

## Petriloid

*“Disappearances involving the Vocaloid group are still rising. Police forces are continuing their investigations through any leads on the whereabouts of the missing girls are hard to come by. Police are encouraging anyone with information to come forwards.”*

Hatsune sighed, staring into her glass of soda, her eyes glancing up at the television screen hanging above the counter as the news report droned on. The sound faded as a waitress turned down the sound.

“Sorry about that Miss,” the waitress apologized, throwing the remote onto the counter as she looked around at Hatsune’s downcast expression.

“It’s okay,” Hatsune replied, pushing her straw with her fingers.

“I’ll get you another. On the house.”

Hatsune just nodded, glancing across the booth to where her friends would normally sit. She flicked her attention out to the Rising Sun city blocks outside, the crystal glass sparkle under the full moonlight. She had heard about the city that sparkled and had always looked forward to when her tour manager would bring up the tour listings hoping that one day she and her little group could enjoy the city together in between concerts but now those hopes were dashed.

The waitress returned, popping down a full glass of soda next to the quarter filled one. The leather seat groaned as the waitress sat down opposite her.

“Penny for your thoughts?”

“Not to be rude but don’t you have work?”

The waitress chuckled, letting her red hair down from its bun as she looked around at the empty diner, the only activity coming from the front door’s bug zapper.

“Unless I started serving ghosts I got all the time for a star like you Miss Miku.”

Hatsune sighed, taking a small slurp on her straw, clutching her hands tightly around the glass.

“My names Diana by the way,” the waitress introduced.

“You ever get the feeling you’re being targeted. I mean I’m used to stalkers and crazy fans we all are but I get the feeling someone is taking it too far.”

“You mean the disappearances?”

Hatsune just nodded.

"It's possible that your right. You guys are really famous. I remember when you first came in here, how the people flocked to you especially."

"We always got that wherever we went."

"Even job offers?"

"Job offers?" Hatsune said, shooting a puzzled look as she stared at the woman, "Explain."

"Well, on your first night here I saw a green haired woman talking to one of your friends, the girl with a spiralled red hair."

"Kasane, she was the first to disappear," Hatsune muttered, despite not getting along with her she had always tried to make nice with Kasane.

"Yeah. Anyway, I overheard the woman offering Kasane a job offer which I thought was a music gig."

"I'm guessing you told the police this?"

"I did I even gave the police some more info."

Hatsune perked up a little and looked expectantly at Diana.

"Your friend was stated as last being seen by the Rising Sun concert hall but witness but the news have it wrong. I reported I last saw her up by the old Dock Vault where high valued shipments are kept." Diana explained.

Hatsune tapped her glass with her fingers, pondering over what she was hearing, while yes the news never got anything right or even the right information that police must have had a good reason for keeping this a secret.

"Sorry I honestly would have thought you'd have known this," Diana said, apologetically, "They told me they'd look into it."

Hatsune flexed her fingers as she looked up at the woman, she bit her lip as a small tear fiddle her eyes.

"Everything okay? I'm sorry if I upset you," Diana asked, looking apologetically as she stood up.

"Where is this dock?" Hatsune asked.

“Now Miss, I know what you're thinking but it's best left to the police. I shouldn't have opened my mouth.”

Diana walked away as she gently punched herself in the gut calling herself stupid under her breath. Hatsune stood up and made her way towards the exit, “*If she wouldn't tell her then she'd have to find it on her own,*” she thought.

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Hatsune strolled down a quiet street, she looked around at the road signs. She stopped on a corner looking around at her surroundings, her feet aching from walking so much.

“Your Miss Miku aren't you?”

Hatsune jumped back, bringing her fists up ready to fight, “You'll never take me!”

She lowered her fists as she heard a faint yet surprising chuckle, her eyes widening as she glanced at the old man standing in front of her. She blushed embarrassed at her actions.

“S-Sorry,” she muttered.

“That's okay my dear. I would be jumpy given the state of things.”

Hatsune played with her hands nervously, her posture becoming awkward as she lost her words.

“I'm sorry. If I scared you but I had to come over and ask for your autograph...it's for my daughter.”

