



The Cat Lover's Circumstances

Chapter 8

Transcript

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Illustrations by Aiwa and © Chromatic Press

Cast:

Misaki: Tara Burke

Aina: Elissa Park

Nishida: Anthony Sardinha

Ayukawa: Sarite Harris

Rina: Courtney Lunn

Special Thanks

Alex O'Shea

Leena Soussi

Jesse Hodson

Ramsey Soussi

Babette Hodis

Jennie Fiddes

Aya & Elias

Note: Due to last-minute changes, transcript may not match final audio exactly.



Continuation (Chapter 8)

Cat Lover's Circumstances

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[Begin fantasy sequence. A male narrator dramatically intones.]

NARRATOR: Last time, on the Cat Lover's Circumstances!

[Music begins: Fantasy Quest.]

NARRATOR: Our hero must rescue a damsel in distress!

RINA (theatrical, princess-like): Misaki, help! You're my only hope!

MISAKI: Wait a sec.

[Music turns off abruptly.]

MISAKI: What do you mean "damsel"? That's Rina. She's my friend. She doesn't need to be rescued; she just needs to be listened to.

RINA (normal, grateful): Hey...you're right. Thanks, Misaki.

NARRATOR (hesitantly): Uh, okay... (once again dramatic) Our hero must stop a fiendish mastermind!

[Music begins.]

AYUKAWA (theatrically evil): No one can stand in my way!

MISAKI: What? Hold on.

[Music stops again.]

MISAKI: That's just mean! Ayukawa-senpai's been looking out for her girlfriend all this time. She was never evil. She was just alone and needed help.

AYUKAWA (normal, a little sheepish): Yeah, I guess I did...

NARRATOR: [sigh] All right... (dramatic again) Our brave hero, Misaki, stands alone against the world.

[Music begins.]

MISAKI (awkwardly, almost apologetic): Um...but...I'm not. Not *alone*, I mean.

[Music stops again. Pause. Now they talk in silence.]

MISAKI: Hey, Mr. Narrator? This has been fun and all--really, thank you. But...I think I'm good now.

NARRATOR: But fantasy is the best thing you have, Misaki. What about the games and the comics? And the cats?

MISAKI: Don't get me wrong, I still love all of that. But right now, I've got somewhere else to be.

NARRATOR: Where?

MISAKI: You know. The real world.

MISAKI (in a rush): Sorry, thanks for everything. I've got to go. People are waiting for me!

[End fantasy sequence.]

[Recap from end of previous episode.]

AINA: It's okay...really. I understand if you don't like me, I just...I want to know. Do you like Misaki?

[Pause.]

NISHIDA: Well...yeah.

MISAKI (shocked): ...What?

NISHIDA: I mean...it's hard to know how I feel right now. It's been a confusing week... But I've always liked her. Since middle school.

MISAKI: Haru...

NISHIDA: What? I was really in love with you...once upon a time.

[New material begins.]

NISHIDA: I thought you knew... Was I wrong?

MISAKI: I felt *something* when we were kids, but I thought you liked Sana... And your feelings have been so blocked off all this time.

NISHIDA (getting a little exasperated): Are you still talking about that psychic stuff? Misaki, we're not in middle school anymore.

MISAKI: I'm serious. I had no idea.

AINA: I-I saw it back at the party. Nishida-senpai treats you differently.

NISHIDA (almost jokingly): Come on, Aina, you're making me sound creepy.

AINA: No, really! You're a lot more careful with Misaki. And...caring. [pause] I should be getting someone to open the door. I'm sorry that I forced everything out in the open.

MISAKI: No, Aina.

VOICES (AINA): *Bitter, jealous, hate myself...*

MISAKI: Please don't feel so sad.

NISHIDA: Aina, listen, I'm sorry about earlier. I think...it really came out wrong.

AINA: You said someone like me shouldn't be with you.

NISHIDA: Well, yeah.

MISAKI: Haru!

NISHIDA: Just wait a second, will you? Aina, I also meant it when I said you're a nice girl. I see how you take care of people. And you were a real hero at the festival! I think you should find someone who's going to appreciate that. Really. Be with someone who's as brave as you are.

AINA: I don't understand.

