

My Umbrella Shield

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Submitted: January 27, 2006

Updated: January 27, 2006

The rain had always soothed Yomi, but can it also help her sort out her feelings for the one she cares for most? YxT fluff

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Chapter 1 - My Umbrella Shield

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1 - My Umbrella Shield

A.N. (Sigh) I know I have not posted in forever, and well, I know I have a bunch of stories that need to be finished. Ah well, I felt like making a shoujo ai fic and Azu one as well. This ish what came out form that.

Disclaimer: I do not own the characters of Azumanga Daioh. Not now, not ever.

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Drop

Drop

Drop

The rain poured form the sky heavily. Each drop cascaded down the leaves of the trees and onto the concrete roads of the city. The water splattered about the ground in a fashion that could be described as so loud it was quiet.

The sky was dark and bleak. It had been rainy all day, and there was little chances of it slowing anytime soon. The city park, usually lush and green, held a dismal look around it.

Most of the residents in the city found it best to stay indoors on these rainy days. Others, say as young children, had other views instead. They were out and about splashing through the puddles that littered the ground. Those who were unluckily caught in the down pour scurried about with their coats held tightly, each seeking out a place of shelter.

A girl walked through the park along one of the many pathways, light jacket over a sweater and an umbrella in her right hand. She couldn't have been older than seventeen, her face mature looking for one of the age as well. Her hair was long and flowing, reaching down to about her waist.

She took a step, slowly keeping a steady pace in her walk. Her boots, splashed only slightly with the water of the rain, gently stepped about the ground. Careful to avoid any unnecessary puddles, the tall teen tilted her head. The girl brought a hand to her face, adjusting her glasses which slipped back and forth into place as she walked.

It was calming being out in the rain, for what ever reason she could find. The light rain pouring down, giving off an echoing beading sound from underneath her navy umbrella, continued its fall.

Even that being said, on that day however, the calming sensation she received from the rainwater was not her reason to be walking out in the cold summer air. She had had a lot on her mind. It mostly involved someone else though. It was for that reason she was out in the rain. A place to think. A place to sort out things... and she was expecting the someone on her thoughts as well.

Alone, she walked about the dreary city green.

The brunette girl had taken a side trip to leave her aimlessly moving gait. Ever so carefully, she headed in direction of a well protected area of trees. Her vision suddenly became aware of a group of kids playing about in the water somewhat astray from her destination. The children were nearly soaking from head to toe, each happily accepting the fact they could catch a cold.

The young lady gave a small smile, a little unsure why the kids would submit themselves to completely drenching each other in water. *`Well, they might as well enjoy this. It's not like anyone at my age still is as carefree as that.'* The girl continued over to the wooded area.

A wet shine on her deep red boots and a mere frizz in her hair were the only signs to the girl's outing into the rainy weather. She held no complaint to remaining dry, though.

A dark haired girl out amongst the splashing and playing children seemed to take note of the girl and her umbrella passing by. She stood and trotted through the raining water.

"Yomi!" came the cry from behind the brunette. The girl in glasses only had a second to turn in response to the call. Almost immediately she was hit with the embrace of a soaking and damp person.

She screamed out a exclamation of surprise as the coldness of the other person's clothes squeezed against her. Yomi looked down to the short girl hugging her waist. "Tomo? What in blazes are you doing playing out there?" *`Go figure... Tomo is carefree like a child.'*

The teen pulled back, flashing a prize winning smile with her. "I was walking around here to meet'cha when the rain started. I figured I'd already be soaked by the time you got here anyhow so I decided to go and play." She shrugged in her normal fashion.

Being released from the embrace of her close friend, Yomi was able to steady herself and hold her medium sized umbrella over her and Tomo. She took this as her chance to glance over her trouble causing friend.

The poor teen was soaking wet and seemed to only be in a light pullover jacket, a t-shirt and shorts. "Tomo, gosh. What were you thinking?" concernedly asked the taller girl. "You'll get sick rampaging out around like this!" She received a giggle.

"Well, I was bored while waiting. So, anyway, what did you want to see me about?" The taller of the two stifled a blush.