Hatsune looked as the man held out a pen sitting on top of a picture of her, a large sign in the background of the photo read “*Comic-Con 2013*”. She chuckled, remembering her first convention where she had met Kasane.

“What's her name?” Hatsune quizzed, taking the paper and the pen, pressing them into a nearby window.

“Patrick...yes I know it's a male name but I was drunk at the birth,” the man replied.

Hatsune began to sign the photo as a thought struck her, “Say do you know where the Dock Vault is? I'm looking for a fun concert location while here.”

“Oh a concert in the old vault the sound is going to be amazing and funky,” the man said, giving a little dance like no-one was watching alongside a few beats spitting from his mouth.

Hatsune chuckled, trying to stifle her laughter. The man stopped dancing, blushing with embarrassment as Hatsune handed back the photo and pen.

“Miku laughed at me. I won’t forget this,” he said to himself.

“Do you know the way?” Hatsune asked with a hopeful look.

“Why yes I do?” he said, turning to point down Mary Street, “Follow this all the way down and you’ll see the main gate at the end.”

“Thanks,” Hatsune said with a smile as she began to walk towards the start of the street.

“Your welcome.”

Hatsune slowly walked down the street, the street light guiding her way. She could see the dark gates looming in the distance, the faint yet growing smell of the sea air sweeping up into her nose. The soft splashing of the waves helped to calm her growing nerves as she came to a stop outside the gates. She looked out the sea in the distance, a lump forming in her throat.

“Your friends need you Miku. You need something to find them,” she told herself, placing a hand on the gate.

Metal creaked as she pushed the gate open, the creaked became continuous as the gate slowly closed behind her. She advanced slowly and cautiously into the dock, her eyes nervously glancing around trying to spot anything or any movement. The gentle breeze playing with her pigtails as she stepped up to the harbour edge, she looked down at the wooden planks of the walkway leading out into the sea where ships would dock next too.

“Those don’t look safe,” she muttered.

A clatter of metal drew her attention, she glanced over to the origin of the noise.

“Who’s there?” Hatsune called out, looking around. Her eyes caught a flicker of green over towards the north of the dock, disappearing behind a building marked “Shipping A”.

“Hey!”

She ran over towards the building, slowly slightly to grab a metal pipe from the floor. She edged her way around the building, raising the pipe whilst her heart raced inside her chest. She jumped out with a small attack cry swiping her makeshift bat down.

"No one's here," she muttered.

She looked around the open space, scattered pallet trollies stood alone awaiting use whilst they paint chipped away from the sea air. She looked further down the port, seeing abandoned containers sitting in the yard.

"Too easy if it was me hiding someone," she said, she turned her attention towards the shipping building, her eyes fixing on the red doors.

*"Guess it's worth a look."*

She cautiously made her way up to the door, pulling the pipe back up whilst knocking on the door with her free hand, the door creaked slightly open allowing a small flick of light to creep out.

"Someone might have come through here," she stated, "Hello?"

Receiving no reply, she stepped back and drove her right foot into the door, knocking it open. She rushed in glancing across the empty office space, papers settling from the small gust from the door opening.

"Nothing," she said, sighing as she turned towards the door, "Guess those soccer lessons came in handy," she muttered, closing the door

She looked around at her surroundings, she looked over the dust on the desk to the clean metal of the cargo elevator. Hatsune slowly stepped into the elevator, butterflies forming in her stomach when suddenly the caged door slid shut, clanging as the bolt locked into place.

"HEY!" Hatsune cried out, banging on the door.

She tugged on the bolt trying to shift it as a faint whirring sound grew. A small bell chimed as the elevator slowly descended.

"Great going! Now you're trapped!"

The elevator shook and rattled as it came to halt. The light flickered whilst the bolt slid back, the clang echoing around. The door squeaked, sliding open revealing a curving hallway that was dimly lit. Hatsune turned the panel, smacking the "G" button as hard as she could.

"I'm way over my head," she cried out, panicked as the elevator stayed still.

