

Whisper Bridge

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Short Fic. Mio and Mayu walk down Whisper Bridge to escape the village, but something goes wrong.

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1. Whisper Bridge

It was dark and cold. The icy breeze from the lake chilled both the girls' ankles and knees as they walked down Whisper Bridge. One holding the other's arm firmly, they both paced towards a pair of large doors at the end of the bridge that lead into the village area. The decay of the bridge caused it to creak noisily as they both walked. Of course, both of the girls had no idea how long it's been since a person has last walked this bridge, and even though they saw no one else, they could sense more than one foreboding presence in this village ever since they first stepped past the boundary.

"Mio... someone else is here, too. They're somewhere close," the first twin murmured.

Mio halted and looked back at her sister, one hand clutching a flashlight, and the other moving to place comfortingly on her shoulder. "Stay here, Mayu. I'll go and check to make sure."

"No!" Mayu locked her arms tightly around her sister's. "You can't leave me. We promised... You promised that we wouldn't separate! You have to stay with me... Please... don't go--!"

Mio looked down at her sister. Her face was pressed against her shoulder, and her eyes were moist and glistening with anguish. "Don't go," Mayu said.

"Mayu..." Mio wrapped her arms around her in an embrace. "I promise that I'll come back, I promise! I'm going to make sure that it's safe to go on further, and I'll be back. Please, don't worry." Mayu looked up at her, and made a quiet sound as she nodded. Slowly they let each other go, and Mio turned and proceeded down the bridge.

Mio moved the flashlight's rays along the surface of the dark water, and trailed it up to one of the rotting trees that stood on either side of the doors. She immediately thought of the bright sunlight that shone through the lush leaves of the forest trees every time she and her sister played outside. They would always run through that forest when they were young. She longed to smell the sweet aroma of the plants and bark again, and to hear the trickling sounds of the glassy stream that flowed through the part of the forest where they made their promise. Though, this promise was much more special to them than any promise they had made to each other or anyone else in their lives. This one they could never break, and that vow was to stay

together always.

Mio's vision then turned back to the doors. She pursed her lips together. I'm not leaving you, Mayu. I'm coming back. I'm keeping our promise.

There were sounds of creaking wood behind Mio. She immediately turned around and shined the flashlight on her sister. She was now about ten yards away from her. "Mayu!" Mio breathed. "I told you to..." Mio stopped and watched her sister. Something wasn't right--she looked like she was in some sort of trance, or maybe sleepwalking. Her head was bowed down, and she was taking slow steps towards Mio.

Suddenly, for a split second, Mio saw a flash of white in front of her. Frightened, Mio began to back away. She cried out as the board beneath her foot dropped. It splashed into the freezing black water, and the area just above her ankle was painfully snared between two broken boards. She was on one knee now, trying desperately to pull it free, feeling like she was in some sort of bear trap. Both the chilled water and the biting wood caused her to flinch. "Mayu, help me--"

There was a soft giggling that was coming from Mayu, and then it broke out into an insane laughter that echoed all around her. When Mio looked up, she didn't see her sister anymore; instead there was a girl in a white, bloody kimono pacing towards her. She had seen that girl before, and she looked exactly like Mayu. But it wasn't her.

"Stop!" Mio pleaded. She clutched her leg while yanking even harder to try and free it. Every pull she made had made her bite the inside of her mouth to hold back a scream. The girl in the kimono was approaching still, but much faster now, and it seemed as though she was drifting across the bridge rather than walking. She gave out a shrill, almost screaming laugh as she lunged for Mio.

Mio's leg tore free from the wooden jaws. Pulling herself up, she half ran, half limped towards the doors that were now only a few more paces away. Mio thought she could feel the girl's breath behind her neck. That horrifying laugh wouldn't stop, and she wished that she could cover her ears.

Finally, she pulled the heavy doors open and went through. They swung shut as she continued

running over the solid ground of the village. Then she halted, breathing heavily. "No... oh no..." Turning around, she now stared helplessly at the wooden doors. "Mayu!"

Mio waited. She saw nobody. No crazed woman could be seen near the door, and she hadn't felt her presence there either, now. Cautiously, she walked over to the doors, resting her hands on them--the flashlight! The flashlight wasn't in her hand anymore. I must have dropped it, she thought. But even if I did, I can't worry about that now. So she focused her attention back at the doors, and took a moment to listen. She heard nothing except the swirling of water against the bridge. The only other sound was her own breathing.

Taking a deep breath, she slowly pushed a door open and peeked through the crack. Sure enough, the flashlight sat next to the hole that her foot slipped through, and it was still casting a white light diagonally over the bridge and lake. But she didn't see her sister. Mio took a step back.

Something made a scraping noise behind her, and she quickly turned. She didn't see anyone, so what made that sound? There came a soft wind that gave Mio goose bumps, and faint whispering could be heard. It was hard to tell if they were voices or just the breeze, but if they were voices, it was more than one person speaking. As Mio stood frozen, her brown eyes darted around in every direction. Then, a pair of cold, white arms weighed down Mio's shoulders, and she cried out in alarm. She felt herself falling with a blurred vision, and the last thing she heard was a maniacal laughter.

"We had... promised each other...we couldn't perform the ritual..."

What's going on? Why can't I see anything? Mayu...?

"...So we ran away."

Mayu, where are you? I can't see...

"Yae... No matter what happens...."

No, Mayu...

"...I'll forgive you."

Mio heard gentle crying. Her eyes had finally opened, but were still blurry with shades of black and gray. She was lying on her side with her head resting on something soft and warm. She could feel a hand stroking her head, and the other had brought her up close to the person's

chest. "Mayu..." Mio whispered.

"Mio," the girl gasped. She placed her hands on Mio's shoulders to gently lift her off. "I was so worried! You left me... you left..." Then Mayu hung her head.

The two twins sat across from each other in silence, and Mio felt a pain in her breast as she watched her sister. But Mio couldn't understand what had happened. Where had Mayu been the whole time?

"We promised each other...." Mayu murmured.

"And kept it," Mio interrupted. "We're still together. I won't leave you again." Mayu looked up at Mio with a tear-streaked face. She nodded.

"And we'll be together forever..."

"Yes, forever," said Mio. Mayu's lips parted, and she stared at Mio. "Mayu.... what's wrong?"

After a moment, Mayu blinked and shook her head. "Mm. Nothing. Let's just get out of here, okay?" And in her hand, Mayu carried the flashlight, and held it out to Mio. Mio stared at the object for a long time, and slowly took it from her palm.

"Mio, what's the matter?"

"...Nothing."

My first fanfic. Questions, comments, and/or suggestions please.