Fading Away

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Kurama's thoughts on the death of a close friend. (non-yaoi)

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By: Avi-chan

Summary: Kurama's thoughts on the death of a close friend. (non-yaoi)

This is a KuramaHiei friendship only. I may love yaoi, but I can't write it very well.

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

I hear the phone ring downstairs as I sit in my room. I don't really care at the moment. Considering the time of night, it's probably one of those damn telemarketers. I hate them! Always calling at the wrong times!

I'm very preoccupied right now, so I don't notice until about the fourth loud tapping noise that my mother's knocking on my door. I open it, hoping this isn't what I think it is. She tells me that it was Yusuke on the phone and he said that I need to go to Genkai's temple immediately (though I highly doubt she has any idea where that is). I turn white; it can't be! But it must be. I only pause to pull on my shoes before I tear out the door and into the night.

Something must have happened to you. It wasn't that I wasn't expecting it; it's just that I didn't want it to happen. There's no denying it, though, you've definitely been getting worse.

It had started about a week and a half ago. The four of us had been fighting against a powerful demon that had taken the form of a huge scorpion. We had come up with a strategy, though. You and Kuwabara would attack first from the front and rear, and Yusuke and I would come next from both sides to finish it off. We realized a little too late that it was on to our strategy. It pretended not to notice you behind it, letting you get dangerously close, and swung its tail at you so fast even you couldn't get out of the way in time. I only watched in horror as it drove its stinger deep into your side. Your body went limp after a moment, and the demon flung you away. I jumped to catch you, and we were both slammed into a tree. I was fine, but you were unconscious, sweating like hell, and your skin was about the color of

paper. I held you up as I watched Yusuke and Kuwabara kill the demon.

When we brought you back to Genkai's temple, she told us that you had been poisoned. The poison would devour your youki from the inside out. If there wasn't some kind of miracle, you would probably die a slow, very painful death. I knew there would be a miracle. I was so hopeful. You wouldn't die. Knowing you, that seemed almost impossible. But even Yukina's healing powers combined with my own did nothing. We couldn't even lessen the pain.

After that, Yusuke and Kuwabara came to see you almost every day. I, however, only came once after that. Seeing you the way you were was too much for me. Knowing you were in agony, but I couldn't help you. You were a fiery creature in more ways than one. Feisty, arrogant, and rude. Hell, I liked it that way. You were strong and

lightning-fast. I'd only even seen you injured a couple times in all the years that I've known you. But that time I came to see you... You could barely move or speak. You seemed so helpless. You...weren't yourself. You were fading away.

I run up to the door of Genkai's temple and bang on it. Yusuke opens it. He looks at me, but says nothing. As I walk in nervously, he walks out and closes the door, leaving me alone with you. I look over at you. You don't seem to be moving... I run over to you and place my hand over your heart.

There's no pulse...

Hiei...

Are you...

dead?

I unwrap the bandages from your cold arm. The tattoo of the black dragon is gone. All the heat of being a living fire-demon has left your body. I look at your face. Your natural eyes are still open, but your Jagan eye is sealed shut. Your expression is the most peaceful I've ever seen on you. I run my hand over your eyes, forcing them shut. I can't bear you staring at me like that.

My eyes fill up with tears as I think about you. Damn it all! I'm such a jerk! I was wrong when I thought I couldn't help you. I could've helped you. Just being there would've helped! But I was too stupid! I should've been there for you. You had wanted me there. You'd told me that. That was why I didn't come

back. I'd never heard you say *anything* like that before. It scared me, made me think you'd given up on yourself. You'd never given up on anything before. Except...well, you never told Yukina that you were her brother. She'll probably never know now.

Tears are streaming down my face now. I'm not one to show much emotion, and you weren't either. Well, you acted angry a lot, but you didn't show much else. I haven't cried like this since...

Since Kuronue was killed.

I bury my face in my hands as more painful memories are thrust to the front of my mind. That day...so many years ago...I couldn't save him either.

I stand up and, wiping away my tears, begin to walk towards the door. I pause as I open it to look back at you one last time. People always said that you were damned from the moment you were born. Somehow, I don't think so. You may have been arrogant and cold towards others on the outside, but in the inside, though you would never have admitted it, I believe you were a good person...a good friend.

Hiei...

I'm sorry.