Glimpsing over her shoulder, Yomi pointed a thumb to where the line of trees were. Swallowing a nervous gulp, she strayed away from the topic "I was hoping to find a spot that was dry to sit down at." She eyed over her friend once more. "Come on. You may develop pneumonia if you stay out here any longer."

Grinning broadly, Tomo took the offer to go with her friend. The duo walked side by side until they reached the destination of Yomi's.

She looked around the base of one of the taller trees, hoping to find a patch of grass that was not covered by the rain. With luck on her side, she found a spot that was good for the two of them to sit down.

Clicking the umbrella down, Yomi placed the object on her lap once she had settled down onto the green summer grass. Her dark haired friend gazed up at the thick branches of the large oak tree. It was enough to act as a mini shelter as long as the wind did not force the rain to blow into them. In front of the girls, a view of the hazy park provided a cute and serene setting, extremely pleasing to the eyes.

Tomo sat down next to her long time friend's right side, shoulders almost touching.

"I really like the rain..." Yomi mumbled mostly to herself, even though the girl at her side could hear her as well. She nodded.

The fair haired brunette sniffed the air and sighed. She loved it when it rained. It was a time when she could just simply relax, put all of her studies to the farthest reaches of her mind along with her worries. The calmness she experienced was enough to make her skip studying every day it rained.

The rain. How could she describe it? Normally associated with depression, the rain can hide tears. That's how many see it, and that reason is true. But the water can also start anew. It can begin an entirely new outlook on life. That was a real reason Yomi loved it so much too.

Her mind clouded peacefully and soon she subconsciously forgot where she was, what she was doing.

Minutes passed before an uneasy cough sounded, snapping Yomi out of her daydream. Suddenly, it all washed back to her why she was out in the park that day.

`...Tomo.'

The brunette bowed her head. Astonishingly, things seemed to get very restless for her.

"So what did you want to talk with me about?" came her dearest friend's query.

Yomi bit onto her bottom lip. Thoughts jumbled into her head. Everything seemed so distant from her at that very moment. She was never good with her emotions and at that time, she was being confronted by way too many. *`How can I say this? How can I tell her without her hating me...'*

It had been discovered by her, her feelings for the smaller girl that is, a couple months back. Sure, Yomi had always been fond of Tomo so to speak. She could never perceive why though. Maybe it was her over friendly personality, or her spirit or who knows? Yet only 5 full months before did the teen actually figure out what she was really feeling for her best friend.

The night prior to this day, she had had every detail covered. She knew what she was to say and how to say it. She went over each case scenario, every possible outcome to what she planned on saying.

That had no importance to the time being though. All her set thoughts had abandoned her as the real

deal came into play. *`Tomo...'* she thought painfully. *`I don't want to hurt you but..I must say that... I...'*

“Come on Yomi-chan! What's the matter, an evil biting cat get your tongue?” Yomi hurtfully looked up to the dark haired teen as Tomo giggled.

`How can she take something this crucial in such a carefree way? Sure, she doesn't know I mean this to be serious, but still... oh. Tomo. Why do you do this to me?' Yomi winced as her friend continued a light laugh.

The look on her best friend halted Tomo's giddy laughter though. “Huh? ...Yomi? What's the matter?” She placed her hand gingerly on the troubled girl's right shoulder suddenly concerned with her friend's expression.

Flinching involuntarily at the contact, Yomi let out a sigh. Her face turned away from Tomo's, not wanting to bear to look at whom she was to admit her innermost feeling to. *`But I must.'*

“Well... Tomo...” She started slowly, picking out each of her words carefully. “I... well... You know how we've been... friends and all, since what seems forever? Well... I think... maybe... uh...” Slowly, she eased her words to a stop. This wasn't working.

Her best friend sat there, quietly for once, with large eyes waiting to see what her friend had to speak about. Tomo smiled when Yomi seemed stuck for words. “It's alright, Yomi-chan. Keep going.” She smiled broadly, the action giving a little bit of confidence back to the bespeckled teen.

`Well... Alright Yomi. It's now or never.' As Yomi let a smile out, ready to state her exclamation of love to her closest and dearest friend, a gust of wind propelled itself upon the duo.