NISHIDA: Hey, Misaki, you want to know something? I honestly never expected you to like me. Not with everything that happened. Back in middle school, after the way Sana tormented you...

MISAKI (uncomfortable): Do we have to talk about that now?

NISHIDA: Why not? We never talked about it then, did we? You remember. When I should have stood up for you, I didn't say anything, I didn't do anything. And then you disappeared.

VOICES (NISHIDA): *Angry, frustrated, hate myself, sad.*

MISAKI (uncertain): Haru, is this what you've been holding in?

[Cat scratches against the door.]

MISAKI: Hey. There's something outside. What is that?

[Sebastian meows.]

AINA: Sebastian! How do you always get out?

MISAKI: Sebastian! Baby! Did you come to see me?

[Sebastian scratches one more time and runs off. Aina chases the cat.]

AINA: Hey, come back here!

MISAKI (relieved): My cat. He's okay...

[Misaki takes a deep breath.]

MISAKI (getting angry): You know, Haru, I was always *right there*. You could have visited me.

NISHIDA: What?

MISAKI: Up in my room, in my house, every single day. Walking distance. I was right there! If you cared so much, then why didn't you contact me? I never saw you again!

NISHIDA (incredulous): Are you kidding? How could I even face you?

MISAKI: I thought you and Sana hated me.

NISHIDA: I stopped talking to her after you left.

MISAKI: You did?

NISHIDA: I couldn't look at her the same after she bullied you. I felt like she took you away.

MISAKI: You really liked me all this time?

NISHIDA (tired): Look... It's not like I kept a torch burning for seven straight years, all right? I moved on with my life. I had fun in high school, got into a good college... But then it all happened again last year, except Rina was getting bullied. My own family. And you want to know something? The day she dropped out, suddenly I started thinking about you again.

MISAKI: I don't blame you for anything that happened.

NISHIDA: You know, once Rina stopped going out altogether, I thought, maybe if I joined a bunch of clubs, maybe if I changed my style and did interesting things, I could be happy again. I could feel better about myself. But I don't. I'm still just a coward.

MISAKI: No.

NISHIDA: I've always been! I've never been able to stand up for the people I care about, and it makes me so sick of myself... But then I saw you at that party and I thought--oh my god, she's

back. Misaki's really back. Maybe I could make things okay again. [pause] But you tell me, has it been okay?

MISAKI: What do you mean?

NISHIDA: Have we had any good moments since we met again?

MISAKI: I... That's a hard question to answer...

NISHIDA: I've been trying. All this time and I'm the one who hasn't changed. I'm still afraid to be honest with you.

MISAKI: Haru, stop beating yourself up. This isn't like you.

NISHIDA: Fine, fine. I know we can't turn back the clock. I just wanted to tell you... I'm sorry.

MISAKI: I'm sorry, too.

NISHIDA: You didn't do anything.

MISAKI: I've been running away just as much as you... But your sister's here now, and we can still help her.

NISHIDA: Can we?

MISAKI: Rina-senpai and Ayukawa-senpai have something they want to do. Even if we can't undo what's happened, we can help them get their wish. Right?

NISHIDA: You're right. The duet... It *has* to happen somehow.

MISAKI: I don't know how we're going to do it, though.

NISHIDA: I have an idea. But we gotta get out of here already. [shakes doorknob] Stupid old dorm with rusted everything... How do you girls even stand it here?

MISAKI: You know, Haru. I wish I did like you.

NISHIDA (caught off-guard): Yeah?

MISAKI: In the romantic way, I guess.

NISHIDA: Well... Makes two of us. Did you really *never* fall for me?

MISAKI: No, I'm sorry. I don't think I've ever fallen for anyone. Back at the festival, I told you, I understand the theory... I've read books, and played games. But I've never been in love myself. [pause] Is that weird?

NISHIDA: Why would it be weird?

MISAKI: Because I feel like I *should*! Honestly, I don't understand love, but everything revolves around it. It's like there's a secret everyone else knows but me. But then why am I so sensitive to everyone's feelings?!

NISHIDA: You're talking about the...psychic power thing?

MISAKI (exasperated): Yes, I'm talking about the power. I know you don't believe me.

NISHIDA: Wait a sec--for the sake of argument, let's just say...I do.

