

Forced Marriage

Written by "Ina Izumi"

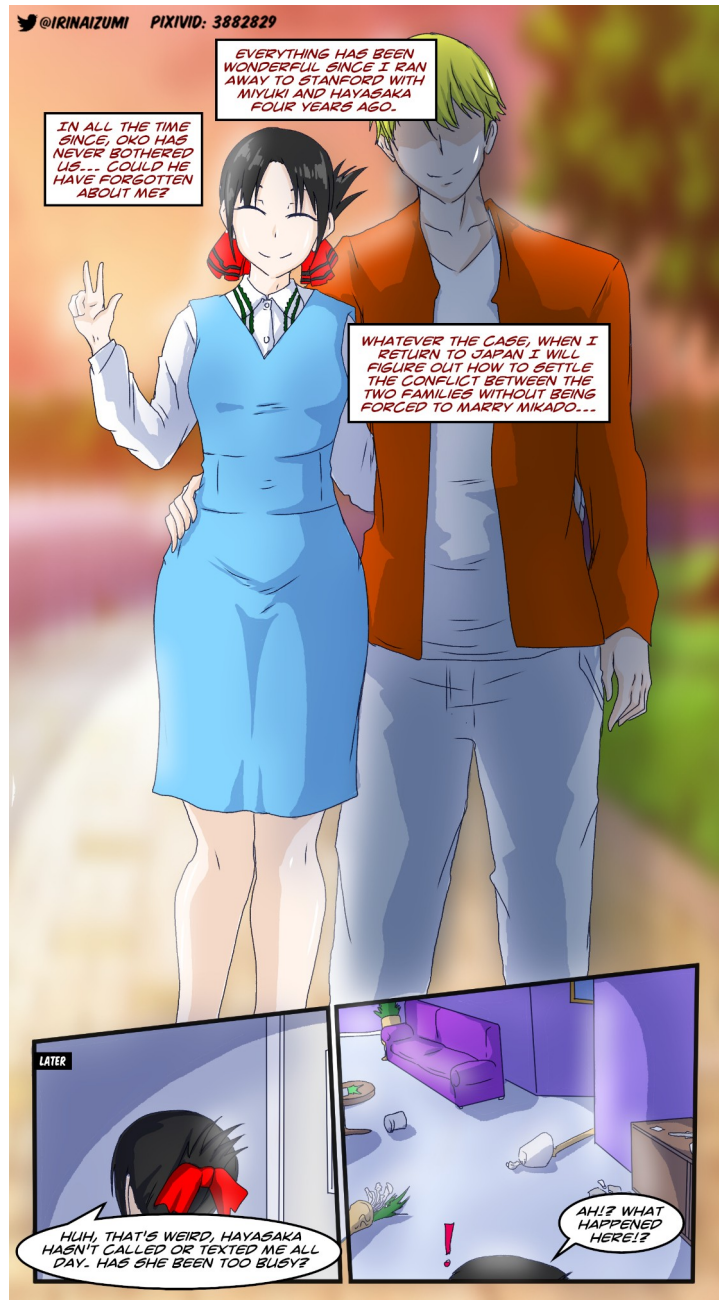
Kaguya has been very nervous all the time since she and Miyuki showed their love at that school festival. Although on the one hand she feels butterflies in her stomach all the time, on the other hand in her head there is only static and a lot of noise as she thinks about everything that her love is facing all the time due to the social differences as well as what seems to be a different destiny predicted for each of them. On the one hand it will be very complicated for the powerful Shinomiya family, to which Kaguya belongs, to accept Kaguya and Miyuki's relationship as Miyuki comes from a lower middle-class background with very little power and influence. On the other hand, Kaguya does not want to hinder Miyuki in his future since he has gotten a scholarship to Stanford and she knows well that having declared her love for him is only a distraction for Miyuki, even though she does not rule out leaving her family to pursue Miyuki in his new adventure.

Despite all the noise she hears in her head, and all the deep fear she feels down to her bones, the love Kaguya feels for Miyuki makes everything quite passable and transient in his life, until the worst obstacle that could have come between Kaguya and Miyuki, the Shinomiya family, has appeared. Not many days after Kaguya and Miyuki began their relationship, the family's older half-brother, Oko, told Kaguya that her inevitable fate is very near. There is no other alternative, Kaguya must marry in an arranged marriage to Mikado, the heir of the Shijo family, a secondary branch of the Shinomiya family with whom they have a huge conflict of interest and that, as far as they have been able to agree, the only solution to said conflict to re-unify both families is the marriage between Kaguya and Mikado. This situation left Kaguya devastated, for just when she had achieved her intentions with Miyuki, it seems that all is lost, and she has no choice.

