Misotheism

by ikuzonos

Summary

Saihara bites down on his lip, and feels blood leak into his mouth. He slams his palm against the wall, feeling faint. Maybe if he dies right here, he won’t ever have to think about Shirogane again. Him dying would be for the best, anyways. He’s always believed that. Falling down is easy, far easier than climbing back up.

[Major Endgame NDRV3 Spoilers.]

Notes

Misotheism is the "hatred of God" or "hatred of the gods" (from the Greek adjective μισόθεος "hating the gods", a compound of μῦσος "hatred" and θεός "god")

Normally, all visitors are escorted out of the hospital by eleven at night, but it’s eleven thirty and Saihara is still inside. Either the security guards haven’t gotten all the way to the seventh wing yet, or they’re all too busy celebrating Shirogane’s return to the waking world.

Just thinking about her makes Saihara feel sick again.

An hour ago, he was forced to leave Kaito alone as it was time for his nightly check up, despite the
fact that his friend was screaming at the doctors to allow Saihara to stay. From what he could tell, Kaito was just as upset that Shirogane was awake now.

Saihara bites down on his lip, and feels blood leak into his mouth. He slams his palm against the wall, feeling faint. Maybe if he dies right here, he won’t ever have to think about Shirogane again. Him dying would be for the best, anyways. He’s always believed that.

His stomach lurches again. Saihara wills himself not to throw up, but he can feel the hot bile rising up. He grabs his head and slams his eyes shut, but he just feels even sicker than before. His eyes flicker open, and he has to squint again because nobody will turn down the brightness. He still feels queasy, like his stomach is doing backflips.

He takes a clumsy step forwards.

The door to Kaede’s room is at the end of the hallway he’s standing in. Saihara stumbles towards it, his heart in his throat and his lungs on fire. He clumsily knocks a few times, then pushes open the door when he hears a response from inside.

Kaede sits up when she sees him, “S-Saihara-kun? You look awful!”

Saihara looks at her, looks at her with haunted eyes, and sees his distressed reflection in her pupils. He takes a few shaky breaths, his mind running at speeds faster than he could dream of moving at. Eventually, he chokes out, “Shirogane woke up.”

Instantly, Kaede’s expression of concern for him changes into one of fear, “N-No! Why her? Why now?”

Saihara runs his hands through his hair. He has no good memories of Shirogane, not even one. Whenever he thinks of her, all he can see is her with her hands on her hips, cackling as she reveals herself as the mastermind behind their predicament. (All he can see is her bashing Amami over the head with a bowling ball, even though he wasn’t present for this part.)

He realizes that Kaede is crying.

Saihara sits next to her on her bed, and she wipes her eyes. He hesitates, then leans over and hugs her tightly. Kaede sniffles a bit, but grabs onto his arm and doesn’t let go.

Under her breath, Kaede asks, “Did she really kill Amami-kun?”

“Yes,” Saihara hisses, “And she executed you for it… You didn’t deserve that. Do you… not remember?”

Kaede whispers, “I only have memories from up until I… died. I just overheard the producers talking about her and… and…” she breaks off, tears rolling down her cheeks again.

Saihara pulls her closer, and Kaede rests her head on his shoulder. She graciously avoids touching his chest, but Saihara doesn’t remember if he ever told her or not.

He doesn’t leave her room until morning, when a doctor arrives to check on Kaede, and shoos him out in the process.

- Group therapy is cancelled that week. Officially, it’s because the psychologist running the group is busy looking after one of the other studio employees who’s in critical condition, but Saihara saw her
passed out in the bathroom, and later hung over. It’s yet another sick reminder that she, like everyone else, practically worships Shirogane, and doesn’t give a shit about their mental health.

The time that Saihara would normally spend with the group is spent in the hospital, like he spends nearly all of his time now. Angie is with him today, rolling down the corridors in her wheelchair at the speed of sound, and trying to keep the mood high.

After painting Kaito’s entire face with watercolours, Saihara and Angie leave him alone. He’ll be moving out of the hospital in a matter of hours, and even though he’s just moving to a darker cell with a view, Kaito’s excited. Kaede has already gotten moved into her new room, and Room 778 is empty again.

They uselessly wander the halls, until Angie points to a door and says, “Oh! This is where Tsumugi is! Angie wants to see her!”

Saihara bristles and stops in his tracks, “We’re not going to see her. I never want to see her again.”

Angie swivels around, “W-Why not? Angie thought Shuuichi would like to see Tsumugi…”

Saihara clenches his fist and spits, “Why the hell would I ever want to see her? She’s working with the people who threw us in that shitty game… she murdered our friends!”

Angie tilts her head, “But Angie heard that everyone was brainwashed! Shouldn’t that include Tsumugi? Maybe she’s not so bad!”

“Do you think I care?!” Saihara shouts, “It doesn’t matter, because she still works for these people! She planned out the murders, she manipulated all of us! Shirogane is a monster!”

Angie sniffles, “Doesn’t she deserve a chance?”

Saihara growls, “No chance in hell. She did all of this to us! She’s the one who really murdered Amami-kun! She’s the reason that Akamatsu-san died for nothing!”

Tears well in Angie’s eyes, and roll down her cheeks, “S-Shuuichi…”

Saihara pushes past Angie, and heads for the exit.

I hope that she chokes in her sleep.

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The kitchen is a wondrous place to be at night. Hoshi is there again tonight, eating more curry. Yorick is sitting on the counter next to him, eating from her own bowl.

When Saihara enters, Hoshi nearly screams, then relaxes substantially at the sight of him, “I thought you were a guard.”