Her heart pounded as she stared down the empty hallway, cautiously stepping a foot outside of the elevator. Her other foot followed shortly, her gut and mind were screaming at her to stay in the elevator. She had only made it a short distance when the elevator door closed, she

screamed, turning and bolting back towards the elevator. The pipe clanged against the door as she struggled to pull it open, the faint whirring filled the air as the elevator left her behind.

Hatsune slammed her hand into the door, a small tear trickling down her face, "Why am I so stupid." She turned, seeing her only way was to continue forwards.

Her hands trembled slightly, gripping the pipe tighter as she advanced down the hallway. A series of small squeaks made her jump as three rats scurried past her. Water dripped from an old rusted looking pipe, the noise echoing as the drops hit the small puddle.

As she entered the curve of the hallway, the white lights fixed to the walls flickered slightly. With a small droning sound the lights went off returning a few seconds later, Hatsune shrieked as she came face to face with a stone male pressed into the wall, his face frozen in a permanent state of fear.

She pressed her hands into it, "It's just stone. A weird stone wall piece," she said, sighing.

She proceeded down the hallway, shuddering at the chilling breeze hitting her, she looked around spotting thin paper strips tapped across a nearby vent, gently moving.

"Maybe I could crawl up one of these?" she quizzed, approached one, a gentle squelching emitting from under her trainers.

She shook her head putting the thought of crawling up a vent to the back of mind. She went to walk away, the squelching emitting more, a startled cry exited her mouth, her body jolting forcing the pipe out of her hand as if something was preventing her from moving from the spot. Hatsune looked down, her eyes widened at the shiny orange substance that she was standing in, she strained and pulled her right foot up. The substance creaked, stretching like rubber refusing to let go of her shoe. It snapped back and snatched her foot back down into the substance, scattering more up the front of her shoe.

Hatsune continued struggling, trying to free herself in vain, it seemed that the more she tried to free herself the tougher it was getting to free herself.

"It's like glue! I can't waste any more time," she muttered, bending down to unlace her trainers.

She slipped her feet out of her trainers, jumping across the solid floor. She shivered the cold steel against her bare feet whilst she gleaned back at the substance.

"Someone clearly doesn't like guests."

A loud clang echoed down the hallway, a series of hissing sounds followed as a rapid series of clanging began as the wheel handle began to spin anticlockwise. Hatsune turned to look down the hallway, the bleak darkness of what appeared to be a dead-end becoming less of an end

and more like an opening as a round vault-like door opened inwards. Hatsune bit her lip, she knew there was no going back, if there was something here then she had to find it but she knew she was way in over her head.

She stepped up to the door as it finished opening, she took a deep breath lightly jogging through the doorway and into the room, the worn orange grate like flooring clattering under her feet. The door slammed shut, the handle spinning clockwise causing her to jump.

She looked around the medium-sized room, a single wide orange grated floor led down towards a series of orange lights, no other exit could be seen as the walls were lined with pipes and cables. Various large and medium pipes and tubes hanging from the ceiling snaking and connecting to ones of the wall. A dim white light hanging above the centre of the room provided enough light to shine off of the grey statues.

One stood close to the door, Hatsune raised an eyebrow as she looked at the statue.

“A Gumi statue. Were these meant for the concert?”

She stared down the walkway lined with statues in various poses, one even laying on the base with a terrified expression, its right arm extending out. Orange lights sat at the end of the walkway, their brightness growing as she advanced down it, looking at the statues as she passed them. Her heart pounded inside her chest, she couldn't help but be a little creeped out at the statues.

Her face fell as she stopped at the last one, she approached it a small tear formed in her eyes at the spiralled pigtails.

“Don't worry Kasane. Wherever you are I'll find you,” she said, placing a hand on the statue's chest.

She walked up to the lights, the grated flooring ending transition to a dark steel blue flooring. An orange light flashed up on the far side of a silver large vat that activated as she passed it. She glanced up to the large orange light above her sitting in the centre of a slim ring light. She turned her attention downwards to the curved glass panels preventing her from going anything, two slim panels of sixteen oranges lights sit on either side of five panels of thirty two lights, following the curved of the glass.