That same day, at night, Kaguya was thinking with her cell phone in her hand whether she should tell Miyuki about the situation, or if she should just give up on it and cut off the relationship... Or maybe... Maybe Kaguya should run away from all that situation with Miyuki to America without telling her anything about that situation? Kaguya is very hesitant and is unable to tell Miyuki everything that has happened, even though she herself has not ruled out the possibility of running away with Miyuki and leaving all those family problems behind, even though she would have to give up her family's wealth and power and must build a future herself. Kaguya then tries to sleep on it, even though she ends up staying awake all night, unable to sleep because she is thinking of a resolution. In the end, in the morning, Kaguya thinks... maybe she should let some time pass? Maybe she could run away with Miyuki and, while she is away from all that conflict of interests, she could think of another solution for that conflict between the Shinomiya family and the Shijo family, since it would be very difficult for her to run away from the problem without thinking of a solution, even though if going with Miyuki to Stanford is presented to her as taking some time to look for alternatives instead of an escape, it might be more acceptable for her to make that decision

Four years later, when Kaguya has turned 21, a happy Kaguya enjoys her new life as she has run away with Miyuki and has somehow managed to study at Stanford as well, as Miyuki used one of her two letters of recommendation she was entitled to as student council president to get Kaguya admitted and just a little diplomacy to get her to exempt a year as well as Miyuki. However, it is not many years before they both finish their degree, and Kaguya is still not sure how to settle the conflict between the

Shinomiya family and the Shijo family to avoid the forced marriage. Kaguya thinks about that problem all the time and it has caused her a huge stress problem throughout those four years. At least that much stress she has been able to handle since Hayasaka has accompanied her to that new adventure and has taken advantage of it to escape the oppression that being from a minor branch of the Shinomiya family has caused her, but still Kaguya fears every day that one day her family will find them and retaliate against them. Kaguya sometimes thinks that maybe it would have been better to stay and face her brother Oko, even though that alternative was not very realistic, since she was still a minor without any legal power over herself in front of her older brother, who is the heir to the Shinomiya Group's business empire, the most powerful zaibatsu in Japan. Even though by then Kaguya has already told Miyuki about Oko's intentions to force her into a forced marriage with Mikado Shijo, she knows well that Miyuki won't be able to do much if one day Oke decides to do something against the two of them, or against the Shirogane family, Miyuki's family.



Later, when Kaguya was on her way back to her apartment, she hears an unusual silence. Normally Hayasaka is not very quiet when she is at home and at that hour she should already be there, but for Kaguya it is very suspicious to find the house silent at that hour or, on the contrary, she also finds it very suspicious that Hayasaka has not yet returned home. Kaguya, taking a step inside the apartment, quickly finds herself surrounded by Oko and his bodyguards, who have Hayasaka subdued and gagged with tape. Kaguya, surprised by the quick turn of events, cannot believe that Oko has gone to America in order to force her to fulfill her responsibilities to the family by accepting the forced marriage. Oko tells Kaguya that he always knew where she was and that it took him so long to act because he was undecided on how to solve the problem of her escape, and that his escape disappointed him greatly, as he expected more responsibility from Kaguya, but that their affair is finally over and that she will have to obey as the younger sister.

However, Kaguya plucks up her courage and tells him that any attempt by Oko to marry her to Mikado is useless, that she is of age and that he cannot legally force her to do anything, and that taking her out of America against her will be very complicated with the security at the airports, to which Oko replies that she cannot oppose because no one will suspect a small and defenseless doll, an object inside a suitcase. Kaguya, bewildered, does not understand what Oko is referring to, until the guards subdue her and inject a strange fuchsia liquid into her neck. Then an oppressive, suffocating heat runs through her veins as she becomes immobile and suddenly darkness absorbs all her surroundings.



WE MEET AGAIN AT LONG LAST, KAGUYA. I HAVE FINALLY DETERMINED HOW BEST TO RELIEVE THE SHAME THAT YOUR ELOPEMENT HAS CAUSED THE FAMILY.

