



Revolutionary Girl

UTENA





A Perfect Mourning

DUEL 01

When she little, her parents died in front of her.

She was left alone at the funeral. How was she not dead?

A prince arrived on a white horse and swept her into his arms.

“Little one,” said the prince, “hold onto your strength and nobility.”

The prince left, then, but not before giving the girl an engagement ring.

Changed by this meeting, she decided that she would grow up to be a prince.

Was that really such a good idea?



Utena Tenjou. Terror of the basketball courts, a single girl who regularly outplayed entire boys' teams but refused to join them. Popular idol and most desired of pretty much everyone who had ever seen her. Possessed of that strange charisma that some people have, a magnetism that draws people in like planets orbiting the sun. Aloof and personable, the mysterious but friendly jock, the tomboy that everyone fell in love with just a little.

She wore a boy's uniform from her old school – a black jacket and tight red bicycle shorts. The

faculty tried to get her to change that, to tame her, and their failure only added to her legend. The boys' teams tried to to beat her on the courts and their failure only added to her legend. Girls took turns declaring their love for her and she was gracious, kind, all of which only added to her legend.

A girl named Wakaba Shinohara claimed that Utena was her boyfriend. This led to some confusion – *those bicycle shorts did not leave much to the imagination* – but questions to Utena herself confirmed that she was a she/her kind of girl and that Wakaba was her closest maybe-more-than friend.

Some people looked at Wakaba with envy.

A lot of people looked at Wakaba with envy.

Nowhere in all of Ohtori College could anyone go and not hear the whispers, the declarations, the legend.

Utena Tenjou.

The Scarlet of the School.



Utena Tenjou was a duellist.

This was not something known to many. A handful of students were Chosen, contacted from the End of the World. Kyouichi Saionji, the monstrous captain of the nationally ranked kendo team who had chosen Ohtori over Totsuki. Miki Kaoru, gifted composer and mathematician, a prodigy, a genius. Juri Arisugawa, still a student and an internationally recognized model, linguist, possibly the best swordsperson in the world; she collected accolades and awards without care or thought. And, of course, Touga Kiryuu.

The End of the World showed them things, proved they had power – power that could be gifted to the worthiest among them. A castle floating in the sky, waiting for the best of them to enter in and claim the power within – eternity, shining and miraculous, the power to revolutionize the world. The rings they were given acted as keys to enter the arena. They brought their weapons with them. These students duelled among one another, the best of them gifted with the company of

Anthy Himemiya.

She was not a legend. She was not well known, or well liked. The Rose Bride, some called her. A witch to some. She tended the roses in the giant bird cage rose garden at the heart of Ohtori and did almost nothing else. People had classes with her but no one could say what her grades were, what she was studying, what she was working towards or why. She had no friends. She never spoke to anyone. Most people, if asked, could not have named the strange girl in her wide glasses, but the look on their faces could not be confused with anything but

Disgust.

Fear.

Hatred.

No one could have told you why they hated her. No one could have told you about a single interaction that they had with her. No one remembered her laughing, or smiling, or doing anything much at all.

Still, a low and long simmering resentment was balanced against her.

It was whispered that some among the student body had confronted her, assaulted her, and worse. It was whispered that she never fought back, that she never cried, that whatever happened to her happened and then

everyone involved suffered terrible fates.

Not expulsion.

Not death.

Nothing that anyone would ever believe.

No, not a legend. A grim fable, a warning.

The end of a world.



Saionji was the champion when it happened.

Wakaba had left him a note declaring her love for him and Saionji had humiliated her for it. Utena challenged him to a duel – and the ring that she had worn since she was a girl gave her access to the duelling arena, gave her the right of challenge. She had no idea what she was getting into. She didn't even bring a real weapon.

She won anyway.

And Anthy abandoned Saionji and moved in with Utena and Utena fell in love with her.

Utena did not yet know that Anthy's presence was conditional.



The bunk beds were mostly for show. Utena and Anthy had a whole building to themselves and they slept in the same room. It had started innocently enough, the heat breaking down one night and the two girls cuddling together for warmth. Anthy had kissed her, gently, a small wet

pressure. Utena had responded, nervous, clumsy.

Now they slept together most nights, most mornings. Both of them woke up early, Utena to hit the basketball courts and Anthy to water the roses, and waking up with one another was a good start to the day – long tangled legs and strong arms, gentle kisses and wandering hands. Utena loved the feel of her friend, her lover, her bride, loved soft skin and the smell of roses and copper, roses and cedar, roses and jam.

Anthy walked out of their shared bathroom wrapped in a towel, droplets of water rushing down her skin, that towel hinting at the soft body underneath. Utena pulled her close, enjoying the light in Anthy's too-wide eyes, the texture of her, the way her hands could roam over the soft opening folds, the sense of touching someone clean and beautiful and perfect.

Utena leaned back and Anthy fell on top of her, hands on her breast to balance herself, lips pressing forward for a long kiss that left Utena gasping, grasping, craving more as fingers slid down and into her, cupping her. It was scary, how quickly and how well Anthy had learned all the contours of her body, forcing Utena to try and keep up.

A long low moaning, a panting, Utena letting herself be led, letting herself settle further into the bed. Anthy joined her, spreading her legs, scissoring her own and grinding down into Utena. She gasped, both falling back, eyes rolling into the back of their heads as Utena writhed back, bucking pushing grinding herself against Anthy.

They came within heartbeats of one another and Utena fell back, sweating, gasping. Anthy crawled over her, kissed her, settled beside her and rested her head on Utena's shoulder.

“Good morning,” Utena smiled, panting lightly.

“Good morning, Miss Utena,” whispered Anthy.

“Some mornings I just can't help myself,” Utena said, her cheeks still flush, eyes shining and bright. She propped herself up on one elbow, cupping Anthy's cheek. “You're beautiful. You know that right? You're beautiful.”

“Thank you, Miss Utena,” said Anthy. And then: “You're beautiful, too.”

Utena simpered, blushed, smiled. She was beautiful most of the time, but she was gorgeous like this, happy with the light filtering in and framing her.

“This is the best way to wake up,” she said, leaning down and kissing Anthy again, getting up. Anthy watched her walk towards the bathroom. Utena knew they shared all the same classes and she'd never thought to ask why.

The water ran. The door was open. Steam trailed out, catching the sunrise. A glowing golden cloud beckoned to Anthy like some holy sign.

She followed it.

“Anthy, what are...?”

Utena's words were lost to moans as Anthy got in the shower and pressed her against the back wall, parting Utena's legs with her thighs. She nibbled on Utena's neck and danced her fingers

along Utena's hip and up her ribs and to her hair, pulling her head lower, her lips lower, low enough to kiss. Utena was taller than her but now she was kneeling, looking up at her with wide eyes, gasping, wanting as the shower poured down upon her.

She wanted to be a prince but she looked so good on her knees.

There were very few ways in which Anthy was allowed to be selfish. Watching Utena's mouth open, feeling her tongue, was one of her very favorites.



Do you know?

Do you know?

Do you know what love is?

This thing that everyone strives for but no one ever defines? If you give your everything to a concept you don't understand, those who do understand it can use it to define you, control you.

Do you know?

Do you know?

Do you know what love is?



Utena did not yet know that the Rose Bride's presence was conditional.