Both girls cried out as sprays of water splashed against them, traveling thanks to the wind. Shielding her eyes, Yomi scrambled for her umbrella.

“Yomiiiiiii!” whined the girl beside her as the wind whipped back again sending another strong gust of water at the two.

With a grunt and trust of her arm, Yomi's umbrella opened up before the two seventeen year olds. Quickly, the girl with glasses tucked up her legs to have her knees touching the trunk of the old oak tree. Tomo followed suit.

Steadying the umbrella out in front of them, Yomi breathed out in relief and briefly laughed. She could tell that they had only gotten a little bit wet due to the spray of rain water. Her clothing felt damp, but not to a great extent and her hair was quite dry. Absorbed in checking her clothing, the brunette was startled when she felt Tomo drop her head onto her shoulder. She felt the smaller girl shiver and asked “Are you okay?”

Tomo nodded while scooting closer. “Yeah, but the damn rain is still hitting my back.” Another blow of the wind sent more rain streaming at them. Tomo shuddered again when she felt the cool water hit her already damp light jacket.

“Gah, Tomo!” cried out Yomi as she adjusted the umbrella to cover her friend, leaving her back slightly in the line of the rain. The water was really cold and she bit her lip while growling at it. Why didn't she bring a larger umbrella?

Then the shorter haired teen protested. “Now you are gonna get wet. Here.” Without a hesitation, Tomo crawled forward and sat on top of Yomi's bent legs, hunching her back slightly to stay within the protection of the umbrella. The sudden closeness of their bodies made Yomi's cheeks flare up faster than a wildfire. She was lucky that Tomo had rested her head over her left shoulder. Otherwise she'd have a crimson face to vouch for.

At long last the umbrella safely covered each girl equally. To achieve this result, Yomi had her left hand holding the umbrella pole while her right arm was around her friend's waist to keep her steady. Her right shoulder was pressed against the tree. The winds were still pretty strong and the duo would hear the splattering of the storm water echoing behind their umbrella shield.

“Well, that was a sure strike of bad luck,” commented Tomo in hopes of lightening the mood. The girl she had been sitting on un-stiffened and relaxed back against the tree once hearing her friend's sentence.

“You could say that again...” mumbled the taller teen in annoyance.

Tomo spoke nonchalantly. “Well, it was your fault.”

The long haired teen furrowed her brows in vexation. “Oh? And how is that?”

“You wanted to come here in the first place.”

Yomi growled. “But it's not my fault that this drizzle turned into an awful downpour.”

Tilting her head a little to one side, Tomo continued, a smug look dawning on her facial features. “Or was it?”

Letting out an exasperating sigh, Yomi frowned. “Oh, so now I am some kind of witch. Even if I could control the weather, why would I want *this*?” She wanted to bite her tongue. There she was, sitting so close to the one person she cherished more than anything, and she was still saying this in spite of her feelings. *Argh. Just shut it now Koyomi!* she scolded to herself.

A fierce zephyr collided into the umbrella sending a load of water with it. A couple of drops splashed over and onto the upperclassmen heads.

“Oh Yomi, you know you like spending time with me.” She turned her head to the other side, it still resting upon Yomi's shoulder, only this time facing in towards the other girl's hair.

The brunette's cheeks flared. Biting her tongue to keep from an embarrassing stutter, Yomi's mind went into overdrive. *Wait. Does that means she knows...? Is she okay with this... How I feel...?* While trying to think of a suitable response, her friend continued on.

"I mean, for whatever reason, you are my best friend." Yomi's eyes widened. Something inside her felt a hard stab with that sentence. "It'd be only natural you'd want to be with me .I mean come on, it is me we are talking about."

'She... still thinks of me... as only a friend...' A sting was felt in her eye, but the tall girl fought back against that which she knew would cause tears. She should have known. *'Friend...'* She repeated the word over and over to herself hoping that maybe she could psych herself out. Maybe even rid her of her this feeling once and for all. Each time, however, just brought more pain into her.

Eventually, she found herself just barely able to keep back a sob.

