

# And Gone Was The Invisible Girl

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She was not used to it – that boys came running to her, asking her out. They were attacking her like hungry wolves and eat her. They wanted her.

It was something new for her. She never got that kind of attention from boys. Well until now. The strange thing was, it all happened very fast and suddenly she had almost the whole school's male population asking her to be one's girlfriend.

One moment she was an average, shy and nerdy teenage girl that transferred to this high school two years ago and worked part-time at the nearby cafe; and in the next moment, all she could see were crowds of boys nagging her, calling her and trying to make her like them.

What the hell happened?

Mikan sighed tiredly, when she thought about it.

It was actually a completely stupid thing. No, not really stupid. The stupid thing was that people started to notice her after. Why did it make her so popular, she had no idea.

Actually...

Yeah, she knew...

It was totally Hotaru's fault.

The hell of a friend.

"I'm going to kill you someday for this..." mumbled Mikan to herself, as she was again walking very fast through the halls of the school, trying to attract no attention. Of course that was impossible. You do not see a group of boys stalking one girl every day.

Well...

Till now...

The boys were laughing and calling her, trying to make her look at them. They whistled and cheered her on to walk faster, because there is no way they would not get her.

Mikan did not look back, left or right. She knew people were watching her and some were laughing at the funny scene that recently happened every god damn day!

The girl stormed furiously out of the building and started to run through the school park. She often hid herself here now. It was her safe point. She looked around to make sure no one was watching her, then jumped on one of the sakura trees and climbed as high she possibly could.

When the group of boys came laughingly around the corner and as they started to look around the park, calling her name and teasing her to finally show herself, she tensed and tried to be as calm as possible.

"Jerks- stupid bold horny cretins... I'll kill you Hotaru..." she whispered angrily to herself, thinking about how much of a friend Hotaru actually is.

Two years ago, when Mikan transferred to this high school, she was lost and alone and did not know where to go or whom to ask for directions on the school ground. She was shy and frightened – why would she not be?

She was small and young country girl who had to move from the village, because her grandfather had to go to the hospital. He did not stay there, but he had to make weekly cheeks, so it was easier for them to move to the city.

And Mikan did not like it.

Not at all.

She still does not understand these city teenagers who only know the word fun in combination with words like alcohol, doing nothing and making out.

Because, what the hell?

Back in the village, Mikan had lots of fun. She played with other teenagers, worked in the garden and went for walks through the forest and over the fields – and time passed by very fast.

And here? She could do none of it.

People here were all crazy she thought. Maybe Hotaru was not that crazy...

Yeah... No.

Hotaru was even crazier than others, just in a kind way... sometimes...

The girls were best friends, but Mikan still could not understand how they survived with each other. If Mikan was bubbly and happy all the time, Hotaru was cold and greedy and did not talk much. Well, not in front of others, only if she and Mikan were alone.

Mikan was not the only one who asked herself how they became such good friends, but thinking about the past she kind of gets an idea of how it happened.

Two years ago, when Mikan nervously walked into the Alice Academy, she had no idea what to do.

That time, when she stormed through the school, desperately searching for a teacher, she bumped into a black-haired girl. Both girls fell and many papers went flying around. Mikan, shocked because of what happened, immediately jumped up and started apologizing. She helped the other girl to stand up and collected her papers and gave them to her, again apologizing for her clumsiness.

Then she hurriedly introduced herself, told her to tell her if she hurt herself, when she fell; and stormed off because she was already late for class.

Of course the black-haired girl was Hotaru, and apparently, no one in this high school has ever apologized to her or even talked to her in a friendly way, because they were so afraid of her. She was a genius, an inventor and a very bold person who did almost everything for money. That was something Mikan learned was true.

And because Mikan talked to Hotaru in a completely normal and honest way, Hotaru took an interest in the shy country girl and became her friend. Her best friend.