YOU CAN'T FORCE ME TO DO ANYTHING, OKO! I AM OF LEGAL AGE, AND BESIDES, SURELY THERE MUST BE SOME OTHER SOLUTION TO THAT ORDEAL. EVEN IF YOU KIDNAP ME, WHAT WILL YOU SAY AT THE AIRPORT?

SAY? WHY NOTHING OF COURSE. NOBODY WILL SUSPECT THAT A TINY, LITTLE, DEFENSELESS DOLL IS A REAL PERSON.

HUH!? WHATEVER ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!?



AHHH!!! GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME!!!

Finally, the wedding day has arrived for Kaguya, even though she does not remember anything of what has happened before, because since she was caught in her apartment everything has become dark and she now has many mental gaps that make her unable to remember how she has come to that situation. On the other hand, everything seems big around her, including Mikado, who is in front of her in a groom's suit, because now from Kaguya's eyes he looks like a giant. On the other hand, Kaguya feels her muscles deeply asleep and numb in an exciting and embracing warmth, though she does not feel much discomfort from it, as if it is now something normal for her, though at that moment she is not sure if it is reality or fantasy, or if she is having some delirium in her sleep.

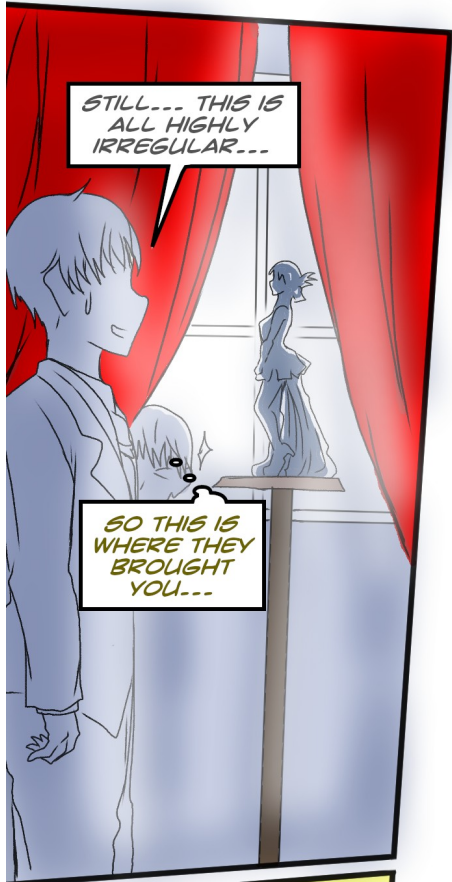
On the other hand, Mikado is deeply puzzled, because Oko has told him that the doll dressed as a bride whom he should marry is Kaguya and that he should not ask questions, that he should just get married and not worry about the bureaucratic procedures. Mikado is not sure if Oko has gone crazy, or if he has been sick and inhuman enough to use that American technology on his sister to deprive her of any trace of willpower and reduce her to a helpless little doll, who will now be Mikado's property in a certain way by marrying her. On the other hand, right there at the wedding is among the attendees a very angry Miyuki, who swears revenge against Oko and the Shinomiya while he sees how the Shinomiya family, making use of their enormous economic power, has played dirty against him and his love for Kaguya.

DAYS LATER

GHH... W-WHERE AM I? MY BODY... FEELS NUMB...

UHH?? WHAT'S THIS? DO I HAVE TO MARRY A DOLL? ARE YOU KIDDING ME, OKO? WHERE IS THE REAL KAGUYA?

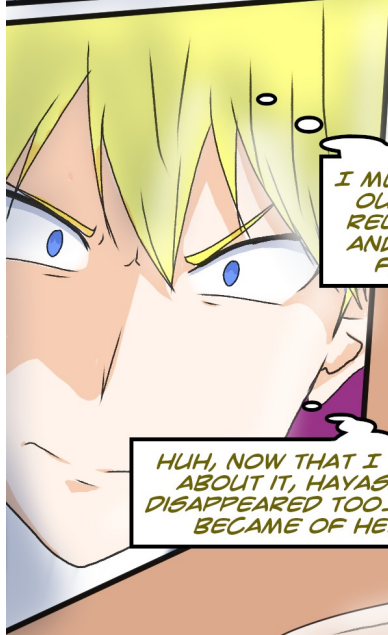
IT'S THE REAL HER. THE DETAILS ARE UNIMPORTANT, KID, I'VE FULFILLED MY PART OF THE DEAL!