A flash of green caught her off guard, slightly dazzling her as a green glyph appeared around the floor, the orange lights flicking to a bright green. Text of an ancient language ran on the outside of the glyphs as beams of green appeared across the glyph. Hatsune looked around nervously as the glyph slid upwards, the warmth from the beams tickling her skin as the beams moved about.

Whimpering slightly as the lights flicked back to green. Fear spreading into her eyes, she wanted to get out, she had to leave. She turned and started to lightly jog, stumbled a little, flailing her arms gently as she found her feet getting heavier. She looked down in fear and

surprise, a shiny grey substance was slowly spreading up from her toes covering her foot. The substance spread upwards slowly over the bottoms of her dark blue leggings advancing over her yellow ankle band whilst she lifted her left foot, shaking it trying to get it off of her foot. The light from the small orange LED bar on the bottom right leg of her leggings faded as the definition of the bar stood out as part of her changing body.

Hatsune looked down, her mouth gaping at what was happening to her. The substance continued its advance up her leggings. She leaned to one side trying to step forwards, having to put her left foot down. She tried to step her right foot forwards, only managing a few inches before having to stop.

She brought her head, twisting around slightly, her eyes widening as she saw a blank, shiny base. She staggered backwards in fright, a chilling thought crossing her mind, with the weight of her feet and calves she was thrown off balance knocking into the Kasane statue. It wobbled about before crashing to the ground, a metallic clang sounded out whilst Hatsune's arms windmilled slightly as she regained her balance.

Hatsune looked down, fear filling her eyes as she looked at the statue then down at her legs, the grey substance spreading over her knees and towards her thighs. She glanced back on the statue's frozen face of fear its left hand fixed as if it was trying to grab something. A sinking feeling washed over her stomach, the substance spreading up her lower body looking all too familiar to the statue.

She shook her head defiantly, "No, no. That...it's impossible," she said, panic tainting her voice.

The chilling numbness struck her thighs as the substance crept over her asymmetrical cutout on the inner part of leggings and onto thighs. The orange LED lighting fading under the substance though they still stood out alongside the outline of the tops of her leggings. The substance crept onto the butt and crotch of her bodysuit, drowning out the twin lights on the butt.

She twisted her hips, struggling to break the substance whilst it advanced up her bodysuit and skin, the definition of her exposed belly button remaining. Hatsune stared downwards, her eyes flickering as small tears formed in her eyes, the substance slowing its advance as it neared her breasts.

She held her hands out in front of her, her pupils dilating as her hands trembling.

"M-my..hands," she muttered.

Shiny grey substance appeared on the tips of her fingers, thumbs and the twin single glove fingers, she watched as it crept down onto her hands. Her right arm bent into an L shape as it dropped to her side whilst her left arm twitched reaching up becoming fixed in position as the substance spread up her arms whilst advancing up and over her breasts and bodysuit. The

large blue armband that sat at the top of her gloves on her upper left arm became the only defining feature to stand out on her statue arms.

The substance spread over her armpits seamlessly meeting the substance on her arms. Her lips quivered as she felt her neck stiffening. The substance appeared on the ends of teal hair whilst it moved over her chin and onto her face, Hatsune screamed, her wide open mouth becoming fixed. The substance spread over her tongue and the insides of her mouth whilst moving up her face.

Her eyes widened, her vision slowly fading as the substance appeared in the corners of her eyes, spreading over her pupils whilst substance spread up her hair slither over her black film reel styled hair bands. Silence fell as the final parts of the substance spread down her ankle-length pigtails.

Hatsune's frozen body toppled to the ground lying next to Kasane, a pair of hooks moved across a rail, lowering down, slipping under her hairbands. Machinery whirred as the hooks retracted lifting her up off of the floor. They moved along the ceiling, repositioning her over the blank base. The statue was lowered onto the base, the hooks slipping off whilst the Hatsune statue stood there. The hooks went to reposition the Kasane statue.

A slender, small green-haired woman stepped from the shadow, her snake-like hair hissing as the woman placed a hand on Hatsune's chest.

"Now that was rather easy," she smirked, placing a hand on Hatsune's cold cheek, "Definitely a fine addition to my collection."