"Best friend my ass..." growled Mikan to herself still not moving from the tree. The boys disappeared already, but she was not that stupid to not know that they were just waiting at a corner for her to come from her hiding spot. She really asked herself if the boys had no life... Why did they do such stupid things?

Oh...

Yeah...

Hormonal and horny teenagers...

City teenagers!

So... How it came to this situation? And what had Hotaru to do with it?

Actually it was just a simple thing, and Hotaru was kind of not at fault – then. Now she was, because she did not help her dear dear best friend.

"Traitor..."

To be honest, Hotaru really did not do anything wrong. She just posted her videos on YouTube once a month in which she presented her inventions. It was nothing unusual. She did it all the time. The thing was that this month her invention was a machine, which made girls look pretty.

Well...

Not literally.

The machine just chose a dress for you that looked good on you, made your make-up and hairstyle. No idea how it did that, but it really worked.

So, yeah, last month Hotaru asked (threatened) Mikan to play the leading (only) role in the video. The brown-haired girl just had to present the invention with her cheery voice and smiling face; she had to wear clothes, she usually wore at home, and look as average as possible. Then she had to press a button on the machine and let it do its work. What came out was a very pretty Mikan in a short yellow summer dress, with long curly hair and smoking eyes.

Apparently, when she circled to show her perfect figure, smiled into the camera and said: "Show your bright self and use Imai-invent products. It works." this seemed to make all her classmates and all other boys in the school go crazy.

Of course everyone saw the video – it is Hotaru Imai's video we are talking about. So, when Mikan went to school the next day, she was faced with the realization that when you cooperate with Hotaru and show your face to public, you become popular. And not the nice kind of way of popular where everyone knows you and just greets you on the hallways. No. Not at all.

It is the creepy kind of way of popular, where hordes of boys try to kiss you in the middle of the class or they stalk you wherever you go – the female toilet is not an obstacle...

Boys literally threw themselves at her and last week, when she (as usual) dodged one of them, he accidentally fell down the stairs... Ouch...

People in the city really did not have a life if they had the time to do such ... mad things.

Anyway, it has already been a month, but it did not seem that anything might stop. It actually seemed to become worse each and every day.

And today was not an exception. Hotaru laughed at her, when she saw her running friend almost crying in the morning. Since then, Mikan has already given up to receive her help.

"Crazy cow..." hissed Mikan and carefully made a move on her branch. Slowly, to not make a sound, she looked around and waited a few more moments, before she quickly

climbed down.

Then she stopped and looked around again.

Huf... It is safe finally.

She adjusted her school bag and made her way out of the school's ground. She will not be coming home at least for six hours, because it is Friday, and on Fridays the café she works at is usually full till the evening.

After exact 6 hours, 37 minutes and 44 seconds, Mikan was finally at home, tiredly putting down her jacket and going into the living room, where her grandfather was reading a book.

"Hey..." she said and smiled at him.

The old man looked up and smiled: "Hello Mikan. You seem very tired." He noticed. Mikan sat down on the couch next to him and turned on the TV. She sighed and went with her hand through her hair: "Yeah, the cafe was full today. And school is rough."

Her grandfather laughed at her: "Don't tell me the boys still didn't stop. It's already been a month."

Mikan looked at him pointedly and huffed: "I don't understand them! For two years I was happily invisible and suddenly the whole school wanted something from me. Geez, it was just a video. I don't understand them!"

"City people are strange, I admit. But don't worry, just one year longer, and you will be free to do whatever you want." The man told her and patted her head.

Mikan looked at him with a soft expression and smiled gently: "Grandpa, you're the best." Then she squeezed herself under his arm and closed her eyes: "Grandpa?" she mumbled.

"Hm?" he stroked her hair, while watching the TV.

"If people want to become friends with you only after you become kind of popular – these are not real friends, aren't they?" she whispered without opening her eyes.

The old man sighed: "Not really. There might be people who really want to be friends with you, but usually they just seek attention, which they could get if they stick with you. Be suspicious, but don't turn people down. Try to know them better, and then you'll be able to see what their real intentions are." He told her and hugged her closer.