There was silence, except for the occasionally blasts of rain colliding with the umbrella. Tomo didn't like this and began to ponder over what could make Yomi so quiet. She felt the girl she sat upon quiver. A couple of seconds later, she felt the same motion again. It was light, but being so pressed up to her friend made it easier to feel.

"Yomi?" asked the normally overly hyper girl cautiously, not sure what was wrong. Her head was just beneath Yomi's ear so the other girl's face was still out of view.

"Hey Tomo," Yomi began as steadily as she could. She couldn't handle everything that was within her. She had to say it. "Do you know why I like the rain...?"

Still surprised by the sudden mood change of her friend, Tomo simply shook her head. Then she felt a droplet on her cheek. Yet the rain had not been blown in that time. Was that... Yomi? Blinking, Tomo sat up as best she could to face her friend.

Even hidden behind her friend's glasses, Tomo could see the puffiness of Yomi's eyes. A trail left from a tear was shimmering on her cheek even in the muffled light. "Hey, what's wrong?" sincerely wondered Tomo, a frown formed by her lips.

Not meeting eye contact, Yomi simply continued what she had already begun to say. "...It's because no matter what happens, it always can disguise tears... for better or for worse..."

At that, Tomo became nervous. Since when did her Yomi cry? Yomi never cries. Never! Not sure about anything at that moment, Tomo leaped forward and tightly embraced her friend just as another spout of rain connected with the outward umbrella. "Why are you crying? I really don't like this, Yomi." She snuggled her face into her friend's shoulder and Yomi nearly moved herself away, but fought back that urge. "You're my best friend, Yomi-chan!"

There it was again. Yomi bit her inner cheek as she felt the painful stab in her chest again. *'That's it. I can't keep this up.'*

"Tomo, that's just the problem," was what she was able to say without stuttering. "Can't you see?" At that point, the girl in her lap took it as her time to pull away to meet Yomi's eyes head on. The shorter girl's eyes held confusion. "Tomo, don't you see that I can't be friends with you?"

A blink was all Yomi got in response. "You are definitely not feeling well, Yomi-chan," came the remark

from the girl before her just as another gust of wind went swooping through.

“Tomo, no. You don't get it!” desperately cried the frustrated teen as her eyes let two more tears go down her cheeks. Her eye contact fell once again, searching for anything to make this easier, more comforting to say. There was nothing within the proximity that she was sitting though that could do that, except for one. Dragging her gaze back up, Yomi met Tomo's look.

The girl before her tilted her head in an innocent manner. “What don't I get? You can say it if it'll make you feel better, cause I'm beginning to miss the old dogy you.” She smiled that Tomo-rific smile, only making her friend more agitated.

Taking in a deep breath, Yomi focused her thoughts. “Okay, Tomo... I can't think of you as my friend anymore...”

Ready to open her mouth to make another comment, Yomi stopped Tomo by quickly finishing her started sentence.

“...because, you're more than a friend to me.. much more...” What she had thought she said pretty clear and boldly, Yomi found to be almost as quiet as a whisper, but none the less sincere.

Shaking her head, the dark haired girl pried, a serious look dawning on her features. “...what did you say?”

More tears spouted from the brunette's eyes. She was too confused. No matter what happened, no matter how much courage she could muster, it never followed through. And Tomo's reaction was not that of which she had expected. She was in disbelief of Yomi, that was it. “I-I'm sorry... Tomo.” Not knowing what else to say, she just continued her rambling apologies. “I'm sorry. So sorry...”

“What are you sorry for?” Yomi stole a glance at her friend's face. “You are so confusing. Maybe if you repeat what you had said before, I could actually hear you and make heads or tails of this whole thing.”

She didn't hear? Go figure. Yomi sighed in annoyance at herself. She was her own problem. The whole thing could be settled by now if only she had the courage to confess to Tomo. Her saddened eyes drew Tomo's face close to hers.

“Yomi, please. If this bothers you so much, I want to know.”

Choking back a sob, which she was not sure came from that time, the brunette stated “I-I don't want... you t-to hate me...”

Playfully sticking out her tongue, Tomo giggled. “I'd never hate you. Maybe on occasion I'd dislike you, but I'd never hate you Yomi.” For a rare moment, Tomo closed her eyes and smiled a sincere smile. “You mean too much to me to hate you.”