STILL... THIS IS ALL HIGHLY IRREGULAR...

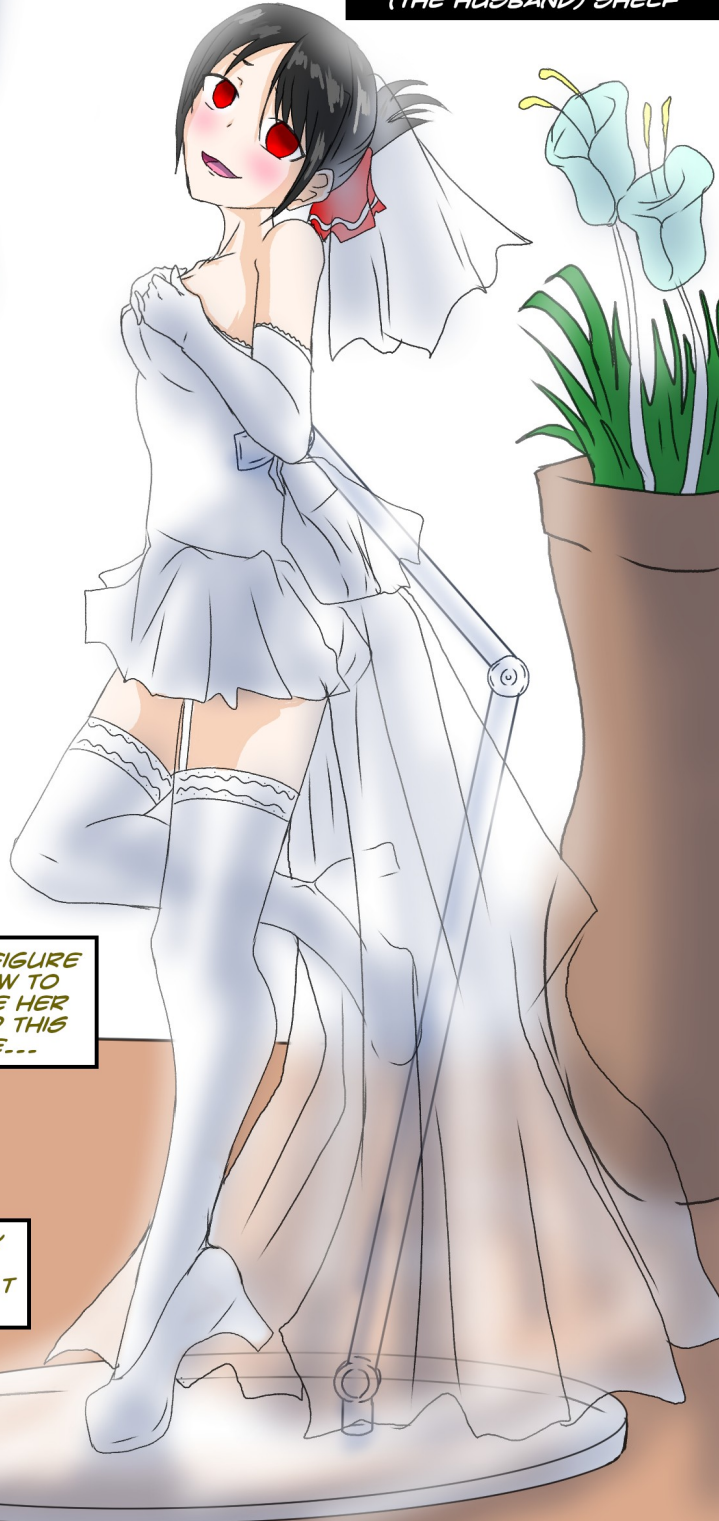
SO THIS IS WHERE THEY BROUGHT YOU...

DAYS LATER, ON MIKADO'S (THE HUSBAND) SHELF



I MUST FIGURE OUT HOW TO RELEASE HER AND END THIS FARCE...

HUH, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, HAYASAKA DISAPPEARED TOO. WHAT BECAME OF HER?



Meanwhile, Hayasaka, who has not shared a better fate, finds herself in her packaging in a second-hand trinket store being sold at a very low price, as payment for her betrayal of the Shinomiya family. Is it all over for Kaguya and Hayasaka? Or will Miyuki be able to save them from their terrible fate?



LATER THAT SAME DAY

WELCOME TO MY COLLECTION, CUTIE...

