

Chocolate Infinity
by debbiechan

Disclaimer: Kubo Tite created the characters of Ishida and Orihime. I write fanfiction like so many others who love *Bleach*, but I earn no profits off Kubo Tite's work. I merely claim to be his girlfriend is all.

Description: PG. This fic is loosely based on the Ishida and Orihime White Day romance doujin "Staurolite Satellite" by Bypass which capsulekei translated here: <http://community.livejournal.com/bleachness/117852.html>

On "White Day," March 14, one month after Valentine's Day, guys in Japan who received chocolates from girls, give gifts in return. If a guy was lucky enough to get "honmei-choco" (love chocolate, usually homemade) and not "giri-choco" (obligatory friend chocolate, usually store-bought), he may give the girl a refusal in the form of a white handkerchief (to wipe her tears) or an acceptance of love in the form of marshmallows or some other gift.

for capsulekei

The White Day gift was ceremonial at this point; Orihime knew she already had his attention and affection.

Ceremonies demanded that a girl *look* just right, though, so after the dismissal bell she'd gone to change in the gym. A floral skirt and a stretch lace top, nothing special, but the school uniform was staid, gray, and smelled like a day's worth of school so she'd packed it off with Tatsuki who'd flashed her an indulgent grin. "Don't kiss so much that your lips swell up like gyoza."

Orihime palmed her fresh skirt, breathed deep, and waited at the appointed threshold. Afterschool clubs were gathering. The hallways weren't empty, just less busy than usual.

A schoolboy rounded the corner. Eyes smiled behind his glasses. He was walking a little faster than Orihime had ever seen him walk, and he stopped just short of crashing into her.

"Happy White Day," he said like *good afternoon*. Then with a casual nod and no further awkwardness, he handed her the white paper sack tied with blue ribbon.

"Thank you Ishida-kun!" There was no stopping her blushing.

“My first attempt at this sort of thing.” He sounded proud--that was very much like Ishida-kun--but uncharacteristically jubilant. “And it turned out pretty good if I say so myself.”

She undid the ribbon and peeked inside the bag.

“I rolled the dough in sesame seeds,” Ishida said.

Orihime’s voice condensed all three syllables of the word into a single squeak: “Wagashi!”

“I mixed raspberry with red bean paste for the filling.”

“Really?” Her favorite purple and red combination. Strings of tartness throughout a mooshy comforting base.

Orihime’s stomach filled with longing.

“Go ahead,” Ishida urged. “Try one.”

“I--I *can't*.”

He looked confused. Should she try to explain? He wouldn’t make jokes like Tatsuki but...

“Inoue-san, you’re supposed to eat them. They’re food.”

“But if I eat them, then I won’t have them anymore!”

Her eyes filled with tears, and his eyes widened with--*what was that look?*

“If you eat them...” Ishida mused in a soft voice. “If you...”

Orihime blinked, and Ishida’s eyes filled with sudden comprehension.

“I’ll make a freezer box for them,” he said in a serious tone. “So you can keep them ... indefinitely.” He took the paper sack out of her hands. “In the meantime, let’s get these to refrigeration right away. Do you have some foil we can lay them on?”

She nodded, and they were walking outside the school building. They were walking timeworn, cracked cement paths towards the train-tracks. March winds blew, carrying spring pollen but not done with winter bitterness.

Seasons came and went and gave the illusion of rebirths, but Onii-chan was dead and gone forever and Orihime would never again hug him as she had on some wonderful occasion involving shiny paper and cake--her fifth birthday?

The memory was brown around the edges, and Orihime wasn’t sure if there had been strawberry milk and a plate of wagashi on the table when Sora had given her Enraku or if he

hadn't given her the little bear the following year at a party with her preschool class...

Candles blew out before they could drip too much wax on the frosting, and Orihime always licked the ends when she pulled them out of the cake...

Things smelled delicious, often better than they tasted, and then they were gone...

Enraku wasn't a real bear and though his coat was starting to mat after years of exposure to humid summers, he would never love anyone more than Orihime. Enraku the bear would never lie on any other girl's pillow...

"Isn't it stupid?" Orihime asked Ishida as they walked. "Wanting to keep my first White Day present forever? Or at least most people would think--"

"If I'd given you flowers, no one would think it was odd if you pressed the blossoms in a book." Ishida's voice was never condescending when it said things like that. Sometimes Orihime felt that, unlike others who believed Orihime to be childish, Ishida-kun respected her oddities, maybe even admired them.

"You ate the chocolate I made you for Valentine's Day. That's what people do. Enjoy homemade sweets." Orihime's shoe splatted in a March puddle of pink soda from somebody's afterschool snack. The next step landed it in moist greenery. She'd worn pretty fabric flats today to match her skirt. The shoes would be ruined, so why did she want to keep her wagashi forever if she didn't she care about her *first White Day with a Boyfriend* shoes?

"You loved my chocolate," Orihime said. "I loved to watch you eat it."

"Your chocolate." As he spoke the words, Ishida-kun squinted a peculiar way and for a moment Orihime could've sworn she saw the beginnings of tears. Then his lips blanched as they formed a slight smile, and rosy emotion overtook his face. "Only *you* would put red-hots in milk chocolate and..."

Ishida only got that look when they had been kissing for too long.

His long legs had been keeping a measured cadence with her smaller steps, but now he slowed to a halt. Shoulders stiff, chin high, he held himself as if reaching out with his senses--he was searching for onlookers? What did he not want people to see? His bright eyes scanned the horizon past the railroad tracks.