A strong gust of wind hit the umbrella once more, eliciting a loud echoing sound of water.

During that moment, Yomi lost all of her self control and wrapped her arms tightly around the other form.

Her face burrowed into Tomo's hair as she sobbed in thankfulness for her closest friend. The more cheery girl hugged back, her hands resting on the other teen's shoulder blades.

Tomo pulled back slowly to meet her face with Yomi's once again, her hands remaining behind her friend's shoulders. "I really want to hear. Now come on..."

Yomi stared back to her friend who was maybe 4 inches from herself, a smile appearing on her mouth at her friend's smile. Her red eyes softened behind her rounded glasses. "Tomo, what I want to say is..."

She felt a sudden wave of courage surge through her staring deep into Tomo's friendly eyes, and it felt so good. This was it "...I love you... More than you would ever believe. I'm in love with you."

At that moment, ignoring her friend's complete change of expression, Yomi threw caution to the wind and leaned in to close the gap of inches between their faces. Unshed tears gathered in her eyes as alleviation took hold of her, finally feeling free of her emotions. She felt the other girl's soft lips against her own as she pressed herself to the other girl. Yomi could feel the warmth, that being around Tomo always made her feel, scorch through her body at that moment.

Another whirl of wind collided powerfully into the umbrella, but it was nothing but background noise.

Finally, after what seemed like a century yet was but a mere 6 seconds, Yomi pulled back. Her eyes grew anxious right away as she saw the look of astonishment sent back to her. The tall girl felt immense guilt pile up within her. *Oh great Kami... Tomo... What have I done?*

"I'm s-so s-sorry Tomo..." said Yomi while bowing her head in shame while a round of sobs over took her. Half of her was hoping that maybe, just maybe, Tomo would call out that it was okay, that she loved her back and kiss her right back. The other half, her stronger half, was expecting nothing less than a slap in the face and utter words of rejection.

What she didn't expect was to hear Tomo break out into hysteric sobs.

Concernedly turning up to the other girl, Yomi could not read anything on her face. She felt the pang of guilt hit her again like a fist in the gut as she gathered the small girl into her arms. Soothingly, she stroked Tomo's back, wanting to speak consoling words, yet not trusting her own cracked voice.

"Yomi... Yo..mi..." sobbed the dark haired seventeen year old onto Yomi's chest. She sniffled loudly and exhaled, it not doing much to steady her breath.

She was helpless. She had no clue what to do. All Yomi knew was that Tomo was there and upset. It was her fault as well! That oh so familiar sting returned to her optics at those thoughts. She let the tears go down her cheeks. *Why am I crying? Tomo is upset!* Gently she shook her head. *I shouldn't be crying. I should be helping her!*

With that set thought, Yomi pulled away, steadying the tearful girl in front of her. Tomo would not keep her half lidded gaze anywhere but Yomi's face. It struck Yomi deeply just seeing the tears cascading down the opposite girl's face.

Carefully, she brought a hand to Tomo's cheek and brushed away a trail of tears with her thumb. Forcing a smile, Yomi laughed into a sob. "Now, don't go crying on me Tomo." She brushed away another tear line, leaning her palms to Tomo's delicate face.

The girl, still positioned on her lap, slowed her tears fairly easily once feeling Yomi's hands rest on both of her cheeks.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to.. upset you..." whimpered the slightly wiser girl. "Now.. I know what you had said before... but I still... will understand..." She swallowed the lump forming in her throat. "...if you hate me now... but I had to.. tell you..."

There was an awkward silence in which only the rain on the protecting umbrella and the duo's breathing could be heard.

Then, out of nowhere, Tomo let out a chuckle. It was quite spontaneous as she was accustomed to doing on many an occasion. The chuckle grew louder and more merry but the second. Pretty soon, she appeared as happy as her normal self. This all just left Yomi in the haze.

"Oh, Yomi. As I said, I'd never ever hate you." Her overly cheerful smile could have fooled anyone into believing that she wasn't just crying. Anyone but Yomi, who seemed quite taken back. "Quite the contrary actually."