Mikan nodded and slowly drifted to sleep.

It was not until one week later that her life started to change again.

She was running again.

"Oj! Sakura come on! Don't run!" boys were calling behind her, trying to catch her. But Mikan did not give up. Again she ran through the school halls and turned right on a corner – but bumped into someone again.

"Gosh, I'm so sorry. Are you ok?" she asked, when she stood up again and tried to help the other person up. At the same time she looked around furiously, because she already could hear the teasing voices of her classmates who were following her.

"Yeah yeah, I'm fine. Watch out next time." Said the person with a deep voice and Mikan had to turn around in surprise to see who it was.

Natsume Hyuuga.

He dusted his jeans and looked at her a bit annoyed, because of her clumsiness.

"Oh, it's you Sakura. What are you doing here, running around?" he asked, scratching his neck, but his questions was answered by the silly voices that came nearer and nearer. He saw Mikans expression change from fear to anger and into desperation.

"Hyuuga, please please, tell them you didn't see me ok?" she held his hand and the only thing he could do was nod dumpy. Mikan then jumped behind him and hid herself behind his bright back. Natsume could feel the warmth of her body, which of course affected him in typical teenage way.

He blinked confused and gulped, when her hands grasped his shirt to press herself closer.

The red-eyed boy was just standing there, as the group of boys came running from the corner, not even seeing him there. They just went on and disappeared after some moments.

When it became silent again, Mikan breathed out in relief and let him go. Natsume turned to her, watched her amused, as she composed herself and fearfully looked around for a sign of danger: "Thanks for helping me." She said, but did not calm down.

Natsume shrugged calmly and checked her out. She really was pretty, even more as in the video.

"You know..." he started and got her attention. "Why don't you just go out with them. Each and every week another boy, and slowly they will lose interest. Or you could just find a real boyfriend between them and everything will be ok. It's a win-win situation, actually." He suggested with a smirk, trying to impress her.

But Mikan just laughed in his face and looked at him sidewise with an amused smile: "Well, thanks for suggesting, but sorry for saying this; I'm not like you. Really, no offence, but I can't go out with people I don't know and don't even like. Please don't take it too personal, people are different and such, and I have nothing against

flexibility in relationships, but I'm not able to do that." She concluded and looked around the corner. It was safe.

Natsume laughed at her words because, well, it was true. He was a playboy. A womanizer. He changed girlfriends almost every week. But he liked it that way. Girls were eating him from his hands.

Mikan looked at him again and smiled. Hyuuga was really a strange guy. He was a very handsome boy with a muscular body, dark dishevelled hair and blood-red eyes.

When she first saw him two years ago, she had a crush on him, as many girls did. But unlike other girls, she did not throw herself at him and declared her undying love for him. She watched him from afar and sometimes daydreamed about him asking her out.

Of course that would never happen. And even if - she would not agree, because she did not want to be a number. She did not want to be one of them.

That is why she never really told that she kind of liked him – no, not him, his appearance yes. He was good-looking and had a cool attitude.

They were in different classes, but in the same year, so yeah, they knew each other.

Right now he was staring at her with that smirk on his face and she would love to punch him.

"So, even if I asked you out right now, you wouldn't say yes?" he asked and leaned on the wall.

Mikan blushed, but laughed it off: "Natsume, I don't really know you, so of course I would say no." Then she waved her hand and bid goodbye. He called after her that she was a moron, but they both laughed and it was ok.

A week later nothing changed. It got worse actually. If boys nagged Mikan only after school a week ago, they did it during lunch break now. It was frustrating and Mikan was about to kill someone.

She ran out of the library with her notebook, pencil-case and school book firmly in arms and almost jumped out of the building. As usual she climbed up the cherry tree and waited for her release.

In that particular moment, Natsume came out of the building and calmly made his way through the park. He stopped in front of 'the particular' cherry tree, smirked and sat down. He leaned his back and his head on the tree trunk and closed his eyes, enjoying the warm spring weather.

