

Strawberry-Chocolate

Orphen x Hartia

Von LORBEERPRINZ

Kapitel 1: Strawberry x Chocolate

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He did not know why it was there. It was lying on the chair, he usually hung his jacket over at night, when he had come in.

It was not even Valentine's Day.

Orphen stared at this little package for a while.

It was heart-shaped, with a big red ribbon around it and a writing, that indicated the box came from the best and most expensive chocolatier on the continent.

Chocolate. Why in the world would somebody make Orphen a chocolate-gift?

Of course, it was clear for Orphen that it had to be a woman. A woman, who was obviously in love with him.

The sorceror picked the small package up and examined it solidly. No name, no seal, not the smallest hint of a sender. The heart was wrapped into plastic-foil, which was very expensive and difficult to do, and had no visible signs that it was opened or manipulated in another way.

So it did not seem as somebody wanted to poison him.

Orphen sighed and put the chocolate-box back on the chair.

As there was a knock on the door, Orphen was too deep in thoughts to hear it. He also did not notice when the door opened a few seconds later and a guest stepped in.

At first, he only put his head into the room, but as he had found Orphen sitting on the ground, in front of his chair, the rest of his body followed.

"Oh, so you *are* here.", he said, "I thought so."

Orphen still did not listen.

His visitor stepped behind him and detected the heart-box. "Well, well", he said, picking

up the chocolate, "is it already Valentine's Day again?"

Now Orphen was interrupted in his thoughts and turned around immediately to face the one who stole his present.

"Hartia! How can you dare to enter this room without my permission?"

The redhead smiled at him. "Well, it's your own fault, if you don't answer my knocking..."

Orphen sighed. Hartia was not so wrong, after all. "Okay, and what do you want?"

"The usual. People have complained about you. Again. And of course, their first address is the Tower of Fang." He pointed on Orphen's necklace.

The brown-haired sorcerer glared at him. "Is that my fault?"

"In a way yes, because..." Hartia stopped, then sighed. "Oh well... forget it..."

Discussing with Orphen when he obviously had other things on his mind was never a good thing to do. Hartia knew that well and he did not want to experience his old friend's shape of the day.

Orphen himself decided that the riddle about the mysterious chocolate was more interesting than Hartia's complaints, and roughly grapped it out of Hartia's hands.

"So, if this was everything, you can leave now.", he said while unwrapping the heart-box.

But instead of doing so, Hartia stayed. He was curious about that chocolate box.

Orphen did not notice that as he opened the box and faced several little chocolate-pieces, each heart-shaped again.

He looked at the box' cover. No letter again. This was going to become mysterious.

"How about tasting that chocolate?", Hartia suggested.

Orphen turned around and gave Hartia a more than slightly annoyed look. "And risking of falling down the next moment and die? No, thanks."

A few seconds later, his expression changed, into something that made the red haired sorcerer know it was going to become troublesome.

"Hey Hartia", Orphen began, "You're looking so hungry. Want a piece?"

He held the chocolate under his nose.

"No, thanks", the freckled sorcerer refused, "It's yours, so..."

"Oh, come on!" Without a warning, Orphen sticked the chocolate into Hartia's mouth.

The redheaded one muffled something Orphen could not understand, but in the end, he chewed and swallowed the sweet candy.

"And?", Orphen asked. He made a curious face, but Hartia easily detected that it was faked.

"Well, it tastes like..." Hartia took another piece from the box and broke it into two parts. The chocolate was just an outer frame, wich contained a white substance, probably yoghurt, with small red stains.

"...strawberry..."

"So it's Strawberry-chocolate?", Orphen asked and stole a piece from Hartia's hand. He looked at it, then at his guest.

He smirked.

"Say, Hartia...", he began, "...did anybody ever tell you that your hair looks like strawberry?"

"What...? No... I mean..." Hartia was visibly irritated by Orphen's question, searching for words. But he did not find any of which he thought they would fit the situation. In the end, he sighed. "But thanks for the compliment anyway."

He looked at Orphen and still found the same, mischievous look. "You're welcome, but..." Orphen looked at the chocolate again. "...I still don't know if it's dangerous or not. What if that is poison that only begins to work after eating more of it?"

The sorceror with the headband pressed Hartia's shoulder down so that in the end, he took seat on Orphen's bed. Orphen himself, took the chocolate box and sat beside him.