"Wha...?" was all she could muster out of her sheer confusion.

The next moment came so swiftly, it made Yomi jump a tiny bit. Tomo leaned her forehead against Yomi's, looking up to her glasses covered eyes. A blush made its way onto both parties' cheeks. "I never thought I'd get to say this to you... but I love you too, Yomi." In the blink of an eye, their lips connected again and Yomi wasn't sure if she should still be shocked or let the feeling take her over. She went with the second choice as she melted into Tomo's lips.

The wind on the other side of the sheltering umbrella let up slightly, but it went by unnoticed by the two girls behind it.

Tomo's arms had snaked around Yomi's neck, pulling the other girl in closer. Yomi smiled into the kiss, totally unaware of anything else at that moment. And once again, the girls pulled back, both panting a little. Tomo went back to resting her head on the taller girl's shoulder, a great satisfied grin on her face.

Minutes passed as the two sat there embracing. It was very quiet. Yomi decided to take a chance and moved the umbrella ever so slightly. The rain was still coming down, but the wind was virtually gone. The windy storm had turned back into a fair summer shower. She grinned.

Tomo made a groan when Yomi tried to move. "Come on, Tomo. The rain is letting up for a while." Tomo sat back up on her own, her eyes looking on the border between awake and asleep.

She yawned and then complained in her childish fashion. "But you were so comfy..."

The opposite girl smiled and her cheeks tinted pink. Yomi then moved the umbrella and gave Tomo

some leeway to stand up. Once the short girl stood, Yomi was helped up. "Hey, let's get going. You're clothing is still damp. I don't want to catch a cold from you."

"With your luck you don't need me for that." Tomo received a playful punch in the arm at her remark. Then very randomly the smaller teen begged Yomi to let her hold the umbrella, which resulted in an odd look from the other woman. "Can I can I can I?"

Giving an impassive face, Yomi raised her eyebrows as Tomo eyed the umbrella grasped in her right hand. "I seem to remember you having bad experiences with any umbrella you use. And I'm sure there will be more to come."

Smiling sweetly, Tomo complied. "Okay. You can hold it." She then looped her left arm under Yomi's, and placed her hand over top of her girlfriend's hand holding the umbrella base. "I'll just hold your hand then."

Trying to keep a composure of a sort, Yomi shrugged. Yet she smiled broadly inwardly. They started to walk off in the direction of the park exit. Once stepping out from the cover of the foliage, the rain began pounding down onto the umbrella. The girls just happily walked through the near completely empty park.

A couple of minutes flew by as they neared the exit to the city green. "I'm just still so glad you told me Tomo. I never would have thought..." Yomi said sheepishly.

"Haha. How could not, Yomi-chan. Hasn't it been obvious since Freshman year?" Tomo hugged her love's arm closely and laughed. Blushing, Yomi giggled nervously while diverting her gaze. "Eh, maybe it wasn't exactly obvious then."

"You think? I think you're too dense most of the time." Yomi then had a question that she had the urge to ask. "Why were you crying then Tomo? After I confessed?"

The tinier teen sighed. "I was so happy, but you surprised me.. Like a whole bunch!" Then she smirked. "Oh, and now who is the dense one here?" Yomi nudged Tomo in a teasing manner.

Smiling in a way she never thought possible, Yomi lost her stare to the water dripping down off of the umbrella. *'I've always loved the rain for many reasons... But I think I've found an even better reason.'* Tomo's head fell onto her taller girlfriend's shoulder.

"I love you, Koyomi."

"And I love you, Tomo-chan."

The two giggled joyfully for no particular cause and made their way out of the park.

Together.

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A.N.: Written over the past three sleepless nights of mine. (Twitch) It was originally a one page oneshot, but then it got longer and turned into eleven (Twitch) I do like this pairing. Number one out of all my fave Azu pairings. And the umbrella idea came from back when my friends and I were kids. Umbrellas do make awesome shields. lol So I used that idea and stuck in some romance.

I didn't want this to be solid drama, so hopefully it was kinda fluffy. Me likes the fluff. Love the fluff people. Love it! oo;