After some moments, he heard running steps and male voices coming near. He opened his eyes and saw a group of boys storming through the park, laughing and calling Mikan's name. When they saw him, they stopped by and greeted him friendly.

They casually asked him if he saw Mikan and ignored the amused way he was watching them.

"Noup, haven't seen her." He lied smoothly and smirked, "I was too busy... you know." They all laughed at his obvious indication and went away.

When he was sure the boys were out of sight, Natsume stood up and leaned his back on the tree. He smirked, lifted his arm and with a strong move backwards of his fist, he hit the trunk of the tree so hard that it shook with force.

He smirked as he heard the shriek of someone in the tree crown and sat down again.

"Hyuuga you ass!" called the girl's voice from above and he calmly answered: "It was my pleasure to help you-" he looked up: "Polkadots." And then he laughed.

Yeah, he saw her underwear... Because he hit the tree, she lost her balance and almost fell down. But her legs caught the branch in the last second, so now she was hanging from the branch, with only her legs around it.

Her clothes hanged as well as her hair and the boy had a nice view of her polka doted underwear.

Mikan climbed on the branch again as fast as she could. It was kind of hart, you know – she was clumsy. When she finally balanced herself, she stood up on the branch, dusted herself and climbed down the tree.

She stopped on the last branch, sat down and leaned her back on the trunk. She was still well hidden by all leafs on the tree crown.

"Forget what you saw and thank you for helping me again." She told him annoyed and huffed. Natsume was still laughing at her, but stopped when he heard the rustling of paper and the noise of pencils in a pencil case.

He looked up and smirked at her: "What the hell are you doing, little girl?"

Mikan ignored his smirk and answered: "Homework of course. I was rudely chased out of the library ten minutes ago, because, although I specifically told the librarian to not let the boys in, they bribed her and she accidently forgot about my request. That treasonable corruptor..." she mumbled the last part, but Natsume heard her anyway.

Again he laughed his ass off and Mikan could only glare at him. While she was scribbling into her notebook and read something from her book – how she did that on a branch, he did not know – Natsume watched her from the corner of his eye, a strange feeling getting to him.

"You know, most girls would kill for the attention you get from the guys." He commented and looked her up and down. She really was pretty.



"Of course they would." started Mikan calmly without looking at him. "That is why most of them change boyfriends as often as they change socks – and they never really feel happy afterwards."

Now she looked at him: "You know, I can imagine that it must be fun to have different boyfriends and such, but I think that nothing real comes out of it. I prefer true meaning behind a relationship – but yeah, you have a different opinion." She concluded and turned back to her homework.

Natsume smiled at her comment and thought to himself that not only she was pretty, she also had her own will, she knew what she wants and she is smart. She is cool.

"Yeah, you're right. But it's cool. I started thinking about it and please praise me," he laughed "I hadn't had a new girlfriend for a month now."

Mikan looked at him surprised: "That is something new. How come?"

Natsume just shrugged: "Need a break..."

Mikan watched him, but did not say anything.

They kept silent for a while till Natsume heard some girls chatting and passing him. They did not see Mikan, because she was still well hidden.

Mikan noticed that all girls in the group greeted and smiled at Natsume, giving him a seductive look. Usually Natsume would smirk, stand up and pick one of them to spend some time with her. But now, he just smirked and saluted with his hand, looking cool as ever.

When the confused girls disappeared, Mikan could not stay silent anymore: "You were serious?" she asked surprised. Natsume turned his head to her still smirking: "Yep, I told you, I need a break from those- chicks..."

His eyes were watching her and Mikan got a strange bubbling feeling in her stomach. It was like- like he would search for something in her eyes or in her confused expression. His eyes sparkled and that made her heart beat faster.

She blinked bewildered and turned her head back to her homework.