[long pause]

MISAKI (careful): You don't...mean that.

NISHIDA: I dunno, some things would make a lot more sense if you *were* psychic. Sometimes you have scary levels of insight.

MISAKI: [sigh] I wish I could turn it off.

[long pause]

NISHIDA: You can...talk about with me, if you want. [pause] I'll listen.

MISAKI: Well... [deep breath] I just want someone to tell me why someone like me has a power like mine. Why *I'm* the psychic, and not someone who actually knows what to do.

NISHIDA: Hmm. If you *did* know what you were doing, maybe you'd be too powerful. Y'know, like you could take over the world.

MISAKI: I doubt that.

NISHIDA: But whatever it is, maybe... Nah, never mind.

MISAKI: What?

NISHIDA: No, it's cheesy.

MISAKI: We're stuck in a closet. It's okay to be cheesy this once.

NISHIDA (embarrassed): Well, I'm just...beginning to think you might have some greater purpose. If you can sense things that no one else can. A... You know, a *destiny*.

MISAKI: [Stifles a laugh.]

NISHIDA: Yeah, see, that's why I didn't want to tell you.

MISAKI: Like *I'm* important enough to merit a destiny.

NISHIDA: You brought my sister out of her shell. You helped me see the truth. What were the odds we'd all be here doing this? That I'd get to see you again, ever?

[pause]

MISAKI: Okay. You want to know something really crazy?

NISHIDA: Give it to me.

MISAKI: I'm so exhausted. I think I've done more in the past week than in the past seven years. It's draining. But somehow...at the same time, this is the happiest I've ever been. Being with people, being worried, being sad, and stuck, and...feeling like I'm losing my mind. All of it.

NISHIDA (skeptical): Those are happy things?

MISAKI: I just feel so *alive*. [She pauses before slowly, hesitantly coming to a realization.] I think...I love it. Having friends, and being out in the world, and...Haru, I love *you*.

MISAKI (backpedaling a little): Wait. I mean, like...I love you as a friend. The kind of love that makes me want to be here. I never expected to say this, but I'm so glad you're in my life again. Do you...get what I mean?

NISHIDA: I do. [long pause] I think I do. And...um. I, you know... [sigh] I love you, too. I mean the way you said. I always have.

MISAKI: I know. I think I always did.

NISHIDA: Really?

MISAKI: Yeah. And I think it's something I...wanted to hear.

NISHIDA: Well, it took us both long enough... I'm really sorry.

MISAKI (voice wavering, like she's about to cry): It's okay. I've missed you.

NISHIDA: Aw, come on, don't cry.

MISAKI: How would you know if I'm crying? We're in a dark room.

NISHIDA: The darkness gives me super-hearing.

MISAKI: Well...Haru, you don't get all weepy, either.

NISHIDA (slightly indignant): I'm not.

AINA (through door again): Misaki... Sorry.

MISAKI (surprised): Aina, you're back! How long have you been here?

AINA: A while...um, I didn't want to interrupt...

MISAKI: Do you have a key?

AINA: No, I couldn't find the manager. But we can't just sit and wait here. You've got stuff to do, right?

NISHIDA: You heard that too?

AINA: Uh-huh. I don't really get it, but I know it has to do with Ayukawa and your sister... Listen, I'm going to kick down the door.

MISAKI: What?

AINA: Just step back as far as you can, okay? I can probably get it in one.

NISHIDA: Wait, Aina. Are you sure you can do this?

AINA: Senpai, to be honest... I'm a lot stronger than you think. (louder) Okay, make room!

[Aina kicks down the door with a loud grunt.]

AINA: See?

NISHIDA (impressed): No kidding.

[Cat meows.]

MISAKI: Sebastian! I missed you so much! [gasp] Have you gained weight?

AINA: He's been a good kitty. Um...Ayukawa-senpai is in her room.

NISHIDA: Okay, good. Misaki, let's go.

MISAKI (talking to Sebastian): Aww, my sweet furry prince...

NISHIDA: Yeah, yeah, yeah, come on. Hey, Aina?

AINA: Yeah?

NISHIDA: Thanks.

AINA: Don't mention it.

To be continued in Chapter 9.