song and stepped father away. Rain falling harder. Faster. Storm. Flood.

He turned to Aya, eyes large, soft, enticing. He held out his left arm.

"Dance with me."

Aya stared at the hand, his own clenching to fists over the handle of the umbrella. His body shook. He didn't know why. Youji's hands were pale, thin, slender. Its movements are graceful. He bit his lip. "I can't."

Youji looked puzzled. "Why not?"

"I'm holding the umbrella."

Rain.

Harder.

Faster.

Louder.

"It's just a bit of madness, Aya," Youji told him coaxingly.

Aya stared at his hand as if he didn't trust him. "But...I want to hold on...to my senses."

Deepening frown. "But," Youji said, voice louder to be heard from the roar of pouring rain, "we lost our sanity a long time ago."

Silence in the rain.

Then, Youji stepped back to Aya's side, his clothes dripping wet. His soft, wavy brown hair clung to his skin, his face, his neck. He smiled sadly. "I don't want to be alone in my insanity."

I don't want you to be alone, Aya almost blurted out. But he was ashamed to. He had just refused an offer. An awkward pause. Then, he raised his eyes to the sky. Gray clouds. Falling rain. Thin, jagged lines indicating lightning. I won't let you be alone. He swallowed. "Youji, I--"

Youji's lips were on his.

Wet, they tasted of rain. A combination of water, rain and tears. Tears...Youji had wept. Dry clothes pressed against wet ones, urging more contact, needing more of the touch. Aya caught Youji's nape with one hand and held, still kissing him.

It was the loud roar of thunder that broke them apart. They jumped back, quite breathless. Amused.

"Madness," Aya said, smiling slightly.

"I love you."

Clenched the umbrella once more. Aya stared down at his shoes. It was the first time Youji told him that. It had been weeks before since Aya had told him of his own feelings but Youji had never returned the simple statement. Until now. Two tears fell from his eyes.

"Aya..."

He looked up and smiled. "I'll dance you with," he said.

Youji smiled. Then he laughed. Laughter almost drowning the pounding of rain on the ground. Soon, the rain will stop. But they still had time. He need not worry.

"But, Aya," he said almost playfully, "you're still holding the umbrella."

Aya stared at the object incredulously. He had forgotten. Shrugging, he snapped it close and threw it away. "Damn the thing." And he stepped closer to grab Youji's waist and kissed him. Youji put his arms around his shoulders. They danced.

Madness.

The rain poured.