Natsume watched her expression and smiled to himself. Yeah, he got her there. He did not get that confused look very often, because girls were crazy about him anyway, but he recognized her expression. He went that through this month. So he knew how she felt. Just a little longer and she will like him as much as he likes her.

He cannot help himself. He really likes her. She is not like other girls. She knows what she wants and she does not let others decide for her. She works hard for something she likes. And maybe she could be like that if he got her into a relationship. Maybe she could be perfect.

And yes, he knows he will get her.

Weeks later, Mikan came to school like she normally did. The only problem was that one of her classmates already nagged her to go out with him. She almost lost her temper, when Hyuuga appeared. Actually, he walked to school with a few of his friends and laughed at something one of the guys said.

As he noticed Mikan's uncomfortable situation, he casually went to her and greeted her like it was the most normal thing on earth. Except it was not. Natsume did not usually go to talk with girls – they came to him.

So that is why all the attention was on them.

"Sakura I need you to help me bring some stuff for the teacher." He told her loudly so that everyone knew that this is nothing special. Soon the attention on them and the pestering guy were gone, and Mikan could finally breathe.

They walked through the halls side by side: "Thanks Hyuuga. I owe you. I don't understand why they don't stop." Mikan grumbled and looked around.

Natsume just shrugged: "Welcome to my world." He smirked as she laughed. "Well, yeah, but I'm not the one enjoying it." She said with a smile and bid goodbye, when they came to her classroom.

Natsume saluted her, walked into his own classroom, and winked to girls here and there.

Few days later, Mikan worked her ass off at the cafe. It was Friday and there were many people. It actually did not surprise her, when she saw Hyuuga and his friends walk in and order drinks from her. Natsume smirked at her the whole time and she just smirked back.

The group of boys stayed till very late and it seemed that they were waiting for her shift to end. And this was proved to be true, because when she was free, all the guys stood up and went out of the cafe with her.

"How long have you been working here?" one of the boys asked. His name was Koko if she remembered right.

"Well, it's been two years. I started to work here as soon as I moved into the city." She told them with a smile and when another guy wanted to ask her another question, she interrupted him by saying that she had to go to the other direction to go home. The boys nodded and bid her goodbye. But then, they also said goodbye to Natsume who apparently lived in the same direction as Mikan.

"I didn't know you lived near me." Mikan told him, when they walked side by side down the street.

The dark-haired boy just shrugged and smirked: "You never asked." He laughed, when

Mikan playfully punched him on the shoulder.

"Jerk..." she mumbled, but smiled afterwards.

"I didn't know you worked in a cafe for so long." He continued.

"You never asked." Said Mikan and giggled.

She was really cute. Natsume could feel his heart speed up and he desperately wanted to hold her hand.

"But for two years? You started really early." He commented and looked at her.

Mikan shrugged her shoulders: "Well, I have to help my grandpa out. There's no one else who could." She explained and Natsume stayed silent. So she was an orphan? He couldn't ask her that. It would be kind of rude.

When he finally opened his mouth again, Mikan suddenly stopped in front of a huge block and smiled at him: "Well, this is my stop. It was nice to walk with you. See ya on Monday." She said and bumped fists with him, as she always did with friends.

"Yeah, see ya next week... Polkadots." He teased and stepped away, when she tried to hit him. He laughed, when she turned away and stormed home, but when he made his way down the street, he heard her calling goodbye. He just waved and went away.

"So you and Hyuuga, huh?" asked Hotaru, while eating lunch on Monday afternoon. Both girls were sitting outside on a bench and enjoyed the warm and sunny day. In front of them was a breath-taking view of the blooming cherry trees of the school's park and there were many students taking a walk or played around.

Mikan who chewed on her apple, looked at Hotaru confused: "Whad'ya mean?" She finally gulped down the peace of fruit and threw away the rest.

"Well, you're kind of the first girl he talked with in a- a normal way, I would say." Explained Hotaru and bit into her sandwich.

Mikan shrugged her shoulders and looked into the sky: "Well, I don't know. We are friends, that is for sure, but I haven't seen any indication of something else."