Saihara doesn’t say anything in response, and trudges over to the cupboards.

Hoshi whistles, “You look like death, Saihara.”

“I feel like it too,” he replies, not taking his eyes off of the wooden cupboards. He doesn’t know what he’s looking for, not quite yet.

Hoshi slides a bowl of curry and a fork towards him, “Eat.”
“That’s yours,” Saihara protests.

Hoshi replies, “I can’t eat it all. Get something in your stomach before you pass out on me.”

Saihara reluctantly complies, and eats slowly. He does feel better once he’s eaten, but the same thoughts are still in the back of his head. He moves to the sink, and washes his dish.

On the edge of the sink, he finds what he’s been looking for, and silently slips it into his pocket. A carving knife.

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From his room, if Saihara opens the window, he can just barely see the ground. If he jumped from that height, he would die for certain. Of course, he can’t do that, not with the long, metal bars across his window.

He assumed that all the rooms had windows like that, but Kaede’s, Angie’s, and Kaito’s are normal. It’s only him and Hoshi that are stuck with the bars.

It’s to keep them alive. The studio knows they’re both at risk for doing something that can’t be fixed by a lying psychologist. It makes Saihara wonder if they’ve seen his hospital records, and he shudders, knowing that the wrong name is on every certificate.

It’s not like he’d jump, anyways. There are lots of cleaner, easier ways to go out. Jumping leaves time for second guessing. A rope does not.

Saihara lies awake for hours, his thoughts jumbled, and tries to focus on better things.

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He’s in the library again. The prison school is quiet in these late hours, with the bears hidden away, and the other students fast asleep in their rooms.

Saihara can’t sleep. He can never sleep. Not with the shadows that creep up the walls and paint his room into something from his childhood nightmares.

So instead, he’s curled up on the floor, reading book after book. He needs more knowledge, no, he craves it. He has to read if the sixteen of them have a chance of escaping from the academy.

Kaede Akamatsu believes in him without question, just because he’s recognized as a detective, just because he follows her around all day. So, he needs to give her a reason to believe in him. He has to.

At half past two, he gets up, and pulls a few more books off of one of the shelves. He needs to keep reading, he’s so focused on making sure they can dig their way out of the school, that he almost doesn’t notice when the bookshelf swings open, revealed a two-toned door.

Saihara drops the books on his feet, but he doesn’t make a sound. All he can think of now is what Kaede will say.

She’ll be proud of him. She’ll believe in him. That’s what matters now.

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It’s still dark when Saihara leaves his cell. His pockets feel heavy, but his heart does not. The hospital is closed now, but it won’t be hard to sneak past the security. He knows their routes by now.
As he passes Kaede’s room, he freezes. He knows that she’s fast asleep, that he can’t bother her, but the thought has already run through his head.

Would she approve of what he plans to do? Would she still be willing to believe in him? She’s not the same person that she was in the simulation, but he’s not either, and both of them know it.

“If I don’t come back,” he whispers to the door, “Please remember that you were the greatest thing that ever happened to me.”

It’s not closure. He’s talking to a hunk of metal, and Kaede has no idea of what he’s going to do now.

He leaves for the hospital.

It’s easy from there. The guards follow the same routes, and he just stays a hallway behind them at all times. Finding Shirogane’s room is no trouble at all.

The blue haired cosplayer is sitting up on her bed when he enters. She smiles at him sweetly, and Saihara glares at her.

“Oh, Saihara-kun!” she says cheerfully, “Have you come to kill me?”

Saihara thinks of the carving knife tucked into his pocket, and of how easy it would be to plunge it into her throat. Then he thinks of what Kaede would say. His hands don’t move.

Shirogane says, “I’ve already received six death threats today, but I don’t mind a seventh. Come to tell me that I’m a hideous monster who unjustly murdered your girlfriend? I know that already.”

Saihara can’t bringing himself to speak. Something about her demeanor makes interaction impossible.

She continues, “Even if you tried to blame the fact that I brainwashed myself… I’ve still been working here for the past four years. The studio as a whole is responsible for the deaths of about eight hundred people. Though really, you should blame the higher ups. They have more blood on their hands than I ever will.”

Saihara pulls the knife from his pocket, and points it at her, “S-Shut up!”

Shirogane yawns, “Is that all you’re going to say? For someone who was so well spoken during the simulation, you’re quite the disappointment. But that’s to be expected, I suppose. Some man you turned out to be.”

Saihara can’t tell if she means that last comment the way he heard it, but it makes his whole self shake with rage. He thrusts the knife right into her head, but she moves just in the nick of time, so that it’s slammed into the drywall.

“You’re just a little boy, Saihara-kun,” Shirogane whispers, as he tugs the knife out, “You can’t even commit a simple murder!”

“Shut up,” he hisses, “You don’t know anything about me.”

She laughs, “Oh, but I know your entire life story, forwards and back. I could tell you anything you wanted about your parents, or your uncle-”

His knuckles are stinging, and her glasses are broken. Probably because he punched her in the face.
He backs away from her, the knife in one hand, and his other fist closed in pain. But instead of calling security, or yelling, or something, Shirogane removes her glasses, and stares at him blankly.

“What do you want?” he whispers.

Shirogane replies, “Put that knife away, and I’ll talk. Maybe we can come to… some kind of understanding. But you have to be willing to listen to me.”

Saihara doesn’t care what Shirogane thinks. In his head, he tells her this and storms out. In his head, he kills her like he came here to do.

In his head, he doesn’t put down the knife, lean against the wall, and say, “Okay. I’m listening.”

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