He held another piece of strawberry-chocolate up. "Say aaaah..."

"But-"

All protesting did not help; the little candy was quicker in Hartia's mouth than he could even speak a word. Then another piece followed and another and another.

Everyone entering the scene by accident would have most probably laughed over the sight of a grown man, almost twenty years old, feeding another man of the same age with chocolate. It was so strange.

With anybody else, Hartia would have protested and end this little game immediately, but now he could not. He had never been able to go against Orphen, and that did not change in years.

Even more, he began to like it.

He liked hearing Orphen's voice, rough and smooth, childish and manly at the same time, so very different from the way the brown haired sorceror casted his magic spells. *Okay, another one?* A beautiful sound.

He liked feeling Orphen's presence so close to himself. It felt like Orphen's free hand was coming nearer and nearer to his own with every piece he gave to him. His heart beat faster and faster.

After a while, Hartia decided to just close his eyes and open his mouth whenever he demanded another piece of chocolate. To his own surprise, Orphen followed these demands and handed him piece after piece.

But after a short time, the feeding stopped.

"Great", Orphen complained, "Now you've eaten it all up."

He looked at the box that now showed another heart and the printing *I love you* on the bottom. "I wanted something too..."

"It was your idea", Hartia protested, "Besides, I could have told you that they are not poisoned before." - "How would you know?" - "Because..."

Hartia turned away, blushing slightly.

"Because I sent the box to you."

For about half a minute, both remained silent.
Orphen looked at the heart-box, the printing and then at Hartia.
He began to laugh. "You're not serious, are you?"
"Of course I am!" - "Don't joke with me." - "I'm not joking."

Orphen sighed. "Okay, then thank you. But..."
He held the box up, showing the printing in Hartia's direction. The redhaired did not watch, just blushed harder.
"...you could have told me that in another way. Could have saved calories."
"It wasn't meant like that", Hartia replied, still not looking, "I got this from a girl, I didn't know this was written there."
Orphen smiled at the redhead. He had never been good at lying.

"But you did know this is a heart."
Orphen took Hartia's face with both hand and slowly turned it to his own.
"You know, I still want to taste that chocolate."

He came even closer to Hartia's freckled face, until their lips met. Orphen was sure to still find some taste of chocolate in Hartia's mouth. He tried to part the red haired's lips with his tongue, which needed some times, but worked in the end.
Even in such a situation, Hartia was not able to stand against his old friend's will.

And Orphen was right. It tasted of chocolate, strawberry and Hartia himself.
A wonderful taste.

The whole situation was even weirder than before, but it also felt much better than the other one. Hartia would have never imagined to kiss Orphen. It was against his own preferences, against the laws the Tower of Fang had laid down for their students, against every bit of sense...

...but if felt good.

Only a few seconds later, it was over.
"This chocolate is very tasteful", Orphen said, smiling at Hartia, whose freckled cheeks were still red like his hair.
"Yeah... that's... right...", Hartia stammered, still confused from Orphen's action.

Suddenly he jumped from the bed. "I... have to go now..."
Sighing, Orphen got up and went after him. "You know, you could come around more often."
"O...kay..."

Already with the doorhandle in his hand, something came into Hartia's mind. Something he already wanted to say since Orphen had compared his hair to strawberries.
He pointed at the other man's head. "Your hair looks almost like chocolate."

Orphen laughed. "Really? So if my hair is chocolate and yours is strawberry..."
He grinned at Hartia. "...Then you have eaten us both."

"Okay, and what's the yoghurt then?", Hartia asked, still feeling uncomfortable about the happenings before.

Orphen's grin became bigger. "Well, what do you think? Don't tell me you're that prudish."

"Okay, okay, I think I know what you mean.", Hartia replied after a few seconds of thinking, "But that's far beyond reality, at least in my case."

He opened the door and left.

For a minute or two, Orphen just stood in the middle of his small room and stared at the door. He still grinned widely, sometimes looked at the writing in the box and then at the door again.

He sighed. "Well, Hartia... I don't really think you didn't know of this print...
But that's okay. Very okay..."

While leaving the tavern, Hartia thought he should buy another box. The same box with the same shape and the same print.

And he should send it to Orphen and then visit him again. Just because the print was true. And because this afternoon was wonderful.

He wanted to repeat it, but slightly changed.

He wanted to say it, to tell him.

He just had to say he loved him.