Hotaru watched her from the corner of her eyes and smirked: "If you say so..."

The day went on pretty normal after lunch. Mikan was relieved that her situation seemed to calm down. She worked through class and made her homework at the library. She was almost completely content until she stepped out of the library.

"I can't believe this." She said angrily, when she saw a group of boys waiting for her. She took a big breath and confidently made her way past them.

"Come on Sakura! Give one of us a chance! We would like to see your beauty!" one of

them said and was cheered on by the others.

"Yeah, girl. We are trying to impress you for almost three months now! Just give us a chance." Said the other guy and stopped her by stepping in front of her.

Mikan glared at him: "I am not interested, so please be kind and leave me alone." She pushed the guy away and continued with her way.

When a third guy tried to stop her, they suddenly heard a deep voice: "Is there a problem?" asked Natsume as he came near the group. He had his sports bag over his shoulder that indicated he had football practice till now.

He looked at all of them and noticed Mikan's angry expression.

"Ah, it's nothing Hyuuga." Laughed one of the boys. "We are just trying to make Sakura here to go out with one of us. That's all." They all agreed and high-fived.

Natsume then just looked at them coolly and made his way to Mikan. She was quite surprised when he threw his arm over her shoulder and pressed her closer. "That's not possible anymore." He told them and all the boys looked at him perplexed.

Mikan was also surprised, but did not say anything. Natsume calmly pulled her with him and they slowly walked out of the building.

When they went through the school park, Mikan finally stopped him: "Thanks Natsume ... again. But I think they will misunderstand the situation." She told him and pulled away. But Natsume grabbed her hand and squeezed it.

"I was serious." He said with his deep voice and looked her straight in the eye. Mikan blinked confused and blushed, after she realized what this is about. She shyly looked away and Natsume had to smile at her cute figure.

"Don't say something, you are not sure about. You know very well what my opinion about this topic is." She told him without looking at him. But Natsume was not having any of that. He pulled her closer and Mikan looked at him with glassy eyes and with a scared expression. She was not scared of him, but of the situation.

"I like you." He told her firmly. "And not in a 'just-experimenting' way. I really do like you."

Mikan gulped down: "But you don't know me. I don't really know you." She whispered.

Natsume just smiled at her and dropped his bag down. Then he put both of his hands on her hips and pulled her closer: "That's what 'going-out' is about. To learn about each other. To get to know you." He put a curl of her hair behind her ear and dropped his palm on her cheek.

He noticed how unsure she was – she was shaking a bit and her breathing was faster and louder than usual. But he knew that she liked him. If she would not, she would

have already run away – she was that type of a girl.

But here she was, standing in front of him, with rosy cheeks and glassy eyes, lost in his own red eyes.

"I-I'm not r-really sure." She breathed out and tried to step back, but he held her firmly.

"We could just try it out if it works. If not, I will back off." He told her.

Mikan was silent for a moment, not really knowing what to do.

"What do you think about me?" he asked her.

Mikan blinked and smiled: "Well yeah... I'm sure you noticed that I kind of like you. But I didn't expect for this to happen."

Natsume smirked: "Yeah, I saw you gazing at me for almost 2 years." He laughed, when she hit him playfully and hugged her closer.

"Well? Will you be my girl?" he asked finally and waited for her answer with a throbbing heart and a hopeful expression on his face.

Mikan smiled gently at him and shyly scratched her nose: "Well, alright. It's worth a try."

She laughed loudly when he lifted her up and swung her left and right. When he finally put her down, he gently took her hands and looked at her. She really was beautiful. And he was not really surprised, when she rose on her toes and kissed him shyly on the lips.

He closed his eyes and massaged her lips with his own. It was not a passionate kiss, but a gentle one, soft as a breeze and sweet as sugar. It was really nice.

"You're mine now." He whispered as they pulled away and leaned their foreheads together.

Mikan smiled at him: "No, you're mine."