"Only you," he repeated. Except for the red on his cheeks, he looked as solemn as soldier standing at attention.

Captain Ishida Uryuu of the French Foreign Legion, Orihime's imagination began...

When he swooped down to kiss her mouth, the gesture was as elegant and practiced as an Olympic diver's dance with gravity. One hand brushed the hair from her face and then settled

on her shoulder. Contact with her lips was brief, moist, complete.

“Oh,” said Orihime. So he *had* wanted to kiss her at the thought of the red-hot chocolates.

“Only you would make such sexy, sexy chocolates for your Valentine,” he whispered against her cheek.

He was dramatic like that, ridiculous like a character in a made-up story.

She loved it.

What day was it? What was supposed to be white? The sky was turning pink fast. The spicy taste in the chocolates Orihime had made a mere month ago surged again in her veins. She knew spicy chocolate wasn't everyone's favorite, but she had planned for the Quincy-star-shaped sweets to be *unbearable*--so that when Ishida-kun ate one, he would have to put the hot taste out on her cool lips.

The plan hadn't worked of course.

A first kiss is supposed to be perfect, but Orihime's had happened too fast for her to grasp the perfection--that sort of knowledge is only approximated in anticipation or in remembrance. Ishida had actually *liked* the odd taste of his Valentine chocolate. Flushed from the red-hots, the date on the calendar, and his nearness to a breathless girl, he had stared and stared at Orihime until she said, “*I have to kiss you, Ishida-kun,*” and did just that.

Orihime had no memory of that kiss whatsoever.

There was just no holding onto some moments. Onii-chan's hugs, Kurosaki-kun vowing to protect her and all his friends. Until that kiss from Ishida Uryuu, Orihime had thought that love would be like a heavy torch that she would carry throughout the lifetimes.

She hadn't expected it to be a spark that would clear her sinus passages and lighten her soul.

“Orihime...”

His lips were still pressed against her cheek and his fingertips were rubbing slow tiny circles against her upper arm. He only called her “Orihime” if he was kissing her, and even though he'd been kissing her for a whole month now--well, off and on, since their first kiss on Valentine's Day--the syllables still sounded strange in his light, boyish voice.

“Orihime, I think we'd better get going or we're going to melt the wagashi.”

“Okay.”

It was not until they were in front of her apartment that he spoke again. The steps there had passed on a quiet erotic cloud. They were both still too shy to hold hands in broad daylight;

they were both still too new to one another to tolerate walking side by side without wanting to lunge into one another's arms.

"There's something I want you to know," he said.

"What?" She had no idea what it could be. Maybe he wasn't really a human or from Planet Earth.

He held the white bag that held the wagashi so firmly that his knuckles turned white. His voice was earnest and hard. "I'm going to make a little box for these. It will be a nice, strong commemorative box and I'm sure it will last years and years but even so..."

No one had ever stood before Orihime and made such a pledge of his own free will.

"These wagashi--" He exhaled the truth. "They can't last forever. Only an idea is forever, like the idea of the Valentine's chocolate you made for me. That was--that was--"

He was trying to explain something to her that she already understood. When had she come to understand it? Sometime before he started speaking, way back there with the kiss.

"Chocolate infinity," Orihime said.

Ishida smiled at that. "Well, yes, but the important thing is that you know that these little sweets and these--" He gestured a circle in the air with the hand that held the white bag. "These little moments come and go but *I'm not ever going anywhere*. I want you to know that."

She nodded.

"Do you understand? I'm not going to die. I'm young and enormously strong and capable. I'm going to live years and years and years..."

She didn't really worry that much about that. With her sort of power--

"I'm not going to leave you."

Orihime felt a spark in her sinuses. It cut something behind her eyes and she felt she was about to cry.

"Are you--? Did I--?" Ishida's eyebrows rose in concern. His lips stayed parted and no words came out.

She put her hand over his hand that was holding the white paper bag. "Everything's okay." The tears spilled. "Everything's more than okay. I understand everything, and ... and ... forget the wagashi ... I mean, *no*, let's not forget the wagashi. Let's go inside and eat it. Let's eat it all up, okay?"

Ishida was looking at her with soft, soft eyes. “Are you sure?”

“Yes.” Orihime squished her eyelids shut twice to clear the goopiness out of them and smiled showing all of her teeth. She could taste tears in the corners of her mouth, but she said, “I want to eat up your White Day present for me, and then I want to kiss you with a raspberry jam red bean paste mouth, with sesame seed flour mouth--”

“Orihime--” His face came closer, as if he were going to kiss her, but his palm rose as if he were trying to push away her exuberance.

“Here!” She snatched the bag out of his hand and without any ceremony pulled one of the pretty confectioneries out of it. “See this?” She held it between her thumb and forefinger for a millisecond and popped it into her mouth. *Mmmmm*. Strings of raspberry flavors, sweet and tart. “This is what you’re supposed--” She spoke with her mouth full and licked her bottom lip. “You’re supposed to enjoy them.”

Ishida’s intent look had become enraptured.

Orihime swallowed.

“Now,” she said. “Kiss me now.”

For a moment, she was all anticipation. Then he was kissing her and his tongue was familiar as red bean paste and after that the kiss was forever a memory, but a good clear memory because it had a story to it.

A story that burned like the red hots, that would always remind her about the principle of Chocolate Infinity, and that was pure and good as Ishida Uryuu himself. But Orihime did not worry about holding onto the memory--who needed to conjure memories when Ishida was always there? With more kisses?

END